

BP 2 Module 8 – Chapter 8 of Engaging in the Deeds of a Bodhisattva: Teachings on Concentration

Lesson 1

16 February 2016

Summarizing the previous chapter:

At the end of Chapter Seven of Gyaltshab Jhe's commentary to *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*, he summarizes this chapter with this verse:

*To sincerely achieve the aspiration for liberation, this depends on the practice of Joyous Perseverance.
To complete what one initially started and is engaged in,
One should generate Joyous Perseverance that is complete with the Four Powers*

This verse is addressing those who are seeking happiness of liberation and enlightenment. To start the process of achieving and then eventually actualizing this, it essentially depends on one's joyous perseverance. To develop this, one must cultivate/generate the *Four Powers*.

As a Buddhist, it is extremely important to reflect on the workings of karma and its effects, to gain an understanding that non-virtue is an object to be abandoned and that virtue is an object to be cultivated.

The Four Powers:

The first of the Four Powers, the **Power of Aspiration**, is essentially developing a conviction in karma and its effects. Through this, one develops the aspiration/ wish to abandon non-virtue and cultivate virtue.

Through understanding how non-virtue is to be abandoned and how virtue is to be cultivated, one develops a heartfelt yearning to discard non-virtue and yearns to actualize virtue.

[Second power:] **Power of Steadfastness:** On the basis of generating the power of aspiration, which is essentially a strong yearning for virtue and to abandon non-virtue, one then engages in the actual practice. After one has started on the practice, one has to ensure that it is brought to culmination. The practice cannot be irregular/ temporary, where one does it sometimes and not at others. One must have stability in one's practice.

[Third power:] **Power of Joy:** This is essentially not being satiated by the practice of virtue, one is just immersed in it. The example [usually] given is that of a child at play, who is completely immersed in it with complete enjoyment. Even when the parents were to tell him to stop, he would not, but would continue on with [his play] without stopping. Likewise, the Power of Joy refers to an insatiability with regards to the practice of virtue.

[Forth power:] **Power of Relinquishment:** It is possible at times that, due to joyously persevering in virtue, one can become exhausted physically and/ or mentally. If that is the case, it is necessary to rest, with the idea of resuming one's practice when one has rested.

As the last verse of Chapter Seven of this root text states:

*7.76 Just as the wind blowing back and forth
Controls a piece of cotton,
So shall I be mastered by enthusiasm,
And in this way I will accomplish all.*

The definition of joyous perseverance is: *an enthusiasm for virtue*. It is a mind that takes delight and joy in virtue.

When one possesses joyous perseverance, whether one is engaging in virtue physically or verbally, one's mind, which is under the influence of joyous perseverance, is able to control and master one's body and speech.

Whatever virtuous or beneficial deeds one is engaging in, it is important to do so with a happy mind that is looking forward to it and enjoying it. If one [possesses] joyous perseverance, then whatever one does with one's body and speech can become virtue.

Laziness, the obstacle to joyous perseverance:

[In the case of oneself], one is affected by laziness. Due to this, it is difficult for one to joyously persevere. There are many practices of virtue that one is actually capable of engaging in, one knows it, but due to laziness, one fails to perform them.

There are practices that are actually within one's ability, one is able to perform them, one knows that one can do it. Further, all the favorable conditions for doing such virtuous practices are available to one, both the external and internal. Yet, one fails to engage in them. Hence, one needs to analyze and check for the reasons why this is so.

The laziness of procrastination:

Essentially, this is due to one postponing/ procrastinating it. One can do it, one has all the conducive conditions to do so, one sees that it is a good thing and feels that one should be doing this or that practice, but somehow one postpones and procrastinates, thinking: "Even though it may be a good thing to do, but maybe not today, maybe I'll do it some other time." One sees that one can do it, one sees the need to engage in virtue, but one fails to do so as one always thinks that one will do so in the future.

The reason for this, the eight worldly concerns:

When one analyzes the reason for this, it is essentially this: The Dharma is of a lower priority, whereas this life's happiness is the highest priority. The affairs of this life is more important than anything else. Due to placing the affairs of this life to be more important than Dharma practice, thus one devotes one's time and energy to merely focusing on the happiness of this life, prioritizing that over one's Dharma practice.

This is the reason why the practice of virtuous Dharma gets postponed. This is because, in one's list of priorities, [Dharma practice] is of a lower priority than the happiness and affairs of this life. Due to that, one devotes all of one's time and energy to the happiness of this life. [Obviously then,] there will not be any time [left] for virtue/ Dharma. Hence, [the cultivation of] virtue gets postponed and relegated to [some other times]. Even to the end of one's life, one is still thinking: "I'll postpone it till tomorrow." Although one claims to be spiritual aspirants seeking for liberation, however, in practice, one is [far from being so].

Antidote, reflection on death and impermanence:

The best antidote to such a laziness of procrastination is the meditation on one's impending death and impermanence. As one is familiar, such instructions are shown in the *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* literature. Continual and deep reflections on one's own impending death and one's own impermanence are extremely important. It is something that one has to focus and [reflect on] all the time. One has to seriously think of one's mortality, how one is definitely going to die, that such a time is [totally] uncertain, and that at such time, nothing is of any use to oneself except the Dharma. One has heard such teachings many times [already], what one needs to do is to meditate on it continually.

There is a saying by one of the *Kadampa masters* that:

*Since I do not know which will come first, tomorrow or death,
Therefore, I will focus on my practice now.*

This piece of advice is very useful to counteract any ideas of procrastination that one may have. If one has the thought that one will do it tomorrow, then it is useful to think about such an advice. One has to [analyze and check whether] one will certainly not die tomorrow? Is one really sure that one will still get to do something tomorrow?

Since death is certain, and one is unsure when that will happen, then it is more important and profitable to do something that will benefit one in all of one's future lives.

The consequences of dying without having accumulated virtue:

One has to consider the likely consequence of having to die without having done some real practice. One has to [take it] that the likely consequence will be having to go to the lower realms of the hells, hungry ghosts or animals. One has heard and read about the sufferings of the beings in these realms. What one needs to do is to [reflect on] it, putting oneself in such a [predicament], if one ends up in any of such realms due to not having done any real practices in this life, one knows the descriptions of all the terrible sufferings [that one would have to endure] there. One has to meditate and ask oneself honestly, that if one ends up in such a situation, would one be able to endure it? This is something that one has to meditate on seriously.

If one [failed] to do any beneficial, meaningful and virtuous practices in this life, then when one dies, what option is there other than going to the lower realms? This is quite clear.

Again, one has to ask oneself honestly [these two questions:] Once one ends up there, would one be able to endure the sufferings? Also, would one be able to [escape] from these realms easily, that it is so easy to obtain a human rebirth? This is because, when one is there, one would be engaging in non-virtues all the time. If one analyzes carefully, once one is born there, it is almost like impossible to get out. As a being in the lower realms, be it a hell being, hungry ghost or an animal, does one think that it is really possible to be virtuous? Is it even possible to develop any virtuous thoughts as a being there? If it is so difficult to generate any virtuous thought as a being in the lower realms, then how is it possible for such a being to get out from there? This is because, there is no basis or condition [for that to happen].

So, I think this is the best meditation and antidote. One has to ask oneself honestly that, once one is in the lower realms, would one be able to engage in virtue and then get out [from there]? If one places oneself in such a situation and imagine how difficult [a situation] it would be once one ends up there, then it is almost like one is completely done for.

The result of having reflected well:

Once one combines all such reflections together, then [naturally] a heartfelt yearning and wish for one's life to be meaningful and to engage in virtue would naturally arise from within one's own heart. *This is the solution.* [The wish to practice] has to come from within as no one can give it to one. The enthusiasm for virtue, the heartfelt wish to practice Dharma has to come from within oneself and not outside. This can only occur when one reflects on one's own life according to what has been taught.

Through such serious and honest reflections, one would then see for oneself the need to do something meaningful with one's life, to practice and engage in virtue. Otherwise, there is no way one is going to engage in anything beneficial, make one's life meaningful, by engaging in virtue. This is because, one [failed] to see the reason. Hence, one would not be engaging in practice. One would find the Dharma worthless and not think that it is a priceless treasure. This is because, one does not see the reason for one to practice the Dharma. Hence, to [be able to] practice Dharma, one must see for oneself the reasons for doing so.

When one reflects honestly on these points and sees clearly for oneself how to make one's life meaningful by practicing virtue, then from one's own side, one naturally wishes to do it happily, taking joy and delight in one's practice. This will show in the way one does one's daily prayers, prostrations, circumambulation and so on. Because one sees the benefit and point for doing so, then whatever virtuous practices one engages in will be done happily and without any resistance. One merely enjoys it.

If one engages in one's practices and approaches one's life in such an enthusiastic way, then there is real hope for permanent everlasting happiness.

If one does not see the Dharma as being valuable and to be treasured, rather, high on the list of one's priorities are essentially the happiness and affairs of this life, one would then devote one's time and energy the entire day essentially trying to actualize it. One then becomes immersed in it, getting emotionally involved in and being attached totally to the happiness of this life. Perhaps every now and then one gets a little bit of such worldly happiness, due to that, one again gets more emotionally involved and become greatly attached to and focused on it. Even if one is not being involved with the work of this life, [due to being attached to the happiness of this life,] one also takes joy in idling, engaging in idle gossip or [meddling with other people's affairs].

This is how one spends one's life, essentially being distracted away from virtue. It is a distracted life in that, one is not thinking of virtue but merely everything else other than that. Sometimes, one may derive some pleasures from doing so, due to that, one then becomes even more attached to [such activities]. This is how one spends one's life.

However, if one analyzes [deeply], such a mind that is completely immersed in the affairs of this life is [actually] non-virtuous. This is because, there is no [mental] space for virtue. From one moment to the next, the mind is essentially moving between one affliction to the other, from ignorance to desire/ attachment to anger and back again. In each and every moment, one is essentially immersed in and accumulating non-virtue. One's mind is hence completely immersed in non-virtuous thoughts, moving from one affliction to the next, completely focusing on the affairs and happiness of this life and becoming attached to it. When one lives in such a world, there is no [mental] space whatsoever for virtue, hence, [such a mental space is only occupied by] non-virtue. Hence, in each and every single moment, one is accumulating non-virtue. The ripening fruitional effects of this would only be a rebirth in the lower realms. There are no other effects.

From here one can see how, in exchange for being preoccupied with and attached to the happiness of this life, In return for that, what one gets is a rebirth in the lower realms. Hence it is not a very wise [state of mind].

If one fails to generate the real wish to make one's life meaningful, using it to engage in virtuous Dharma practice and transform one's mindset, then it does not matter how much study, learning or reflection of the Buddhadharma one has done, these are pointless in that, [none of these activities have enabled one to] achieve its intended purpose.

Hence, if one is really a seeker of freedom and liberation, then all such points made so far are something that one has to seriously think about continually at all times. Of course, if one is not seeking liberation, but merely the happiness of this life, then one does not need to do all these things. But if one considers oneself a Buddhist and a seeker of liberation, then one has no other options but to reflect.

The benefits of practicing the holy Dharma:

When referring to the holy Dharma, in a simple way it refers to virtue, a virtuous state of mind. When one generates such a mind, then this is practicing the holy Dharma. If one has the mere thought/ wish to do something meaningful and beneficial for others, in a simple way, that is also holy Dharma. Hence, generating such attitudes are holy Dharma. If one reflects deeper, one then has to see for oneself, how if one practices the holy Dharma, one will definitely be happy in this life and the next. One can achieve liberation and enlightenment. However, one has to realize [all such benefits] oneself. If one thinks of the holy Dharma as the thought/ intention to benefit others, then at such times when one does possess such thoughts/ feelings, deep in one's heart, there is joy and satisfaction.

The faults of non-virtues:

Whereas, at those occasions when one feels negatively about someone, particularly wishing to harm him, when one searches for one's state of mind from the depth, one is actually very unhappy and miserable. Having such negative thoughts/ states of mind disturb and harm one in this life. Since it does not benefit one in this life, then how is it possible for it to do so in one's next life? These points are really important, one has to really and seriously think about it.

In essence, if one is able to gain some mastery and control over one's mind, putting it in a state of virtue, then one's mind will then be able to exert a positive influence and control over one's body and speech. With this, it will become easier to make [whatever one is doing with] one's body, speech and mind to become an actual virtue.

When one listens to the teachings, learns the Dharma, reflects or meditates on the teachings, one needs to do so enthusiastically. From one's own side, one [should possess the thought to] really want it. Essentially, [whatever] hearing, reflection and meditation one is doing must be done happily and enthusiastically. If not, then it will be difficult for one.

What the Dharma wheel, buck and doe depict:

If one looks at Tibetan monasteries, one sees a Dharma wheel, buck and doe on its left and right situated on the top front of the building. The ears of the buck and doe are depicted in an erect upright alert posture. One would not find a pair of buck and doe above the monasteries depicted with their ears drooped down. The Dharma wheel (Dharmachakra) has eight spokes, which symbolize the Eight-fold Noble Path/ Eight Branches of the Arya Path. The buck and doe [depicted in a kneeling posture] on its left and right with their ears erect symbolize listening to the teachings intently with concentration. The deer in the wild are always on alert, even at night when they are resting. They have to be on the alert to protect themselves from predators and hunters. They are so alert that, with the slightest hearing of sound, they are ready run away.

Likewise, whenever one is in the situation of learning the Dharma, listening to an explanation, one has to do so intently with a very alert mind.

Reasons showing that, to be able to practice Dharma, one needs to study first:

There are many who believe that, there is no need to study and learn the Dharma in order to practice it. There are always people who ask: "Why is there a need to study so much? One merely needs to practice and that is good enough!"

An example of a reply to [such qualms] was given by the Savior Maitreya Buddha, who said:

"If there is no need to study in order to practice, then what was the purpose of Buddha Shakyamuni having taught the Three Scriptural Collections?"

If there is no need to learn extensively [to be able to] practice, then it follows that there is no real great purpose behind Buddha Shakyamuni revealing all the teachings that now form the Three Scriptural Collections. Such a statement means that, one needs to study [the teachings to be able to practice it.]

The second qualm could be this: "Even though I may need to study, but do I need to meditate on what I have studied?" The Savior Maitreya replied:

"If there is no need to meditate on what you have heard, then why did all the past holy beings meditate?"

Hence, Buddha Maitreya is saying that, it is not sufficient to merely study, one has to meditate and familiarize oneself with what one has learned.

Generally, the more extensively one hears, studies and learns the teachings, the greater will be one's wisdom arisen from hearing. [Its significance is that,] when one has more information, one would have more materials to reflect on. The more materials one is able to reflect on, commensurate with that, one's wisdom arisen from reflection will be also be greater. [Its significance is that,] when one has more wisdom arisen from reflection, this means that one is able to approach even a single meditation topic from different perspectives and [a wide variety of] angles. This is something that [those without such wisdom] are unable to do. If one is able to do this, then of course the quality of one's meditation and familiarization will also be better.

How such a line of reasoning also applies to the secular world:

Generally, the more educated one is, the more one is able to analyze and think. If one has a greater processing capacity, then the amount of work that one can do and the choices available to one will also be greater. One will be able to achieve more [in life. Hence such a line of reason] also applies to worldly life in general. When one asks: "What is the need to study extensively just to be able to practice the Dharma," this would be the same as asking: "Why does one need to study so much just to be able to get a good job or to do many things in life?" When one approaches this question from the perspective of daily life's career or work, [then it will be absurd to say]: "There is no need to learn, one just needs to work, why do you study so hard?"

Hence, there is really not much of a choice. If one is seeking liberation, then the method is Dharma, which is vast and profound.

*Hence, it is not something that one can come to an understanding of merely by saying:
"This is virtue and that is non-virtue!" It is really not so simple.*

Since the Dharma is not simple but deep and profound, then there is no choice but to know it. To do so, one has to learn.

That is why it is emphasized in the teachings that, the practice of meditation, familiarizing oneself with the teachings, has to be preceded by [come after] analysis and reflection. Such a reflection must be preceded by study, reading, hearing or listening to the teachings. Hence, for one to really be able to meditate, one has no other choice but to learn, study, reflect and then meditate.

Yet, the teachings also emphasize that, mere study alone is of no benefit, as that [alone] will not change the mind. The entire point of learning is such that, one can put it into practice. Hence, one must meditate on what one has learned.

If one does so as advised, [progressing] in a proper order, first learning about it, then reflecting on it, and then meditating and familiarizing oneself with what one has ascertained, then there is no doubt that one's mind will transform and actually change for the better.

The faults of not remembering death and impermanence:

The best and most important antidote against the laziness of procrastination is one's meditation on one's impending death and impermanence. In the Lam Rim teachings, there is the presentation on the disadvantages/ faults of not remembering one's impending death and one's impermanence. When one failed to actively remember and recollect one's impending death, one will not remember the Dharma at all. The reason one forgets the Dharma and not practice virtue is that one forgets that one is going to die.

Another fault of not remembering one's impending death and impermanence is that, even if one remembers the Dharma, one fails to practice it. This again is essentially not being aware of and not actively remember that one is going to die.

Even at those times when one actually remembers the Dharma and practices it, the practice itself does not become real and pure Dharma practice. It becomes a tainted practice that is mixed with the affairs and attachment to the happiness of this life.

Most of us are probably in this situation.

One may be doing some practices, but such practices does not end up as real Dharma practice, as it has become contaminated. The reason for this is the same as before: one has forgotten about one's impending death and impermanence.

Even for those people who actually remember the Dharma, practice it and do so purely with real Dharma practice, they are still unable to sustain their practices in earnest. This is again the fault of not remembering well death and impermanence.

The topic on death and impermanence is not intellectually challenging at all as it is straightforward and easy to understand. There is nothing complicated about this topic. What one needs to do is to actively remember, reflect and think about it, doing so continually, as said in the teachings:

To possess the attitude of recognizing that one is going to die and being unsure of when that will happen.

Hence, when referring to death and impermanence, this does not refer to the death and impermanence of something external to oneself, that something else is impermanent. Rather, it refers to how oneself is impermanent, that one will die sooner or later and that one actually does not know when that will be. This is the kind of recognition of death and impermanence that one needs to possess. If one is able to recognize one's own mortality and impermanence, then it will become easier to stop such negative thoughts like desire, attachment or anger. As mentioned in the Lam Rim:

Of all the recognition, the recognition of one's own death and impermanence is supreme.

This is because, the moment one remembers one's own death and impermanence, at that moment, whatever negative thoughts of anger, desire, attachment or pride and so forth are immediately pacified. This is why it says in the teachings that, the recognition of one's own death and impermanence is the best of all recognition.

The consequence of holding onto something other than oneself as being impermanent:

In the study of Buddhist philosophy, there is the study of dialectics where one analyzes a topic through the use of reason. For example, in the study of impermanence, one may refer to any object as one's subject of inquiry. One then proves that such a subject is impermanent due to certain reasons. In classical debate, they assert: *The vase is impermanent because it is a product*. Intellectually, one knows that it is obviously impermanent due to it being a product and so forth.

However, if someone were to [suddenly] say that the vase is permanent, such a statement would then become very shocking to one: "How surprising it is, for you to say that a vase is permanent...!" [Hence it is bewildering,] when one understands that the vase is impermanent, and yet someone else can [be so reckless to say that] it is permanent.

However, oneself, who holds on to the view that the vase is impermanent, is at the same time, holding onto one's own lifespan and oneself as being permanent. Would [such a view be] even more surprising [and contradictory]?

When one tries to learn, understand and [struggle] with the concept of impermanence, one may understand it eventually. However, such a concept has to be mainly applied to oneself and not so much an inquiry about the impermanence of the world, the vase and so forth. Hence, the basis of applying such an understanding is actually one's own lifespan, one's own impending death. This is what one needs to understand.

When one derives even a mere feeling of one's own impending death and impermanence, then even such [a small] understanding can help one weaken or pacify whatever strong desire, attachment, jealousy, pride, anger, negative competitiveness and so forth. All such [negative thoughts] become pacified.

An experiment that is good to try on:

One can actually experiment with such an idea: think about one's own mortality, how one is definitely going to die one day and that such a day is totally unknown, that it could be very soon. When one gets an understanding about this, one can then see for oneself whether one's negative thoughts and emotions become weaker or not.

This is very important, one has to try it out and discover for oneself. One has to experience for oneself the benefits. Gaining such little experience, [which is] tasting the Dharma, experiencing and getting the feel of [the teachings] is very important. This is because, this will be the motivating factor that would keep one going [with joyous perseverance]. As one tastes [the benefits of the Dharma,] one knows that it is helpful and that it really works. This then becomes the basis for one to carry on and persevere.

Summary:

The essential point for this lesson is that: Whatever practices of the virtuous Dharma, especially studying, listening to, reading and thinking about the Dharma, meditating on it and so forth, all these have to be done with a happy mind. One needs to do so happily, having enthusiasm for it: "I want it!" [Such thoughts] are important [to possess]. This is joyous perseverance. But for such joyous perseverance to take root and arise, one has to identify the obstacles to its development. One then has to work on it and eliminate it as much as possible.

Chapter Eight: Teachings on Concentration

C. The way to train in concentration included in the [mundane] and [supramundane] calm abidings

a. Explaining the chapter's material [8.1 – 8.187]

[Stating the major outlines of this chapter:] The chapter that comes after the [seventh] chapter on joyous perseverance in Shantideva's <i>Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds</i> is the [eighth] chapter on concentration or meditative stabilization.
Here, there is a discussion on the need to develop concentration, particularly, to develop calm abiding, how one must abandon all the unfavorable conditions. {Abandoning the class of things incompatible with calm abiding [8.3 – 8.88]}
After this, there is the presentation on the way to proceed with meditating on calm abiding. {How to cultivate calm abiding [8.89 – 8.178]}

- 1) Instructions on cultivating concentration [8.1 – 8.2]
- a) The reasons it is necessary to accomplish calm abiding [8.1 – 8.2(ab)]

<p>8.1 a Having developed joyous effort in that way, b I should place my mind in meditative stabilization; c The man whose mind is distracted d Dwells between the fangs of afflictions.</p> <p>8.2 a Through isolation of body and mind b No distractions will occur;</p>
As was shown in the previous chapter, joyous perseverance is “enthusiasm in virtue”. It refers to a happy and delighted mind whenever one is engaging in virtue. However, [having the mind of] joyous perseverance alone is insufficient. One needs to engage in virtue with a single-pointed state of mind.
Take for example, the activity here of learning the Buddhadharma. In this case, one is learning about how to develop calm abiding/ concentration. To develop an understanding of such a topic, one must first receive instructions on it, by hearing/ listening to its explanation.
When one does so, one has to do it with an enthusiastic and happy mind which takes delight in hearing the instructions of this topic and seeking out the techniques for developing calm abiding and so forth.
In the process, one then removes any misconceptions or the lack of understanding of the topic.
After one has removed all doubts, misconceptions and lack of understanding of how to develop calm abiding, one would then have acquired a correct understanding of how to proceed with developing calm abiding.
One then takes such instructions to heart by actualizing them in [retreat] isolation.
<p>The type of concentration that should be developed is A single-pointed state of mind that is not influenced by excitement nor laxity.</p>
If one has enthusiasm for virtue, taking delight in [cultivating] it, but when one engages in it, one lacks a single-pointed/ focused state of mind, then what would be the faults?
When one lacks a single-pointed state of mind, one would then become easily distracted by various objects of form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and even objects of the mental consciousness.
One’s mind then becomes easily distracted by moving from one object to another. Due to such distractions, many faults arise in one’s mind. This makes it difficult for one to achieve liberation and freedom.
If one lacks a single-pointed state of mind by being constantly distracted, one would then be like a person that is standing in the midst of all sorts of dangerous wild creatures who are just waiting to devour one.
One would literally be dwelling among the fangs of the afflictions. One’s mind would be under the influence of all different kinds of afflictions which cause harm to one. This would then [rob] one of any chances of achieving liberation.
Essentially, this is an explanation on the need to possess a single-pointedness of mind.

[Achieving calm abiding through physical and mental isolation from distractions]:

The way to achieve single-pointedness of mind is to abandon distractions through isolating oneself physically and mentally.
If one is intent on cultivating calm abiding, developing a single-pointedness of mind, one would then have to isolate oneself physically, not dwelling or living in places where there are many people, not getting involved with its hustle and bustle.
One also has to be mentally careful to not pay attention to all sorts of discursive thoughts like desire/ attachment. One needs to distance oneself from such distractions.

In general, for a beginner who wishes to cultivate and actualize calm abiding, choosing the correct and suitable external environment becomes very important. Such an explanation is given from the perspective of someone who is intent on developing calm abiding, hence, the external environment becomes very important.
The teachings instruct that one needs to isolate oneself physically, staying and living in a place that is very quiet.
As a beginner, it is very obvious that one's mind can get distracted very easily. As soon as one's mind comes into contact with an object, merely by hearing or seeing something, all sorts of negative discursive afflictions that distract would arise easily.
Hence, living in a very quiet environment that is not busy becomes very important for a beginner who seeks to actualize calm abiding.

b) Instructions on abandoning the class of things [incompatible] with calm abiding [8.2(cd)]

To develop calm abiding, one must abandon all the unfavorable discordant conditions:
<i>c Therefore, I should abandon the world d And completely discard conceptualizations.</i>
The external discordant factors of calm abiding are essentially [living] a busy life. Hence, one needs to [physically] abandon the hustle and bustle of such a life. Mentally, one needs to discard and distance oneself from all sorts of mental distractions.
To engage in the practice of actualizing calm abiding, one has to abandon a busy life through isolating oneself physically. The reason that one is unable to stop living a busy life is that, one likes a busy life of hustle and bustle due to being attached to it.
Hence, to even be able to physically isolate oneself from a busy life, one must first [be able to] identify the factors that cause one to want to be [continually bounded] in a busy life. [One must identify this] before one can give up a busy life:

2) Abandoning the class of things [incompatible] with calm abiding [8.3 – 8.88]

a) Abandoning the bustle of the world [8.3 – 8.37]

i) Identifying the causes of attachment to the world [8.3(ab)]

<i>8.3 a Because of attachment and due to craving for material gain and the like, b The world is not abandoned.</i>
It is very obvious that one is unable to give up one's busy life due to attachment.
In dependence upon holding onto/ grasping at a 'self', the view of the transitory collections, arises grasping at 'mine', holding onto that which is 'mine'/ belonging to 'mine', one develops all sorts of attachment for all sorts of things.
One should analyze for oneself with one's own experiences, whenever one gets upset or attached to something, whatever afflictions these may be, would these always arise in relation to an identity of one's 'self', who one identifies oneself with?
Firstly, with such a strong feeling of 'I', one then holds onto it. Based on this, one then gets attached to this 'I/ me'. From this, either attachment or anger arises.
Perhaps for one, it is quite clear, as one can tell, that the bigger the ego one has, the more attached one is to this sense of 'I'. Due to that, the anger and other afflictions that arise in dependence on such attitudes are also much stronger.
Thinking of one's own experience, generally, when an attractive object presents itself to one, one usually develops attachment for it. When [one comes into contact with an] unpleasant object, one usually reacts with aversion or anger.
The reason one is attached to something is that, it appears as pleasant and attractive to 'me'. The reason one is upset with certain people or situation is also that, these appear as unpleasant/ disgusting to 'me'. Hence, [all such afflicted thoughts] are always related to the 'I'.
It is very clear that, one does not get attached or upset to a person or object just because that appears as pleasant or unpleasant [respectively] to one's friend. This is because, an attractive or unattractive object has appeared as it is in the view of 'I/ me'.
The stronger one is attached to one's 'I', the stronger one cherishes this 'I', the stronger will be the anger and attachment that arise in dependence upon such attitudes. This is very obvious.
Hence, it is important to strive in a method that will reduce one's grasping at the 'I'. If one is able to reduce such an ego-grasping, then the anger, attachment and all other afflictions that arise in dependence upon it would be weaker as well.
[How the understanding of tenets help one to reduce/ eliminate grasping at the 'I':] Hence, as a method to eliminate or at least reduce one's ego-grasping, there is the presentation on the view, the nature of reality. In the presentation of the <i>Four Buddhist Tenets/ Philosophical views</i> , each of them has its own assertion as to what the 'self/ I / person' is all about.
Beginning with the explanation on how there is no such thing as a permanent, unitary and independent 'self/ I / person', there is also an explanation on how the 'self/ I / person' does not exist in a self-sufficient, substantially existent way.
Although in reality, an understanding of the 'self/ I / person' in these ways would not eliminate ego-grasping from its root, [these understanding would nevertheless] help one to reduce one's ego-grasping.

When referring to the emptiness or the lack of a permanent, unitary and independent ‘self’, whether such [technical] terms are used or not, this is essentially saying that there is not an ‘I’ that is separate in entity from the body. That is, there is not an ‘unchanging I’ that is of a separate entity from the body. This is [generally] what the phrase means.
An explanation that is more refined than this, is how a person does not exist as self-sufficient, substantially existent. That is, if the ‘I’ is not outside [the body and mind complex], then would there be an ‘I’ that is [found] within the body and mind?
When one says that there is not a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, this means that, within the body and mind, there is not anything within it [that is found to be] the controller or owner of the body and mind.
One does have [these two] wrong conceptions. There are occasions where, one may think that there is a real ‘me’ that is of an unchanging entity existing distinctly and separately from one’s body and mind.
However, when one analyzes it logically, one would see that such an ‘I’ has never existed and will never exist. This helps to reduce one’s grasping for such a [non-existent] ‘I’, as grasping at it would lead to many problems.
Similarly, when one understands that, there is not an ‘I’ that is self-sufficient, substantially existent, then this is also very helpful in reducing one’s strong and coarse grasping, clinging onto an ‘I’ [that does not exist]. If one is able to weaken these wrong conceptions, then the afflictions that arise due to such wrong conceptions would also be weaker.
In essence, lines 8.3 ab are teaching that, in dependence upon an ego-grasping, holding onto a ‘real I’, then grasping at ‘mine’ arises, from that, one develops attachment for sentient beings as well as external objects like wealth, reputation and so forth.
Such an explanation [on selflessness] are essentially the approach of the <i>Great Exposition School</i> and <i>Sutra School</i> .
They assert that, all afflictions and problems arise from holding onto an ‘I’ as self-sufficient, substantially existent. Due to that, one develops anger, attachment and so forth, which result in many problems.
If one is able to counteract and overcome such a grasping at a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, then one will be able to remove all the afflictions. Hence, for these two schools, they assert a selflessness of person only. They do not have a presentation on the selflessness of phenomena.
As for the Mind Only School and the Middle Way School, over and above their respective presentations on the selflessness of persons, they also present a selflessness of phenomena. Hence, they put forth methods which are more powerful in dealing with ego-grasping. Essentially, they assert that phenomena do not exist in the way they appear.
The Mind Only School asserts that external objects do not exist. Although there is an appearance of an external object, of phenomena existing as a separate entity from the consciousness, but in reality, that is a mistaken appearance. Hence, they present a selflessness of phenomena in that, there are no external objects, as everything is merely an [entity] of the mind.
As for the Middle Way School in general, they present a selflessness of phenomena in that, all phenomena that exist, do not exist truly, although they appear to exist truly.
Due to such a presentation of selflessness in terms of the perceiver and the perceived, their methods for counteracting ego-grasping is even much more powerful.
Hence, the Mahayana tenets [of the Mind Only and Middle Way Schools] present a selflessness of phenomena. Essentially, they assert that although phenomena appear in a certain way, in reality, they do not exist in the way they appear.
Hence, understanding their presentation of how phenomena exist is a very powerful way to counteract one’s afflictions.

ii) The way to abandon these [8.3(cd) – 8.37]

1' Identifying the antidotes [8.3(cd) – 8.4]

a' Instructions on abandoning attachment [8.3(cd)]

Since attachment is the cause for taking a delight in living a normal busy life, where one goes around looking for material gains, power, reputation and so forth, therefore, if one wishes to achieve a single-pointedness of mind, then one has to act against such an attachment to the busyness, which gives rise to many discursive thoughts and distractions:

**8.3 c Therefore, I shall entirely abandon these;
d The skilled analyze in this way.**

Hence, the ‘skilled’ or the wise one would analyze in this way, what they need to cultivate and discard.

b' Identifying the antidotes that act to abandon attachment [8.4]

**8.4 a Having understood that afflictions are completely destroyed
b By special insight endowed with calm abiding,
c First of all I should search for calm abiding.
d Further, this is achieved with joy by those unattached to the world.**

Calm abiding is achieved when one gains a single-pointedness of mind that is freed/ separated from excitement, laxity and which is endowed with both the bliss of physical and mental pliancy.

On the basis of having achieved calm abiding, one then meditates on emptiness. Eventually, when one actualizes the special insight that focuses on emptiness, then for the first time, one would possess the actual antidote/ tool to the afflictions, with which, one would be able to actually harm and destroy ignorance.
After one has achieved such a concentration of the mind of calm abiding, one then proceeds on to and engages in analytical meditation on emptiness. However, the special insight focusing on emptiness is not achieved until the analytical meditation on emptiness is able to induce the bliss of physical and mental pliancy.
If such an analytical meditation on emptiness is able to induce the bliss of physical and mental pliancy, then this becomes the [mind] of special insight focusing on emptiness.
There is the bliss of physical and mental pliancy that is induced through meditative stabilization by placing one's mind single-pointedly on a chosen object of observation without any laxity and excitement which possesses/ is endowed with the bliss of physical and mental pliancy. Such a mind is called calm abiding.
Such a bliss of physical and mental pliancy comes about through placing the mind single-pointedly on an object.
There is also a bliss of physical and mental pliancy that arises due to analysis. Such a [blissful mind] of physical and mental pliancy that is induced by analysis is called special insight.
In the context of this verse, the special insight mentioned here is the special insight that is focused on emptiness. It is such a special insight focused on emptiness that is the only tool to overcome ignorance.
Hence, to overcome one's afflictions, one has to generate and actualize this special insight focusing on emptiness. However, to develop such a special insight, one must firstly actualize calm abiding.
Of course, such an explanation of how one must develop calm abiding prior to [actualizing] special insight is an assertion of sutra [paramitayana]. This is the general procedure according to sutra.
For the mind to act as an antidote to the afflictions, particularly to ignorance, such a mind must see emptiness clearly, which must appear very clearly to such a mind.
For emptiness to appear clearly to the mind, the mind must firstly be able to abide single-pointedly on its object, emptiness.
Within the ability to abide single-pointedly on its object, emptiness, this allows one to experience a clear appearance of emptiness, through which, one comes to see emptiness clearly and subsequently, see it directly.
However, one would not be able to overcome the afflictions merely by possessing a single-pointed mind. If one does not realize the object of emptiness, then no matter how stable and clear a concentration one may possess, one would not be able to overcome one's afflictions.
This is clear, when one analyzes the beings/ gods of the form and formless realms. To be born there, one must necessarily have achieved calm abiding.
The gods in these realms, from the first, second, third, forth concentrations, as well as the four levels of the formless realms, up to the highest level of cyclic existence, called the <i>peak of existence</i> , have unbelievable concentrations. They are able to stay focused for eons. However, they still have to take rebirths after their karma for that rebirth finishes.
Hence, this clearly proves that, they still have afflictions in their mental continua as they have not abandoned ignorance. Hence, they have no other choices but to take rebirth.
The main purpose of actualizing calm abiding is so that, one has the means to actualize special insight focusing on emptiness, the purpose of which, is to destroy one's afflictions, ignorance. To do so, one must have such a powerful mind.
But prior to actualizing special insight focusing on emptiness, one must have calm abiding.
This is the reason for such a presentation on the need for calm abiding here.

[How, with the aid of method, the wisdom realizing emptiness becomes more powerful on the paths and grounds:]

In the presentation of <i>The Five paths and Ten grounds</i> , the path of preparation is achieved when one actualizes the special insight focusing on emptiness. With such a mind, one also simultaneously achieves the <i>Heat level</i> path of preparation.
On the different levels of the path of preparation, one progressively gains the ability to suppress the [different levels of] manifest apprehension of true existence. One is able to act, in certain ways, against dualistic appearances.
With the gradual diminishing of dualistic appearances, one's abilities to harm the manifest apprehension of true existence increases. Eventually, when all of one's dualistic appearances have subsided, one would then see emptiness directly [and simultaneously achieves the path of seeing].
When one sees emptiness directly, not only is one able to harm the manifest apprehensions of true existence, one is also able to abandon the artificial conceptions of true existence, together with its seeds.

On the first up to the eighth ground of the path of meditation, one is able to progressively harm and overcome the innate apprehension of true existence together with their seeds through a path that unifies both method and wisdom. The bodhisattva is then able to finally destroy the innate apprehension of true existence together with its seeds on the eighth ground.
When one reaches the eighth ground, one would then [completely destroy all] innate apprehension of true existence together with their seeds. Essentially, the entire Five paths and Ten grounds can be seen from the perspective of how one comes to develop the wisdom realizing emptiness and how it progresses.
As one moves from path to path and ground to ground, due to the factor of method, the wisdom realizing emptiness becomes more and more powerful. Hence, with the support of method, the bodhisattva is able to overcome even the predispositions of ignorance.
When even the subtlest stains of the predispositions of ignorance are removed, the bodhisattva achieves the Mahayana path of no more learning and becomes a Buddha.

[The reasons one needs to realize emptiness to destroy one's afflictions:]

Hence, the essential point one must derive at is this: To destroy one's afflictions, one has to actualize the special insight focusing on emptiness. But, one must think and analyze in detail why this is the case.
What one really needs to understand, see clearly and answer to oneself is that, why one would not be able to overcome one's attachment if one does not realize emptiness.
As long as one [continues] to grasp at an 'I', then there will always be the [danger] of developing anger, attachment. Hence, so long as one does not abandon such a [mis-]conception, there is no way one can overcome attachment.
Hence, to destroy and overcome such an ego-grasping, clinging onto a 'real I', then the only antidote is to realize selflessness
That said, one also has to really analyze this: Why should one realize emptiness just to overcome one's ego-grasping?
To be able to really answer such a question well, one must first have at least some vague idea of what ego-grasping/ ego-clinging/ self-grasping/ apprehension/ holding onto a self is [all about].
One must obtain an experiential feel, or at least an introduction to what ignorance/ apprehension of self/ self-grasping and so forth, what sort of mind it is, how it works, how it views the world, whether it is a factually concordant or discordant mind.
Particularly, one must know what its <i>mode of apprehension</i> is all about, essentially, how it views the world. It is only when one understands this, have some feelings of it internally, would one come to understand that, the only way to destroy such an ego, is to generate a mind whose <i>mode of apprehension</i> , its way of seeing the world is completely [opposite] to ego-grasping.
If one analyzes in such a way, [then the conclusion of such an understanding would be that,] the only way to overcome and uproot ignorance is to generate a mind whose <i>mode of apprehension</i> is completely opposite to that of ignorance.
To overcome one's afflictions, one has to attain the special insight focusing on emptiness. To attain that, one must first achieve calm abiding. To achieve calm abiding, one must first distance oneself from the unfavorable discordant factors to calm abiding.
Essentially, one should distance oneself from attachment and the objects that causes distractions and attachment: sentient beings and non-sentient beings. To do so, one must take delight/ joy/ be enthusiastic in wishing to isolate oneself physically and mentally. This would enable one actualize calm abiding. This is the sequence.

Student 1: What is the difference between manifest apprehension of true existence and intellectually acquired apprehension of true existence?

Khenrinpoche: When referring to manifest afflictions, there can be instances where there are artificial [intellectually acquired] conceptions of true existence, there can also be instances where there are innate conceptions of true existence.

Student 2: At the time of analytical meditation focusing on emptiness, does the bliss of physical and mental pliancy that was induced by calm abiding temporarily cease? This is because, at this time of analytical meditation focusing on emptiness, it also induces another bliss of physical and mental pliancy.

Khenrinpoche: Perhaps it is possible to possess the bliss of physical and mental pliancy before achieving special insight. After one attains calm abiding, one already possesses the bliss of physical and mental pliancy. However, up to the time one achieves special insight, it is possible to possess the bliss of physical and mental pliancy. This is because, one does not lose calm abiding [up to just before one attains special insight].

Student 2: Is it the same continuum?

Khenrinpoche: It is not the case that, after one has achieved calm abiding and when one subsequently works on to achieve special insight, one suddenly loses one's calm abiding. Special insight is attained from within [the bliss of] calm abiding. It is within calm abiding that one performs analytical meditation. Hence, one does not lose one's calm abiding. The bliss of physical and mental pliancy that is conjoined with calm abiding is induced through close-placement, placing the mind single-pointedly and stabilizing it on an object, it is not induced by analysis. For something to be a special insight, it has to be endowed/ conjoined with the bliss of physical and mental pliancy that is induced by/ through the force of analysis, otherwise it is cannot be special insight.

[Review of the previous lesson, the purpose of cultivating calm abiding:]

It was mentioned earlier [in lesson 2] how important concentration is. If it is absent, one's mind would easily become distracted. This would lead to all sorts of discursive thoughts, which are obstacles to the cultivation of virtue, particularly, it hinders the achievement of liberation. Hence, concentration is very important. It is therefore important for one to strive at it.
It is taught that, as a method for developing concentration, particularly to cultivate calm abiding, one has to rely on both physical and mental isolation:
1) <i>Physical isolation</i> means isolating oneself from the hustle and bustle of a busy life and living a quiet life. 2) <i>Mental isolation</i> means to isolate, protect/ guard one's mind from all sorts of distractions and discursive thoughts.
In the previous lesson, one is asked why one takes a liking to a busy life, is unable to give it up, to protect, isolate one's mind from distractions and discursive thoughts. After analyzing, the conclusion is that, <i>it is due to attachment/ desire</i> . Due to it, one is unable to give up a liking to a busy life. Hence, it is very difficult to give up [distractions] and discursive thoughts.
One also saw how, the root source from which all attachment arises is essentially self-grasping. Hence:
1) Attachment is the cause that prevents one from abandoning the hustle and bustle of life and all discursive thoughts, 2) Root of attachment is the self-grasping ignorance, holding onto the person and phenomena as true existent, 3) Only antidote to self-grasping is the realization of emptiness, particularly, the special insight focusing on emptiness.
However, to develop special insight focusing on emptiness, one must first actualize calm abiding. To do so, one has to rely on both physical and mental isolation.
One must enter into and undertake the practice of calm abiding with enthusiasm and delight, wishing to rely on physical and mental isolation to actualize calm abiding. [Such an enthusiasm] comes from seeing the reason why calm abiding is essential.
The main reason for actualizing calm abiding is to actualize special insight focusing on emptiness with which, one [would then be able to] destroy one's self-grasping, the root of all problems. Hence, possessing calm abiding by itself is insufficient.
Even if one has calm abiding, having developed a clear and stable concentration, but if one lacks the special insight focusing on emptiness, then one's concentration alone would not enable one to overcome one's self-grasping, the root of all problems.
[Why special insight is indispensable:] Calm abiding itself is not a realization or a quality that is unique to the Buddhist path. It is a realization that can also be achieved by the followers of other spiritual traditions. Hence, on the basis of achieving calm abiding, there are people who attain higher rebirths in cyclic existence, being born in the form and formless realms.
Even if they are born in the highest realm in cyclic existence, the peak of existence, they nevertheless still possess self-grasping and are unable to abandon their afflictions, particularly their ignorance. This is all due to not having the wisdom of special insight focusing on emptiness.
It is definitely possible to realize emptiness prior to actualizing calm abiding. However, the realizations of emptiness that occur prior to the achievement of calm abiding are called the minds arisen from reflection. Such realizations are not wisdom arisen from meditation.
For it to be a mind realizing emptiness that is arisen from meditation, one must first possess calm abiding. It is only the mind realizing emptiness that is arisen from meditation that acts as an antidote to self-grasping.
One is either attached to sentient beings or objects like wealth, power, reputation, respect and so forth. The attachment itself then stops one from delighting in distancing oneself from a busy life, it is that which prevents one from being able to depend on physical and mental isolation. Due to it, one's mind becomes so busy with so many kinds of disturbing discursive thoughts
Hence, the root text explains next about the various faults of attachment. Firstly, the faults of attachment to sentient beings:

2' The methods for developing the antidotes [8.5 – 8.21]

a' Inner: Abandoning attachment to sentient beings [8.5 – 8.16]

1" The disadvantages of attachment [from the perspective of subject] [8.5 – 8.7]

a" Not encountering what one wants [8.5]

<p>8.5 a Because of the attachment one impermanent being b Has for impermanent beings, c He will not see his beloved ones d For thousands of lives.</p>
[The explanation of] 8.5 ab is very helpful if one has very strong attachment for one's partner, friends, relatives and so forth.
Taking oneself as an example, one is impermanent, changing momentarily. In fact, one is moving closer to death in each and every moment. Eventually, one would have to die. The sentient beings [one is attached to] are the same, they are also disintegrating momentarily, changing from moment to moment. They will not be there forever. Eventually, they will also die.

The sentient beings one is attached to are no different from one, they are all the same in being impermanent, moving closer to death in each moment. Eventually, they will definitely die. Hence, the [conclusion] here is that, what would be the point?
One can also apply [such a reflection] to deal with anger one may have for a person: [Since oneself and one's object of anger] are all going to die eventually, then what would be the point of being so angry?
In fact, one may think about how everyone is impermanent, beginning with oneself, those whom one is either attached to or one is competing with, whom one [despises] and so forth. Whomever they may be, since everyone is impermanent and will all die, then what is the point of being so emotionally involved, upset, angry, attached, jealous, [contemptuous], competitive?
In one's daily life, one [easily] develops all such negative emotions: anger, attachment, jealousy, feeling egoistic, wishing to compete with others negatively and so forth.
When such emotions arise, one should experiment for oneself to see, if one brings to mind strongly one's own and others' impermanence and thinks about it actively, whether one's negative emotions would subside and become weaker or not.
Such a reflection could be very helpful at times, when there is a disagreement, where people are upset with one another. Merely thinking about how oneself, others and the situation itself are all impermanent, helps very much to allow one's mind to be more calm, relaxed and so forth.
8.5 cd: One gets very emotionally involved with people, loved ones and one's object of attachment. One invests so much effort [towards that] with such intense attachment and desire. Even though it is so, however, would one then [continue] to meet that person for thousands of lifetimes to come?: No.
The ironic thing is that, it is said that due to being attached to the person or object, [such a mind of attachment is that which] causes one to be separated from that person or object for thousands of lifetimes:
<i>The result of attachment and desire for the pleasant is that which leads to being separated from that which is pleasant:</i> 8.5 c <i>He will not see his beloved ones</i> d <i>For thousands of lives.</i>

b" Lack of discrimination [due to anger] with respect to [not meeting with desired] sensory objects [8.6(ab)]

<i>8.6 a Not seeing them I will not be happy.</i> <i>b Also my mind will not be set in equipoise;</i>
When one [is unable] to see those persons or objects one [is attached to], one becomes unhappy. The result is obvious that, one's mind will not be in equipoise. This is how attachment [harms one]. When this happens, one's mind becomes disturbed and one is unable to settle down. This of course is a great obstacle to developing a single-pointed concentration.

c" Not being content despite that one has obtained [what one sought] [8.6(cd)]

<i>8.6 c Even if I see them there will be no satisfaction,</i> <i>d Whereby, as before, I will be tormented by craving.</i>
Even if one sees one's object of attachment, this will not be any different from one's past experiences in that, one's emotional involvement could become even stronger with more attachment and craving. This brings about even more painful [feelings].

d" It acts to hinder liberation [8.7]

<i>8.7 a Through being attached to sentient beings,</i> <i>b I will be completely obscured from the perfect reality.</i> <i>c My mind of disillusion will also be destroyed.</i> <i>d In the end I will be tormented by sorrow.</i>
Through being to attached to sentient beings, one will be completely obscured from the perfect reality. One's attachment for a person would completely obscure one's mind from seeing the actual reality of that person, its ultimate nature.
When attachment is manifest for a person, due to it, the manner one views the person is completely [obscured] by one's attachment. Even though one has different minds operating simultaneously focusing on the person, but due to being influenced by attachment, whatever thoughts one may have towards the person would be [obscured] by one's attachment.
<i>Hence, whatever one sees of the person is whatever attachment is [directing] one to see. One would not see the reality.</i>
Through reflection, one may have had some experiences of the suffering nature of samsara. One may even come to a fairly well-formed experience/ feeling of how [repulsive] samsara is, that it is in the nature of suffering and so forth.
One actually sees suffering as it is. Even if one is able to produce some disenchantment for cyclic existence, but when attachment arises, this will overwhelm whatever disenchantment one may have had [before].
Eventually, such a disenchantment, the feeling of disillusionment with cyclic existence may even be destroyed, dissipate and fade away. What is left is one's [usual] attachment [with cyclic existence]. In fact, one may come to point in time where one does not develop even any disenchantment with cyclic existence at all.

In the end, one will be tormented by sorrow. Even though one may live one's life with attachment, but eventually one will die. At that time, due to one's strong attachment, being so familiar with it, one ends one's life with very strong attachment and desire. This would then bring about a lot of unhappiness and sorrow.

e" It causes one to waste the leisures and endowments [8.8(ab)]

**8.8 a By only thinking of them,
b This life will pass without any meaning.**

By only thinking of whomever one is attached to, there is no opportunity/ mental space [in one's mind] to make one's life meaningful by engaging in virtuous activities that will really be helpful in the long run.

This is how one's life is completely made meaningless [by being engrossed in attachment] day after day.

[Verses 8.5 to 8.8 ab] explain about the loss one makes through following attachment. One has to think for oneself and understand the faults as they are. It is only through [such analysis] would one slowly come to work with one's attachment.

2" Abandoning them by knowing the disadvantages [from the perspective of object] [8.8(cd) – 8.16]

a" Reflecting on the disadvantages [8.8(cd) – 8.14]

(1) An extensive explanation [8.8(cd) – 8.13]

(a) It destroys what could otherwise be very meaningful and leads one to the lower realms [8.8(cd) – 8.9]

**8.8 c Friends and relatives lacking permanence
d Will even destroy the everlasting Dharma.
8.9 a If I behave in the same way as those equal in fortune to the childish
b I will certainly proceed to lower realms.
c If I am led there to those unequal in fortune,
d What is the use of entrusting myself to the childish?**

It is due to one's attachment to persons and objects, that one is completely unable to achieve and actualize the method/ cause for any permanent lasting happiness, to free oneself from suffering.

'Childish' can mean different things: It can refer to the childish as opposed to the elderly. It can refer to those who have not realized emptiness directly. It can also refer to the foolish as compared to the wise.

The wise are those who are skilled, expert and knowledgeable with regards to what to discard and adopt. Hence, the childish here means those who are not skilled, expert and knowledgeable as to what to discard and adopt.

**It is quoted in the Lam Rim Chen Mo that, for the wise, even the heavy negativities become light,
Whereas for the foolish, even the light negativities become heavy.**

For a wise person who is skilled in what to adopt and discard, he is able to [render even] his heavy negativities to become very light. This is because, he is knowledgeable in purifying his negativities and obscuration through the practice of applying the *Four Powers*. Due to that, he is able to weaken his powerful negativities.

Since the childish/ foolish is not skilled/ knowledgeable in purify his negativities, not knowing what to adopt and discard, even though his negativities may start off as light, but due to not knowing how to purify them, these negativities multiply through time and become very heavy.

If one's actions of body, speech and mind are in accord with such foolish persons, 8.9 a *If I behave in the same way as those equal in fortune to the childish*, then one will certainly proceed to the lower realms.

8.9 c *If I am led there to those unequal in fortune*: By associating with the childish, they will only cause one's actions of body, speech and mind to not be equal to the fortunes of the superiors.

(b) Do not rely on the company of the child[ish and even if one does so it is problematic] [8.10 – 8.11]

**8.10 a One moment they are friends
b And in a while they become enemies.
c Since they become angry even at the sources of joy,
d It is difficult to please ordinary people.**

**8.11 a They are angry when something of benefit is said
b And they also turn me away from benefit.
c If I do not listen to what they say,
d Becoming angry, they will proceed to lower realms.**

When one associates with the childish, those who are not knowledgeable/ skilled in what to adopt and discard, if one speaks in agreement with them, they remain as friends. But all it takes is saying something disagreeable to them, then they [immediately can] become enemies.

When the childish are given advice, even if one does so with sincere good intentions to benefit them, by offering suggestions to discard harmful and adopt beneficial actions, [not only do they not accept], they may even become upset with one.

Even though one may have met the Dharma and obtained a perfect human rebirth, but when [the childish] see [one possessing] the same [endowments as them], they may even get jealous.

When one associates with the childish, there are times when they can get jealous, perhaps over one's wealth, good life, or even over one having met the Dharma and practicing it. Hence, <i>8.10 d It is difficult to please ordinary people.</i>
One may be trying to practice Dharma purely and sincerely, but in the process if one gets involved with childish people, those who are not knowledgeable as to what to adopt and discard, then they may cause obstructions to one's practice of virtue.
There are those who like to offer [mis-]advice, [by discouraging] one from Dharma practice, saying that it is a waste of time. When one fails to listen to them and continues with one's practice, they would then get upset with one: <i>8.11 d Becoming angry, they will proceed to lower realms.</i>

(c) One does not obtain any benefits from [the childish] but rather receives harm [8.12 – 8.13]

8.12 a They are envious of superiors, competitive with equals, b And proud towards inferiors. They are conceited when praised, c And if anything unpleasant is said they get angry; d When is any benefit obtained from the childish? .	8.13 a Through associating with the childish, b Non-virtue will certainly ensue, c Such as praising myself and belittling others d And discussing the joys of cyclic existence.
Verse 8.12 explains that, when one associates with ordinary childish people, it is normal that they are jealous or envious of others who are better off. They like to compete negatively with their peers. They are conceited and despise the inferior.	
They get very proud, egoistic and conceited when they are praised a little and are easily upset when even some small unpleasant words are said to them. Hence, what would the benefits be for one to associate with them?	
Verse 8.13 explains that, when one relies and associates with the childish as friends, then one's ordinary life would only involve non-virtue. This is because, living an ordinary life would most certainly involve talking about [oneself] and others, which will usually be about praising oneself and belittling others.	
[One also gather others] to discuss how to defeat a common enemy or help one's friend/ allies/ objects of attachment. One also discusses about how to improve one's business, increase one's power, wealth, repudiation and so forth.	
This is what will happen when a childish person relies on and associates with other childish persons.	

(2) Summary [8.14 (ab)]

8.14 a Others and I relying [upon each other] in this way b Will bring about nothing but ruin.
Since oneself is still childish, if one then associates/ makes friends with and relies on other childish persons, seeing them as one's refuge and support, then since everyone here is the same in not knowing what to adopt and discard, then the ensuing result will only be a messy life involving negativities, unhappiness and non-virtues.
If [one's and others'] lives are just [involved with] non-virtues, then of course the end result is just destruction.

b" The way to abandon them [8.14 (cd) – 8.16]

Hence, the way for oneself, a childish person, to lead one's life without attachment and away from other childish persons:		
8.14 c They will not enact my purpose d And I too will not enact their purpose.	8.15 a I should flee far away from childish people. b When they are encountered, I should please them joyfully. c I should behave well, merely ordinarily, d Without becoming greatly familiar.	8.16 a In the same way a bee takes honey from a flower, b I should take merely the purpose of Dharma c And remain unfamiliar d As though I have never seen all of them before.
If one is childish, then obviously one cannot fulfill the purposes of another childish person, whether it is the person's happiness of this or all of his future lives. Since other childish persons cannot really make one happy in this life, nor do anything helpful for one's future lives, then one really needs to think well and seriously about relying on physical isolation.		
When a childish person associates with another childish person, the only ensuing result is just non-virtue, nothing really beneficial comes out of it. They do not help one's practice of virtue, in fact, they are an obstruction.		
When such people gather, it is almost always having conversations about someone or something else. The conversations should ideally be about something meaningful and beneficial, like the Dharma and so forth. But such do not happen.		
Whereas if one depends on physical isolation and does not associate closely with ordinary childish persons, since there are less distractions, then naturally non-virtues will decrease. It is so much easier to live a meaningful life, putting one's body, speech and mind into beneficial virtue.		
In the <i>Songs of Milarepa</i> , which are the compilations of Jetsun Milarepa's spiritual songs, he said that: "Living in isolation in a cave, when I am sick, there is no one to ask me whether I am sick, When I die, there is no one to make a [commotion]. Hence, the wishes of this yogi is fulfilled."		

All such advice/ instructions are taken to heart and cherished by those who see the futility and problems of being attached to the happiness of this life and associating with childish persons. Such persons are those who really wish to develop a single-pointed concentration with the aim of cultivating the wisdom that enables them to achieve everlasting happiness.
8.15: Should one be living in physical isolation in a hermitage and so forth, if one encounters others, one should not just run away. Rather, one should be cordial, nice and respectful. However, one should not associate with them for too long. This is because, if one becomes greatly familiar, then there is the danger of becoming attached.
When one is in a hermitage, one is supposedly practicing Dharma. If someone were to appear, then one should not be upset nor be attached as well. Hence, one should [manage the situation] without becoming attached and so forth.
When one is living in and relying on physical isolation, be it in a hermitage or somewhere else, there would be times when one has to leave one's [place of isolation] and go to where others live, stock up on supplies to sustain one's body to continue with one's practice. One then needs to act like a bee:
When bees land on a flower, their only purpose is to [extract] the nectar from it. When they are done, they do not [loiter] around the flower but leave immediately. Likewise, if one has to leave one's place of isolation to stock up on supplies, one should just go there with the intention of sustaining one's body for practice.
One should just be mindful, do whatever needs to be done, leave [immediately] and return to [one's place of isolation].
For the meditators living in isolation, this is what they should be doing: going to town to acquire whatever are needed, but not becoming attached to the place, the situation nor the people they come in contact with. They then return quickly.
[Verses 8.5 to 8.16] is the section dealing with abandoning attachment to the inner objects of sentient beings.
[Verses 8.17 to 8.21] deal with attachment to external objects like material gains, praise and so forth.

[Summarizing this section:]

Due to one's attachment to people, one is unable to live alone. One must be [in the company of others] and be involved in the hustle and bustle of life. Hence, <i>to counteract such an attachment:</i>
1) One should firstly think and see for oneself the faults of [worldly] associations with people.
2) One should then see for oneself the benefits of relying on physical isolation.
All such advice and instructions for practices are absolutely essential and indispensable for those who mean it when they say they wish to practice pure Dharma. Particularly, if one really wishes to develop the focus of the practice of concentration, then these [instructions] are really indispensable. One really needs to live in the retreat of physical isolation. This is because:
[Benefits of physical isolation:]
1) When one is in retreat, due to the power of the environment being quiet without people around, one's discursive thoughts would naturally subside.
2) It is also easier to live a simple life in contentment.
3) One's practice of ethical discipline also becomes much purer.
4) When all such conditions gather, then this makes whatever meditational practices one is engaged in become real practices which will bear results.

Student 1: Why are sentient beings considered as inner objects whereas gain and honor are outer objects?

Khenrinpoche: Generally, if whatever object in question is conjoined with a consciousness, then it is labeled as an inner [object], if it is not conjoined with consciousness, then it is [labeled] as an outer object.

Student 2: How does one strike a balance between regarding each other as Dharma friends, hence [one needs to be] close, but at the same time, one also needs to keep a wise distance?

Khenrinpoche: We are not childish people, as we are all experts in knowing what to adopt and discard! So what is there to worry about?

Student 2: Then how about those who are very new to the center?

Khenrinpoche: If they are new, they can [consult] me!

Student 3: If one's spouse and parents are the childish ones, then how does one best behave?

Khenrinpoche: The advice here is given in the context of someone who wishes to reduce attachment, distractions and actualize concentration.

For those living a lay life, realistically speaking, literally being a householder with family and so forth, then abandoning attachment is difficult.

Nevertheless, what is important is that, one just has to bear with [the problems], with some sense of patience. As much as possible, to do so with love and compassion and to reduce attachment. Since all of us here have some understanding of Dharma, have studied about love, compassion and patience, then one just have to try to develop some sort of love, compassion and patience. It is said that, if one has a good heart even while in samsara, one can still derive some kind of peace.

As mentioned before, it is very beneficial for the mind to think about death and impermanence all the time. It does not matter whether one is practicing or not, if one thinks about death and impermanence, that this is how life is, that things can change for the worse, that one has to die, then this makes life a bit easier, with less mental [disturbances]. One gets less upset when the situation does not accord with one. As seen earlier, it is important to think about death and impermanence everyday.

Whatever problems or situations one may meet in life, whether it is positive or negative, it is good to keep in mind that things [and situations] are not static, that these will always change. Whether it is a positive or a negative situation, it is good to bear in one's mind death and impermanence.

This is especially so when one meets with challenges and difficulties in life. When one brings to mind about death and impermanence, how the situation will change without choice, this really makes it so much easier, so much more peaceful for one. One's mind becomes less uptight and more relaxed. This is for certain. Thinking about death and impermanence is not a difficult nor challenging concept at all.

Student 3: Since that is the case, would [actualizing] calm abiding for a lay person be more [difficult] then?

Khenrinpoche: Generally, to achieve calm abiding as a lay person is difficult. Of course, there are also exceptions as it all depends on the individual. If you are someone who is already living a simple contented life, with few distractions, has a great support of merit, good practice of purification of negativities and obscurations, then it is always possible.

One of the most essential and important condition/ cause for success in developing calm abiding is possessing very pure ethical discipline. If one has that, one would really be restraining one's body and speech from all sorts of distractions, attachments, activities and so forth. Due to that, then it would be easier to work with one's mind. This is because, one would already have distanced oneself away from many non-virtues and discursive thoughts. Hence, this really makes it much easier to work with one's mind.

[Preparation for cultivating flawless concentration:]

<p>Lord Atisha, in his <i>Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment</i>, said that: <i>“If you do not rely on the prerequisites for developing calm abiding, Then if even you work very hard for thousands of years, you will not be able to develop it.”</i></p>
<p>In the context of this chapter for developing single-pointed concentration, this is essentially referring to cultivating meditative stabilization/ calm abiding. To be successful in this, one must rely on the prerequisites to gather all the favorable conditions before one stands any chance of actualizing calm abiding.</p>
<p>This topic of cultivating calm abiding is something that has already been explained in the <i>Lam Rim, the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment</i>:</p>
<p>A) Relying on the 6 favorable prerequisites/ preconditions for the cultivation of calm abiding:</p>
<p>1) Dwelling on an appropriate area. 2) Having little desire. 3) Being content. 4) Completely giving up many activities. 5) Pure ethical discipline. 6) Completely getting rid of thoughts of desire.</p>
<p>All such prerequisites are absolutely necessary, as when one lacks such [vital conditions], one does not stand a chance.</p>
<p>B) Above these, one must have 1) faith in [the attainment of concentration], 2) a strong yearning to actualize it and 3) skilled in the [complete working] methods, [the full particular] meditation techniques for generating calm abiding in one’s mind.</p>
<p>When all such factors [A) & B)] gather, together with putting in C) joyous perseverance, it is said that it will be possible to achieve calm abiding within 6 months.</p>
<p>Hence, the entire purpose of relying of physical isolation is to train one’s mind, here, to meditate on and actualize calm abiding. But before one actually [embarks on such an endeavor], one must know how to achieve it. Hence, the [actual] practice [and its prerequisites] have to be preceded by learning. One needs to be sure about the methods.</p>
<p>Lama Tsongkhapa, said in his <i>Lam Rim</i> teachings, that the entire purpose of learning the Dharma is to put it into practice. Whatever understanding one gains from one’s learning, one practices it in accordance with one’s own capacity.</p>

[Restating the faults of attachment, the unfavorable condition for cultivating calm abiding:]

<p>There are many obstacles/ unfavorable conditions [that hinder] the development of calm abiding. One of which is attachment, with which one’s life becomes busy and so forth.</p>
<p>There are different [objects] that one can get attached to, one of which are sentient beings. Since [such attachments] are obstacles for the cultivation of calm abiding, then there is the explanation on the faults of attachment and how to [manage] it.</p>
<p>[The faults of attachment:] As explained before, due to attachment to sentient beings, one essentially 1) destroys whatever chances one may have of achieving liberation for oneself. Due to it, one is 2) unable to practice the holy Dharma.</p>
<p>3) When one associates with other [childish] people, not only is there no benefit, there is only harm, as people hurt and destroy one another. Hence, the advice is that, one should rely on physical isolation away from the objects of attachment.</p>
<p>In the course of [living in isolation], if one has to leave one’s place of practice for valid reasons like procuring the necessities of life and so forth, if one were to come into contact with people, then there are also advice for that.</p>
<p>Essentially, one should not become overly familiar and attached to those one comes into contact with. One should also not become upset merely because someone [were to appear] at one’s place of isolation.</p>

b' Outer: Abandoning attachment to gain and honor [8.17 – 8.21]

1" The subject's faults [8.17 – 8.19(ab)]

a" The disadvantages of pride [8.17]

<p style="text-align: center;">8.17 a “I have many possessions as well as honor, b And many people like me,” c Nurturing conceit in this way d I shall be made terrified after death.</p>
<p>If one becomes attached to material wealth, possessions, power, [reputation], one’s supporters, benefactors, students and so forth, above that, being discontented, wanting more and more of these, then such mindsets are causes for lower rebirths.</p>
<p>It is stated clearly in the vinaya, the code of discipline for the ordained, that if ordained people merely accept offerings from the faithful, and yet still remain lazy, then all such offerings that they use for enjoyments become a [karmic] debt that has to be repaid in the future.</p>
<p>If one were to live a life being conceited with all such enjoyments, praise, respect and so forth with the mind of attachment, one will only go to the lower realms in the next life.</p>

b" The disadvantages of attachment [8.18 – 8.19(ab)]

<p>8.18 a So, thoroughly confused mind, b By the combination of whatever attachments c To this and that, multiplying into thousands, d Suffering will ensue and arise.</p>	<p>8.19 a Hence, the wise should not be attached; b Fear is produced from attachment.</p>
<p>8.18 a <i>So, thoroughly confused mind</i>: This does not refer to someone else but oneself. Due to not knowing about [or observing] karma, one gets involved with attachment, being attached to all sorts of objects and not doing anything about it.</p>	
<p>One merely allows [such attachments] to grow in strength and multiply. The end result will only be suffering.</p>	
<p>8.19 a <i>Hence, the wise</i>: Refers to those who are knowledgeable about what to discard. They do not follow nor give in to attachment because of the fear of going to the lower realms.</p>	

2" The object's faults [8.19(cd) – 8.21]

a" Objects of desire are not reliable [8.19(cd) – 8.20]

<p>8.19 c Firmly understand well d That it is the nature of these things to be discarded!</p>	<p>8.20 a Although I may have many possessions, b Be famous and well spoken of, c I do not know where d The collection of possessions and renown will go.</p>
<p>Whether it is about possessions or fame/ reputation, these [objects] are not reliable and will not last forever. This is because, one will eventually die. At that time, one cannot bring these objects along and so they are of no benefit to one. One must be convinced that this is the case.</p>	
<p>No matter how many loved ones, entourage, supporters or wealth one may have had, at the time of death, all such [objects] would have to be left behind. One has to make the onward journey alone.</p>	
<p>This is essentially the same [in meaning] with the outline in the death and impermanence section of the <i>Lam Rim</i>, where it says, “<i>At the time of death, nothing is of any benefit to one except the Dharma.</i>”</p>	
<p>This outline consists of three points: <i>At the time of death, a) one’s wealth and possessions are of no benefit, b) one’s friends and loved ones are of no benefit, c) even one’s body is of no benefit to one.</i></p>	
<p>Hence, the only thing that will benefit one at the time of death is one’s practice of virtue/ Dharma one has done. Since that is the case, then the conclusion at the end of such a reflection will be that, <i>one will practice only the [pure] Dharma.</i></p>	
<p>If one actually thinks about and puts into practice such instructions and advice, even if it is merely a little, it will be helpful in at least reducing one’s attachment and desire for wealth, possessions, power and so forth.</p>	

b" There is neither benefit nor harm in [receiving] praise and [criticism] [8.21]

<p>Since praise and criticism do not really benefit nor harm one [respectively], then there is no need to be so overly distracted/ excited when receiving praises, there is also no need to be so upset and depressed when one is criticized:</p>	
<p>8.21 a If there is someone who derides me, b What is there for me to be happy about in being praised? c And if there is another who praises me, d What is there for me to be unhappy about in being derided?</p>	
<p>Essentially, what is the point of being so excited about and attached to [when one is] praised? This is because, praise and criticism are completely opposites as one harms the other. Hence, that which is the enemy to praise and harms it, is criticism.</p>	
<p>Even if there are those who praise one, there will always be others who will be criticizing one as well.</p>	
<p>Likewise, 8.21 cd teaches that, there is also no need to be so affected by criticisms. Even though others may criticize one, but there will also be others who will like and praise one.</p>	
<p>This is an advice for how to [think], not becoming upset when one is criticized and also not becoming attached when praised.</p>	

3' The disadvantages of bustle [8.22 – 8.24]

a' As it is difficult to keep company with [the childish], do not be attached to their preoccupations and diversions [lit. bustle] [8.22 – 8.23]

<p>8.22 a If even the Victor is unable to please b The beings of various inclinations, c Then what need to mention about a negative person such as I? d Therefore, I should give up worldly thought.</p>	<p>8.23 a They deride sentient beings who have no possessions b And say bad things about those who do; c How will they who are by nature difficult to get along with d Produce happiness?</p>
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Worldly childish beings are full of different [characters, personalities and] inclinations. Their wishes are so diverse.
Even the fully Enlightened One, who is free of all the faults and possesses all the qualities, cannot please everyone. If that is the case, then there is no need to mention about oneself, an inferior ordinary being, who does not know the thoughts and wishes of sentient beings. How would one be able to make everyone happy?
There is no need to mention all sentient beings, one does not even know the thoughts of those one has been associating with closely for a long time, one's close friends. Since that is the case, one would not know the wishes of all sentient beings.
Since one does not know the wishes of all sentient beings, then there is no way that one can make everyone happy.
Hence, the conclusion is that, there is no need for one to associate with others motivated by the eight worldly concerns. If such are one's motivation, then there is no need to go around associating with others.
Rather, the best [mode of behavior] in this context is to rely on physical isolation.
When one, a worldly being overwhelmed and possessed by the eight worldly concerns, sees others who are poor or failing in life, one would [belittle] them by saying: "They were misers in the past, hence they become what they are now."
When one sees others who are wealthier, not bearing it out of jealousy as one lacks what they have, one then says: "Even though they may be rich, but their wealth must have been acquired unethically and they are bad people."
One essentially says bad things about others whether they possess wealth or not.
This is what happens when people with eight worldly concerns associate with others with eight worldly concerns. Hence, [deep down], how can one really be happy associating with them?

b' Stating the proof for that [8.24]

<p>8.24 a It has been said by the tathagatas, b "Never befriend the childish," c Because without their welfare, d These childish ones will not be happy.</p>
People who have the eight worldly concerns, the childish who merely focus on their own happiness alone without concerns with what happens to others, are extremely difficult to get along with. There is also no way to make them happy.

4' The benefits of relying on [solitude] [8.25 – 8.37]

a' Companions [8.25]

If one were to act on the above instructions and [wishes to] go into isolation, then:
<p>8.25 a When shall I come to dwell with these delights b Of deer, birds, and trees in the forests c That say nothing unpleasant d When associated with?</p>
This is the description of the type of company that one will keep when one lives in physical isolation: deers, birds who 'sings' and beautiful trees and flowers. No matter how much time one spends in their presence, they will never say unpleasant things, criticize and give one problems. Hence, such company is said to be delightful.
This is what can happen if one takes such a route, relying on physical isolation. The company that one keeps are beautiful trees, flowers, wildlife like birds and so forth. No matter how long one associates with them, they will never cause any problems. One's mind will naturally be happy as there is nothing to be unhappy about.
In terms of the company one keeps, this is what one can envisage, look forward to and experience, when one lives in physical isolation. This makes one yearns for it. One can then develop aspirations and make prayers for it to come to be one day.
With such company that does not disturb, one's non-virtues will naturally decrease while virtues will naturally increase.
Bearing such an advantage in mind of what one would find living in isolation, one would then really look forward to it, aspire and pray to be able to live such a life.
One can compare with one's experiences in associating with worldly people. Whomever one associates with, sooner or later, they would become the cause of problems, for one to be attached, get upset, be distracted and so forth.
Comparing this to another way of life in isolation, where one does not need to associate with such people, one sees the difference this makes to one's mind. [The former] brings about attachment, desire and anger, whereas the [latter] leads to the lessening of such thoughts. By seeing the advantages of living in physical isolation, one then aspires to it.
By seeing its advantages, this helps to inspire one to develop the wish to be able [live such a life] one day.

b' Place [8.26 – 8.27]

<p>8.26 a I shall dwell in caves, b In empty shrines or at the feet of trees. c When shall I not look back d And be without attachment?</p>	<p>8.27 a When shall I come to dwell b In places not held to as “mine,” c Which are by nature spacious d And where I may behave freely without attachment?</p>
<p>8.26 cd: When shall I not look back and be without attachment?: When would one be able to give up an ordinary way of living life under the influence of desire and attachment, and depend on physical isolation by living in the mountain hermitages, caves, empty shrines or dwelling at the feet of trees?</p>	
<p>Would it not be nice where one does so in a place where one does not need to regard it as ‘mine’, but merely dwelling there without the idea of ownership, as well as in places that are by nature environmentally very clean, with fresh air, [a pristine] view with beautiful trees and rivers or streams without anyone obstructing one?</p>	
<p>[It would be marvelous if one could live in such a place.] One should then make aspirational prayers to be able to do so.</p>	
<p>Even though one may come to live in such a place without having to pay for it, but when one starts to regard it as [belonging to ‘me’], then this would defeat the purpose. But since one did not buy it, then it would be less likely to think of it as ‘mine’.</p>	
<p>If one is really serious about one’s practice and is committed to actualizing calm abiding, then this is the kind of environment that one needs to be living in. Hence, one needs to make aspirational prayers to have such conditions.</p>	
<p>However, to really be able to actually [live in isolation] is not easy. But if one thinks about it often, one will slowly develop a desire for it. It is only then that one would act upon it. Otherwise [it would not happen].</p>	
<p>There are many of such places available, but of course it is another matter whether one wishes to go or not. Even though they are available, accessible and free, but still one does not wish to go. The question one has to ask oneself is why is this so?</p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: Why are we still stuck here? Someone mentioned to me before, he says he wants to make money first. I asked him why, he says that when he has lots of money then he will go into retreat! His goal is to [first] make money, then go into retreat. I told him this: “When you [have made enough] money, you won’t want to go into retreat!”</p>	
<p>This is very true, when you make [more] money, it is almost impossible to go into retreat. Many people have this idea: “I want to save money, when I have enough money, then I can go into retreat.” When you have money, you will never make it.</p>	
<p>Anyway, he was one of the member here, he has since passed away. This was what he had told me in the past.</p>	

c' A point on livelihood [8.28]

<p>8.28 a When shall I come to live without fear b Having slight things such as a begging bowl, c Wearing clothes not wanted by all d And not even hiding this body?</p>
<p>For example, when one lives in physical isolation, one does not consume food out of some precious containers. If it is a begging bowl, it should not be an expansive one, but one that is made out of simple clay.</p>
<p>c Wearing clothes not wanted by all: One would not be wearing designer clothing in a retreat, but clothes that are unwanted by others, tattered and made by attaching different used garments together.</p>
<p>Not only would one not use things that are expansive, but one would also keep the number of articles to the minimum.</p>
<p>If one lives such a simple life, there is really no need to worry or fear about thieves and robbers as there is really nothing that they can take away from. One’s begging bowl is of no value, one’s tattered clothes are old and dirty. Since they would have no interest in [robbing one], then there is really no worries about them.</p>
<p>If one lives in isolation in a simple contented life, having only a few articles to sustain it, having enough to eat and without many possessions, then there is no cause nor reasons to be fearful.</p>
<p>One does not own anything or merely a few simple things. One is ready to go anywhere unafraid without anyone interested to rob one as one has no possessions. It is the same as the beggars, who move around without any fears as they have nothing.</p>
<p>As for the rich, wherever they go they have many possessions with them, so when they have to travel alone they get very worried and fearful: “Would I lose this and that or would I be robbed?”</p>

d' A point on discernment [8.29 – 8.32]

1" Discerning the antidotes to being attached to body [8.29 – 8.30]

<p>8.29 a Having gone to the charnel grounds, b When shall I deduce c That this body of mine and the skeletons of others d Bear the property of disintegration?</p>	<p>8.30 a This very body of mine will also become so. b Because of its odor, not even the foxes c Will come close to this body of mine; d There will come a time when such will happen.</p>
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Verse 8.29 is a reflection on the impermanent nature of one's body: If one goes to the cemetery and observe the remains laid out there, there is actually no real difference between these and one's body. The only difference is that one has not died yet.
What one sees in the coffin in the cemetery is essentially what one's body will become in the future, the same thing will definitely happen to one. If one understands the impermanent nature of one's body, then it will be useful to reduce whatever clinging or attachment one may have for one's body.
Verse 8.30 is a reflection on the unclean nature of one's body, how it is by nature filthy: When one dies, [one's body] becomes a corpse. If one leaves it alone, it will start to rot, smell and be infested with maggots. Eventually, it will be so disgusting and smelly that, even the wild animals that usually feed on flesh will not be interested.
The only reason one's body has not yet started to rot and smell is that one's consciousness is still inhabiting it. Eventually, when [one's consciousness] leaves, then the body that one leaves behind will rot and smell as described.
Due to the impermanent and unclean nature of one's body, therefore it is appropriate not to be attached and cling to it.

2" Discerning the antidotes to being attached to those dear to oneself [8.31 – 8.33]

a" Attachment to those dear to oneself is inappropriate [8.31]

<p>8.31 a Although this body arose as a unit, b The bones and flesh with which it was born c Will break up and separate. d What need is there to mention other friends?</p>
When one took conception in one's mother's womb, one came into this life with such a body. Gradually, [one develops] flesh, bones and so forth. Such [physical aspects of one's body] accompanied one from the beginning of this life.
However, one will eventually have to part with one's body. If one has to depart from this very body of flesh and bones that one was born with, what need is there to mention having to be separated from one's friends, relatives when one dies?
That which is closest to one in this life is one's body, having inherited it after coming into this life. One is so close to it day in and day out. If one has to part with it at the time of death, then of course there is no need to mention that one will have to part with one's friends, relatives, loved ones and so forth.
Hence, the conclusion is that there is really no point nor need to be attached and cling on to them.
All such [teachings] are merely stating the facts of observing reality. These are not ideas that were made up by someone. Although it is so, one still needs to be aware of [the truth of the situation], thinks about and accepts it.

b" The reasons for that [8.32]

<p>8.32 a At birth I was born alone, b And at death too I shall die alone; c If the suffering doom cannot be taken on by others, d Of what use are hindering friends?</p>
When one is born into any life, one is always born alone. When one dies, one also has to make the journey on alone again. When one is born, there is the suffering of birth, which is experienced only by oneself [alone], nobody else can experience that for one. When one dies, one will also suffer, which will again be experienced none other by oneself alone.
Since [such a suffering experience is already present], but above that, if one adds on all the suffering that one will experience due to engaging in and accumulate non-virtues for the sake of one's friends and loved ones motivated by attachment, then the ensuing results will only be experienced also by oneself alone as well.
It is not as though one's friends and loved ones will experience such suffering results for one. If that is the case, then again what would be the use of [being attached to] such friends, relatives and loved ones?
Through reflecting on these points, one attempts to abandon the attachment for them.

c" Thinking of oneself as a guest who spends one night in each place [8.33]

<p>8.33 a In the same way as those who have embarked on the road b Own a place of stay, c Likewise those who have embarked on the path of existence d Own an abode of birth.</p>
If one is hiking and nightfall comes, one would have find a place like a guest house to rest. [Such a place of rest] is just for the night. One does not stay on in it the next morning but would have to leave it and continue with one's journey.
Likewise, this life and body is very much like the guest house. Due to karma and afflictions, one has obtained this rebirth and body. Eventually, when one has to move on to the next life, this body would have to be left behind.

When one stays at the guest house, one would also meet with [other guests]. Likewise, the people one meets in this life is like the [guests] one meets at the guest house. At sunrise, everyone would have to go their own ways.
Those who were one's friends, loved ones and relatives in this life are like the travelers one meets with while hiking. One meets them only for a short period. Come sunrise, everybody goes their own ways.
It is not as if one can bring along one's parents, spouse and so forth, die together and then proceed on together to the next life, all the way up to enlightenment. One does not go to the next life together with them, nor together to enlightenment.

e' A point on non-distraction [8.34 – 8.37]

1" Wise one's reliance upon [solitude] is appropriate [8.34]

<p>8.34 a Until the time comes for it b To be supported by four pall-bearers, from that, c While the world is completely stricken, d Till then I shall retire to the forest.</p>

Once one is born, it is certain that one would have to die, [one has no choice in this]. When people die, their friends and relatives would gather around, wail, cry and make a lot of noise.

By thinking that this is what will usually happen, then is it not better to just live alone in solitude?
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2" The benefits of relying upon [solitude] [8.35 – 8.37]

a" There is none of the torment of mourning and so forth [8.35]

<p>8.35 a Befriending no one and begrudging no one, b This body will dwell alone in solitude. c If I am already counted as dead even before, d Even when I die there will be no mourners.</p>
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This is just like what <i>Jetsun Milarepa</i> has said: “When I was in solitude, even when I am sick, there is no one to ask about my welfare; when I die, there will be no mourners around me. Hence, the wish of this yogi is now fulfilled.”

What this is saying is that, if one can live in isolation and die without any disturbances from others crying over one, [without having to worry about others], then this would be good.
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Otherwise, one can see what happens when people die. Due to not being able to let go, there are so much worries with the attachment to money, friends, relatives and so forth. Others cry and worry around them. [It is very natural that the mind of the dying person] will be disturbed. This therefore does not make for a good death.

[Summarizing advice:]

What has been taught so far in this chapter is not difficult to understand, not intellectually challenging at all to think and reflect on. It is very obvious as one knows these.

Hence, what one needs to do is merely to reflect on it to see the truth of such points for oneself.

One already has all such life experiences: All the problems that one creates for oneself when one lives a busy life, all the ensuing problems one experiences on a daily basis when one has attachment to objects and persons.
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One should think how nice it would be, even by simply generating the mere wish to be able to live in isolation.

Even if one cannot actually [embark on such an endeavor] now, but such points are helpful to enable one to live a simple life where one is contented. When one lives a simple contented life, even though one may not be in isolation, but one's life will be peaceful and happy.

When one reflects on these points, one can see for oneself whether this is the case or not, that such reflections will help to reduce one's attachment, anger, ego, jealousy and so forth.
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As mentioned in previous lessons, the recognition/ idea of impermanence is very important in one's daily life.
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[Continuing with verse 8.35:]

If one relies on physical isolation living in solitude, one will be physically distant from objects of attachment or aversion/ those whom one may be resentful. One would then not have much of a connection with such persons, including loved ones.

Hence, in their [perspectives], they would have already discounted one, [viewing] one almost like a dead person. Hence, when one were to die alone while in physical isolation, there would not be anyone crying and making noise around one.

b" The virtuous side of one's life does not deteriorate but rather flourishes [8.36]

**8.36 a There will be no one around
b To harm me with their mourning,
c Thus there will be no one to distract me
d From my recollections of the Buddha and the like**

If one is able to live in solitude and die alone without anyone around, there will not be anyone around crying and making noise. [If there were, this] may disturb one's mind. At the time of death, the loved ones and relatives of the dying person loved would usually become sad, wail, cry and make a lot of noise. This would disturb the dying person.

But if one were to live and then die alone, one would not be subjected to such harms. There will be no one to distract one from remembering the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha at the time of death and whatever practices one would be doing then.

Hence, it does make a difference [to one's future life,] if one is able to die alone in a peaceful manner without any disturbances from anyone. When one dies thinking of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and whatever practices, this will make a difference to the type of rebirth one will obtain in one's next life.

Living a modern busy life is already an obstacle to the practice of Dharma. It would be really difficult to do any real Dharma practice. If one then dies in the midst of loved ones, objects of attachment, relatives or servants and so forth, with them surrounding one sadly and making noise, this will only harm one as they may disturb one's practice and state of mind.

On the other hand, if one lives in the solitude of physical isolation, at the time of death, there will be no one around one to disturb, make noise, cry and so forth. One will be able to focus on the Three Jewels, put one's mind on whatever practices one was supposed to be doing anyway.

Therefore, living in solitude helps one very much to be able to practice in general, without mentioning about [being able to practice] at the time of death.

Hence, as much as possible in one's daily life, if one has little desire, easily contented and be able to abide in ethical discipline, then this will make it easier to practice the Dharma, this will especially help one to prepare oneself properly at the time of death. [One will then have a good death.]

[From the *Sets of Recollections*,] there are the *Six Recollections*: Recollecting the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, Generosity, Virtue and Deity. Sometimes, the last recollection is called recollecting the Guru and Deity.

With respect to the virtues that are [accumulated by] the body, speech and mind, the virtuous practice that is [accumulated by] the mind is the most important. With regards to the Three Jewels, one should always recollect the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha at all times. This means to possess a mind of clear faith towards them and verbally praise them and so on.

The recollection of ethical discipline/ virtue here means abandoning/ discarding the class of discordant factors/ [non-virtues]. The recollection of generosity here means to bring to mind the actions one should engage in and cultivate them.

The recollect of the Three Jewels is not something that is only done for a short period, some portions of the day or for a few days. This literally means bringing the Three Jewels to mind all the time, giving them a place of prominence in one's mind.

This is very important. One of the precepts for taking refuge in the Three Jewels is to go for refuge to them three times in the day and three times at night. This is a tool/ way to help one remember and familiarize oneself with going for refuge in them. This builds up the habit such that, one's mind is constantly influenced by the Three Jewels.

One is always keeping the Three Jewels right [in one's heart,] having a place of prominence in one's mind such that, when one meets with difficulties in life such as getting sick or meeting with problems, especially at the time of death, due to the habituation of thinking about and recollecting them, one would not forget but will remember them at such critical times.

Even if one is overwhelmed by pain and suffering at the time of death, due to the habituation of recollecting the Three Jewels, [at such times,] this will definitely reduce whatever sense of suffering or worries one would have. This practice of going for refuge to the Three Jewels is extremely important for one. This is something that one must pay attention to.

Hence, one must be habituated to this idea. With such habituation, even at those times in one's life when the situation can be difficult, such as getting sick, suffering and especially at the time of death, one would be able to recollect them.

This is the whole purpose of going for refuge three times in the day and at night, to build up such a habit. When one goes for refuge, it is not merely an exercise of the mouth. It is something that is done from the core of one's being, from the depths of one's heart, on the basis of knowing who one's objects of refuge are, possessing this strong devotion to them.

In fact, refuge means essentially giving, entrusting and surrendering oneself completely to them. When one is able to do so at the time of death, then one will definitely obtain a good rebirth.

As mentioned in the Lam Rim, one of the benefits of going for refuge to the Three Jewels is that, one will not fall to the lower realms. However, one has to analyze [how this is so] in detail.

Perhaps this means that, if one's refuge is from the heart and not merely from the mouth, if one devotes and entrusts oneself completely to them, especially at the time of death, being able to die with such a faith, then one will experience such a benefit of not going to the lower realms.

Hence, this verse is saying that, if one is able to die in solitude and a peaceful environment, without anyone crying, making noise and ending up disturbing or irritating one, dying whilst thinking of the Three Jewels, then this will be most wonderful.

c" Therefore, [think:] "It is appropriate for me to rely [on solitude]" [8.37]

**8.37 a Therefore I shall dwell alone,
b Happy and contented due to insignificant difficulties,
c In very delightful forests,
d Pacifying all distractions.**

If one is able to live in the solitude of physical isolation in a beautiful place, then one's mind would naturally feel happy and relaxed.

In the teachings on calm abiding, there are many explanations on the kind of environment one should be living in to develop it. Such a place is where one can find food and water easily, the [grounds] do not promote sicknesses, those staying around one share the same ideals and are helpful, is not a busy, noisy place, where one does not hear any noise from beings or water.

Essentially, one should find a place with all such characteristics. It should also be a place where, over time, due to the [pure] energy of the place, one's mind naturally becomes pacified, subdued and calm, where one naturally finds it easy to put one's body, speech and mind into the practice of virtue.

[Verses 8.3 to 8.37] are teachings on abandoning the discordant factors of calm abiding [with respect to abandoning the bustle of the world]. [Verses 8.38 to 8.88] are teachings on abandoning erroneous conceptions, which are discordant factors/obstacles to the development of calm abiding. Hence, one has to abandon such thoughts:

b) Abandoning erroneous conceptions [8.38 – 8.88]

i) Cultivating weariness for desire [8.38 – 8.84]

l' Reflecting on how the effects of honing one's desire involves fear [8.38 – 8.39]

a' Instructions on exerting effort in virtue [8.38]

**8.38 a Having given up all other thoughts,
b With only one thought in me,
c I shall strive in order to set my mind in equipoise
d And in order to subdue it.**

a Having given up all other thoughts: The thoughts here refer to involvement and attachment to the happiness of this life, such as taking care of love ones, relatives, subduing and defeating enemies.

b With only one thought in me: This refers to having the only thought to engage in virtue and to subdue one's own mind.

c I shall strive in order to set my mind in equipoise: This refers to developing calm abiding.

d And in order to subdue it: This refers to subduing one's mind with [the wisdom of] special insight.

Essentially, one generates the thought to engage in the practice of developing calm abiding and special insight.

This verse teaches that, one should strive in subduing and pacifying one's afflictions through special insight that sees the ultimate nature of all phenomena. Such a special insight could only be developed on the basis of possessing calm abiding.

b' Reflecting in the disadvantages of desire [8.39]

**8.39 a Both in this world and the next
b Desires give rise to great misfortune,
c Establishing in this one killing, bondage, and flaying,
d And hells and the like in the next.**

[In the context of this section of abandoning] the discordant factors to calm abiding, besides living a busy life, the other discordant factors to calm abiding would be having such erroneous thoughts that are harmful and not beneficial.

Generally, this text on *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* is an antidote to erroneous thoughts. Particularly, chapter six [Relying on Patience] teaches antidotes to the erroneous thought of *hatred*. Chapter nine [The Perfection of Wisdom] teaches the antidotes to the erroneous thought of *ignorance*/ bewilderment holding onto truly existent persons and phenomena.

In this chapter, the erroneous thought that is taught is that of **attachment/** desire. The verses that will be taught [8.34 to 8.84] explain about the faults/ disadvantages of desire. One is either attached to sentient beings, or to objects [of the eight worldly concerns] of material gains, praise, reputation and so forth.

Whether it is following after attachment towards material gains, reputation, power, men or women, due to such attachment and desire, all sorts of problems of this life occur. People end up killing, fighting, physically harming others and so forth.

What follows in the next life would be the lower realms. One will be reborn the hells, as a hungry ghost or an animal.

The great *Kadampa masters* have said that:

One engages in actions motivated by desire, attachment happily, enthusiastically, voluntarily and accumulates karma due to that, but at the time of experiencing the results of such karma, one experiences them with tears.

2' Reflecting on the unclean nature of the body and so forth [8.40 – 8.70]

a' Reflecting on the disadvantages by considering what one finds in cemeteries [8.40 – 8.48]

1" There are no [results from] experiencing [the taste of desire] [8.40 – 8.42]

<p>8.40 a For their sake many requests b Are first made through male and female messengers. c Negativities and notoriety too d Are not shunned for their sake.</p>	<p>8.41 a You even engage in fearful deeds for them b And will even exhaust your wealth. c You greatly enjoy d Completely embracing them.</p>	<p>8.42 a If they are nothing other than skeletons, b Rather than being so desirous and completely obsessed c Towards that which neither is under your control nor belongs to you, d Why do you not go to the state beyond sorrow?</p>
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These are essentially teachings on the faults of attachment/ desire motivated by desire for a person, be it a man or a woman.

One engages all sorts of [behavior] voluntarily, enthusiastically and happily just to [possess] the person one desires. Yet, when it is time to experience the results of such actions, one suffers.

These are teachings on the antidotes to attachment for another person through [reflecting on] the objects of attachment, be it a man or a woman, as being a skeleton, which is essentially the truth.

This is because, what [one's body is inside], is essentially skeletons [consisting of] many bones held together in 360 different places. It is said that there are 360 joints that basically holds the skeletal frame together. There is no real body right there from its own side. Hence, what is there for one to be holding onto [with attachment]?

8.42 is asking why is one so engrossed in being completely caught up [in others'] skeletons. Why does one not free oneself from such sorrows?

The reason there is the instructions on abandoning attachment here is that, if one is unable to effectively [manage] desire and attachment, one would not be able to properly live in ethical discipline. To do so, one must be able to [manage] one's attachment to a reasonable level, without which, it would be difficult to possess any pure ethical discipline.

If one has pure ethical discipline, one would be able to settle one's mind down fairly easily when one attempts to achieve calm abiding. This is because, one's mind is nearly settled without the distractions that are fueled by attachment.

This makes it easier for one to engage in calm abiding, the purpose [of this chapter] here:

1) Without abandoning at least the gross desire/ attachment towards external objects and sentient beings, then it is not really possible to possess any pure ethical discipline.

2) Without pure ethical discipline, one would not be able to develop calm abiding.

3) Without calm abiding, one would not be able to develop special insight [focusing on emptiness].

4) Without special insight [focusing on emptiness], one would not be able to abandon the afflictions belonging to the level of the peak of existence of the formless realm.

2" In the end, [the body one is attached to] does not pass beyond the cemetery [8.43 – 8.44]

<p>8.43 a In the first place, making effort, you lifted her face and drew it [towards you]. b However she bashfully looked down. c Previously whether anyone looked or not, d Her face was covered with a veil.</p>	<p>8.44 a But now why do you run away b Upon directly beholding c This face of afflictions d As it is being removed by the vultures?</p>
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The tradition of unveiling the face of the bride still exists even nowadays. Her face is covered, [making the bridegroom very excited, who] cannot wait for the moment to [unveil] her face. Such is the strong attachment.

If that is the case at the time of marriage, then why is such [strong attachment absent] at the time of death?

The action of looking at the face is the same, be it at the time of marriage or at the time of death. However, when the wife is dead, the moment he sees her face, [the husband would] run away. The question then is: Why does one have aversion then?

Hence, the question [to ask oneself] is that, when the person is dead, why is one not attached but repulsed instead, even though the act of looking at the face is the same?

3" It is inappropriate to stingily guard one's own and others' bodies [8.45]

**8.45 a You completely guarded it
b Even when others cast their eyes upon it.
c Why, miser, do you not guard it
d While they are devouring it?**

It is the case that, when others were to look at one's own object of attachment, one would become unhappy. When others cast their eyes on [one's object of attachment], one becomes very protective over [him/ her].

However, why does one not protect the same body when that person is dead? If the body is left at the cemetery, there would be vultures and so forth, who would devour the same body [one was protective over]. Why does one not protect it then?

Such ways of thinking are just some points to help one counteract one's attachment/ desire.

4" The silliness of the wearing of ornaments [8.46]

5" The appropriateness of feeling extreme trepidation [8.47]

**8.46 a If, having seen this heap of flesh,
b The vultures and others eat it,
c Why do you make offerings of flower garlands,
sandalwood, and ornaments
d To the food of others?**

**8.47 a If you are frightened by the skeletons you see
b Even though they do not move,
c Why are you not frightened by that similar to a zombie
d Which is moved around by a few intentions?**

One can get frightened when one sees corpses or skeletons, feeling worried [of being harmed by them]. Actually, there is really nothing much to worry about as they would never talk or move [to harm one].

However, one would never be frightened with the living, especially one's object of attachment. When one examines them internally, they are essentially skeletons, which happened to be moving and talking due to possessing a consciousness within them. However, their lives are merely driven by the three poisons of anger, attachment and ignorance.

Not only is one unafraid of them, one even becomes attached to them. These are some points to help one reduce one's attachment/ desire, one just needs to think about them.

6" The silliness of being attached to the wearing of clothes [8.48]

**8.48 a You are attached to it even when it is covered.
b Why do you not desire it when it is uncovered?
c If you have no need for it,
d Why do you embrace it when it is covered?**

[Verses 40 to 48] are points to overcome attachment, specifically seeing/ viewing one's object of attachment as corpses.

b' Reflecting on aspects of those who are still alive [8.49 – 8.70]

1" Attachment [is seen to be] inappropriate once the lack of cleanliness becomes apparent [8.49 – 8.57]

a" The inappropriateness of being attached to physical sensations [8.49 – 8.51]

**8.49 a If both excrement and
saliva
b Arise solely from food,
c Why do you dislike excrement
d And find joy in saliva?**

**8.50 a Cotton too is soft to the touch,
b But while you find no delight in a pillow,
c You think, "It does not smell,"
d Lustful One, you are confused as to what is
unclean!**

**8.51 a Thinking, "I cannot copulate with
this cotton,"
b Although it is soft to the touch,
c Confused, negative, and lustful people
d Become angry towards it.**

b" Stopping the conception [of things] as clean [8.52 – 8.53]

**8.52 a If you have no attachment to the unclean,
b Then why do you copulate with another
c Which is a cage of bones tied together with muscles,
d Plastered over with the mud of flesh?**

**8.53 a You yourself have many unclean things
b That you constantly have to utilize;
c Out of obsession for the unclean
d Also in other bags of filth, [why do] you desire it?**

c" Individually, the body and mind are nothing to be attached to [8.54 – 8.55]

**8.54 a "I delight in this flesh."
b If this is what you wish to touch and behold,
c Why do you not desire flesh in its natural state
d Devoid of mind?**

**8.55 a Any mind that you may desire
b Cannot be touched or beheld,
c And whatever you are able to [touch] will not be consciousness;
d What is the use of embracing the meaningless?**

d" Reflecting on those faults in relation to oneself [8.56]

**8.56 a It is not so strange that you do not realize
 b The bodies of others to be of an unclean nature,
 c But it is indeed strange that you do not realize
 d You yourself to be just unclean.**

e" Physical appearance [lit. shape] is nothing to be attached to [8.57]

**8.57 a Having forsaken the young lotus flower
 b Unfolded by beams of sunlight free from cloud,
 c Why, with a mind adhering to the unclean,
 d Do you take joy in a cage of filth?**

2" By ascertaining [with correct reasons the unclean nature of the body, attachment is inappropriate] [8.58 – 5.64]

a" Reflecting on their lack of cleanliness in light of the fact that they are the [cause] at which unclean things exit the body [8.58]

**8.58 a Since you do not desire to touch
 b A place that is sullied by filth,
 c Then why do you desire to touch the body
 d From which that arose?**

If one's clothes were to fall onto a dirty place and become dirtied, one would consider such a piece of garment as dirty. Likewise, if a piece of clothing were to be dirtied by one's object of attachment, one would also consider such a piece of clothing to be dirty as well.

Since one considers such a piece of cloth to be dirty, then one would also have to consider the source of the [filth], one's object of attachment, to be dirty/ filthy as well. The point here is to realize that, the physical body of one's object of attachment is impure and dirty by nature. This is because, it is a source of filth.

b" Reflecting on their lack of cleanliness in light of the fact that they are the [result] of those [unclean substances] [8.59]

**8.59 a If you are not attached to what is unclean,
 b Why do you copulate with others
 c Which arise from the field of the unclean
 d And are produced by its seeds?**

Verse 8.58 explains about [one's object of attachment] being the [cause] of the impure. If one objects to this, then this verse would explain about [one's object of attachment] being the **result** of impurity, [to show how it is still impure].

If one looks at the body of one's object of attachment, it came about due to impure causes. Such a body arose from its mother's womb, which is an impure, filthy and unclean place. The substantial cause of such a body arose from both the egg and sperm of its parents.

Since the sources/ causes of the physical body of the person one is attached to are impure, then the result of such impure causes, the body [one is attached to,] must also be impure, filthy and unclean. Through recognizing such a fact, one seeks to reduce one's attachment [to it].

c" Illustrating the body's lack of cleanliness by means of an example [8.60 – 8.61]

<p style="text-align: center;">8.60 a You have no desire for a small dirty maggot b Which has come from filth. c[Why] do you desire the body which is in the nature of many impurities, d And is also produced from filth?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">8.61a Not only do you not disparage b The uncleanliness of you yourself, c But out of obsession for unclean bags of filth, d You desire others as well.</p>
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Maggots essentially arise from dirty places, like corpses. Hence, one would never [be attached to] them. If that is the case, then why does one desire the body of another person which is the result of many impure substances?

When maggots are found inside the septic tank, these essentially grew out of feces. The reason one is unattracted to them is simply that they are dirty, having grown out of dirty [sources, like] feces, corpses and so forth.

If a housefly were to land on one's plate of food, one would immediately think that one's food is polluted and dirtied by it. [Such a thought arose] because something dirty has contaminated it.

Hence by extension, the argument should also apply to one's object of attachment, the physical body of another person one is so desirous of. It first arose in the mother's womb, a filthy and unclean place. The substantial cause of such a body, the egg and sperm of its parents, are also something filthy, unclean and impure as well.

If the cause is impure and dirty, then the result, the body [one is attached to,] is also impure and dirty. Hence, why [is one attached to] something that is impure?

d" Reflecting on the lack of cleanliness of one's own body [8.62 – 8.64]

(1) Reflecting on the body's lack of cleanliness [8.62]

<p>8.62 a Even attractive things such as camphor, b Cooked rice, and vegetables, c Make the ground dirty and filthy d Should they be spat out after being put into the mouth.</p>
<p>One may have the best food in the world. Before it was put into someone’s mouth, the food was not dirty. But once it has been put into the mouth of someone else and spat out again, no one would consider it as clean but dirty.</p>
<p>Hence, the condition that made it dirty was the mouth/ body of the person. If the cause for food becoming dirty is the mouth/ body of the person, then why is one attached to something which is by nature dirty?</p>

(2) If one is attached to that, then one ought to be attached to the bodies in a cemetery [8.63 – 8.64]

<p>8.63 a Although such uncleanliness is obvious, b If I have doubt, then I should look at the unclean bodies c That have been disposed of d At the charnel grounds.</p>	<p>8.64 a Although they understand that they will generate great fear b Of that from which the skin is rent open, c In any case they will again generate joy d Towards those themselves.</p>
<p>Despite all the explanations given so far on the various antidotes for counteracting one’s attachment, if these still do not affect one’s stubborn mind, then the instruction here is to go to the cemeteries or where corpses are placed.</p>	
<p>One should then observe what happens to them each day when they start to rot over time.</p>	
<p>One can also [mentally] dissect the body and observe its insides: its flesh, blood, veins, bones and so forth. No one will be attached to what they see there, rather, they will be disgusted and may even vomit.</p>	
<p>Even though many explanations have been given, essentially, one should think/ view the body one is attached to as being a source, as well as the result, of impurities. It is through thinking like this that, one can reduce one’s attachment/ desire for it.</p>	
<p>The larger perspective is this: if one is unable to manage attachments and desires, there is no way to possess pure ethical discipline. If such is absent, it is not possible to pacify one’s distractions, without which it is not possible to actualize calm abiding. If such is absent, it is not possible to attain special insight, without which, it is not possible to achieve liberation.</p>	
<p>Hence, it is important to manage and control desire and attachment. The instructions thus far have been explaining about the faults/ disadvantages of being attached to [the bodies of] sentient beings.</p>	

[Summarizing the faults of following attachment and how to counteract it:]

[Instructions on] *Abandoning erroneous conceptions [8.38 – 8.88]* was [first given] in the previous lesson. In general, there can be many erroneous conceptions, in the context of this chapter, the erroneous conception to be abandoned here is that of longing desire/ attachment. In explaining this, instructions on the faults of attachment were taught.

[Faults of following desire/ attachment, suffering in this and future lives:] When one follows desire/ attachment, one suffers endlessly as these bring so many problems. This is not the end of it. By following the mistakes of desire/ attachment, one accumulates non-virtues which then bring about many sufferings in future lives as a hell being, hungry ghost and animal.

[One does] not experience [such sufferings in these lower realms] just once, one would have to experience the sufferings [almost like] forever [in these realms] many times over. This is something one has to understand.

[Identifying the object of attachment:] One can be attached to many things. One of the basis for attachment is the physical body of either oneself or that of another. **[Counteracting attachment:]** [There are instructions] here on how to counteract such attachments towards the bodies of either oneself or another.

[Imagination: The basic nature of the body to be not different from a corpse-] Reflecting this way, one can counteract one's attachment [towards it]. [It is for certain] that, one's body and those bodies one is attached to will eventually become corpses. Reflecting and visualizing on this fact can help counteract one's attachment to one's or others' bodies.

[Reasoning: The body is by nature filthy, dirty and impure, the cause of other filthy substances-] Through using common sense and reasoning, one understands how the body is a source/ origin of filth/ impure substances.

There is actually a list of 36 impure/ dirty substances that can be found in the body. One's body also contains many orifices like the ears, nose, mouth, anus and so forth. Whatever that comes out from them are just dirty, filthy, impure and unclean. The source of such dirty substances [is none other than] the body itself. This is mere common sense.

When one has very strong attachment/ desire for one's body or the bodies of others, one then has to counteract it through thinking, bringing to mind, for example, on what has been explained. The substances that [are excreted] by the orifices, either of one's or others' bodies, are just impure, dirty and filthy.

Since these substances are like that, then the very source/ origin of such substances, the body itself, has to be impure. This is straightforward common sense. When one reflects on this, one will be able to see the reason why the body is dirty. One then comes to understand that the body is dirty and impure, which is a source/ cause/ factory of [other] impurities.

[Reasoning: The body is the result of impure substances-] The body itself also arose from other impure/ filthy substances. Since it arose from impure substances, to which one has no attachment for, then one would also be able to counteract any attachment for the body, the result of impure substances.

For example, the main/ substantial cause of the body is the egg and sperm of its parent. These are probably something one would not be attached to, as these are not something one considers as clean and pure. Since the cause of the body is dirty and impure, then the result, the body itself, must also possess the same nature.

[Analogy: Showing how the body is impure through an example-] One also does not have desire/ attachment for what one finds in the septic tank or corpses: maggots or insects that arose from impure substances within them. Likewise, the body is also the result of impure substances. One then applies the understanding to the meaning, that the body is impure.

Hence, the ways to meditate and counteract attachment to one's body or the bodies of others are essentially through imagination, thinking what the body really is, how it is no different from a corpse, how it is a source and result of impurities. Through such various examples and reasoning, one uses them in one's meditation to counteract one's attachment.

[Direct Observation: how the body rots-] If such methods still do not affect one's heart and reduce one's attachment, then the text instructs that one should go to the cemeteries and directly observe a corpse. One sees [clearly] at how the body looks like after the person has passed away. One also looks at it again a few days later to see how it changes/ rots.

This [helps] to remind one that, there is actually no difference between the corpse and one's body/ another body one is attached to. The only difference is in the matter of time. There will come a time that one's body, and that of another body one is attached to, will look exactly like the corpse one is staring at.

When looking at the corpse, one should reflect that when it was alive, it was not any different from one now. It was moving around, talking, not able to tolerate when it was feeling too hot or cold. The only difference now is that, it has died and has become a corpse. One's body and the body one is desirous of have also the same nature, it will also become a corpse one day.

If one meditates on all such different methods, one will definitely be able to [manage] one's attachment, be it the attachment for one's own or someone else's body. In essence, using imagination, common sense reasoning and direct observation/ experience of say, seeing a corpse or someone dying, one can [work with and manage] one's attachment.

This is a summary of the previous lesson: If one were to [compile] all these verses related to this instruction, reflect and meditate on it, perhaps this would be the conclusion: Through meditating on the impure and impermanent nature of the body, one comes to develop disillusionment/ disenchantment with it. This is to discard/ counteract attachment for the body.

Student: Since it is the mind of attachment that needs to be addressed, then why does one need to think that the body is dirty, filthy and unclean? For example, the body of a bodhisattva superior is not dirty/ filthy, but if I am attached to its body, then there is something wrong with the mind of attachment. Hence, does one [address the problem of] the body, be it one's or someone else's, or should one [address the problem of the] thought?

Khenrinpoche: The entire purpose of using meditation, employing common sense, reasoning and direct observation is to counteract the attachment one has for one's own or someone else's body. If one does not possess such attachment, then there is no need for [such antidotes]. But if one has such attachment and thinks that one needs to counteract it, then one needs to do something to reverse/ counteract it. Hence, this whole instruction here is about that.

When referring to the erroneous conceptions, there are 4 major ones. For example, with regards to the body, apprehending:

- 1) An impermanent body to be permanent.
- 2) An impure body to be pure.
- 3) A suffering body to be pleasurable.
- 4) A selfless body to possess a self.

In analyzing the evolution of one's own desire/ attachment, when one is attached to one's own or someone else's body, in the view of such an attachment, it believes that the body is clean and pure. In the view of such an attachment, it does not see the body of the person it is attached to as dirty, but as clean, pure and nice. This is because, if it sees it as it is to be dirty right from the start, then there is no way that attachment/ desire can arise. Hence, one does not [instinctively] see one's own body or that which one is attached to as dirty, but as nice, beautiful, pure and clean. In reality, these are all dirty and impure.

However, the body being dirty and impure are not its inherent characteristics, as these [characteristics] do not exist from their own sides. Even though the body is dirty and impure, but such [characteristics] exist as something that are merely imputed by thought.

Let us examine this in detail: Does impurity exist? Does purity exist? Yes. Hence, [the concepts of] clean, pure, dirty and impure do exist. No one [can claim] that there are no such things as pure and impure. If there is [such a claim], then [the argument] would conclude that there are no pure and impure, no clean and dirty, no samsara and nirvana, [which become absurd and untenable].

[In reality,] samsara and nirvana [do exist], even though these do not exist in and of themselves from their own sides, but nevertheless, these do exist as merely imputed by thought, as dependently originated. Likewise, there [exist] impurity and purity, cleanliness and dirt. Even though they exist, they exist as [merely being] dependently originated and not in and of themselves. Hence, just because impurity and purity do not exist in and of themselves, but as something merely labeled by thought, [do not mean] that there are no impurity and purity, [that they do not exist].

Just because something is merely imputed by thought as [being] dirty or pure, this does not mean these do not exist as they do exist. Conventionally, these do exist. When one eats food, one puts them into one's mouth and it goes into one's stomach. After a while it will be excreted as feces. No [ordinary being] will say that: "Oh, [these feces] are so clean and beautiful!" Everyone would agree and label it as feces, as conventionally it is well known in the world as feces. This means that, it is commonly accepted by everybody as the worldly conventional term called 'feces'. Hence, it is 'feces' as it is, [possessing the characteristics of being] dirty as it is.

Of course, if one's mind is at a different level, then this will be different matter. One can [even partake] feces [as something very enjoyable and blissful]. However, [such a base] is well known and conventionally accepted in the world as feces. Hence, that [substance] which is known and accepted as 'feces' is [called] 'feces'. The mind that sees and accepts that as feces is a valid mind/ valid cognizer. Hence, for humans, [such a substance] is feces because it is conventionally accepted and known in the world as feces. However, to a pig, [such a substance] is delicious and something to be eaten.

Hence, the final position [of the Consequent Middle Way School] is that, the way phenomena exist is a mere appearance to the valid mind. The phenomenon is [thus] established as it appears, as how it exists. Hence, depending on the state/ level of the perceiver's mind, there is a certain appearance and existence for such an individual as it is. However, this is a very difficult concept [to realize].

One just needs to think about something that is common sense: One sees feces as disgusting, dirty and would never eat it. However, in the view of the pig, it is delicious food.

Therefore, it is very important to understand one's mind, how it works, how objects appear to one's mind. The way in which a particular object appear to the mind can be very different even for [the same] person. One has many different kinds of minds, there are some that are wrong conceptions, erroneous views. An object appears in a very different way to an erroneous concept. The same object also appears in a completely different way to a valid mind.

Hence, the same object can appear to [even] the same person in many different ways, depending on how one is [perceiving] the object. Even with regards to attachment, when one has very strong attachment for a person or an object, such a person or object appears to one’s mind as very [pleasant, beyond what it actually is]. The same object would look differently the moment one’s attachment subsides, even if it is only a little. How one feels about the object will be different. Of course, if one’s attachment has completely subsided for a while, the same person or object would appear very differently.

Likewise, when one is feeling angry at something or a person, the person or situation appears to one’s mind of anger in its own [particular] way. However, when one’s anger has subsided and no longer manifests, how the person or the situation appears to one is again very different. At least, it is different from how it appeared when one was very upset. This is very clear.

When one is either very desirous of or angry at a person or object, one’s entire attention is completely absorbed in it. There is no other [mental] space whatsoever for other concepts or thoughts. In the viewpoint of one’s attachment or anger, the object looks very different, there is no space even for any correct positive thoughts. It is only when the attachment or anger has subsided that, there is a possibility and [mental] space for a valid cognizer to arise to look at [the object] correctly. When such correct states of mind are given a chance to arise, then one would look at the person or situation differently.

In an earlier chapter of this text [5.7 to 5.8], *Shantideva* said:

<p>5.7 Who intentionally created The weapons of hell beings? Who created the burning iron ground? From what did all those hosts of women ensue?</p>	<p>5.8 The Muni taught that all such things Are the negative mind. Hence, within the three worlds There is nothing to fear other than my own mind.</p>
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Hence, [Shantideva asked] who created the iron burning ground or fires [of the hells]? He [answered] that it is all the creation/projection of one’s own negative mind.

[Therefore, when examining the ultimate nature of] the impure and dirty body, it is [the same with] every other thing that exists, which are all dependently originated, merely imputed by thought and do not exist in and of themselves. For if there is a dirty body that exists in and of itself from its own side without being dependently originated, then it would [absurdly] follow that whoever looks at the same body would see it as dirty, filthy and impure.

Although the impure body does not exist in and of itself, nevertheless, there is a need for one to oppose one’s wrong concept holding onto the dirty body as pure. Since this is so, then one has to apply the antidotes by analyzing the object of attachment, here, observing the entity of the body of oneself or someone else [and come to understand that,] by [conventional] nature, it is impure. The cause of the body is impure, hence, the result, the body itself, is impure.

It is very natural and effortless for one to conceive of one’s body and that of others as pure and clean. However, this is a wrong erroneous conception that brings about problems. Therefore, there is a need to stop it. However, realizing [that one needs to] stop it is not easy. Since one’s wrong concept is very stubborn, then that is why one has to employ many lines of reasoning to attack it through all angles. This is why there are so many explanations here [guiding one] as to [what to think].

3" Thus, [stop] this grasping [at the body and things as being] clean [8.65 – 8.70]

a" [Fabricated] ornaments cannot make the body clean [8.65 – 8.67]

(1) Perfumes such as sandalwood do not have the capacity to render an unclean body clean [8.65]

Even though one may [intellectually accept that] one’s body is dirty, one may just [emotionally dismiss it] by thinking that one merely needs to apply perfumes or bathe it, after which, it will become clean again. Hence, one thinks that there is nothing wrong for one to be [attached] to it. [This verse serves] to counteract this:

<p>8.65 a The scents which anointed the bodies b Are sandalwood and the like, not that of others. c Why are you attached to others d Because of scents of something else?</p>
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One can become attached to one’s own body or someone else’s body when some [fragrant scents have been applied]. But the smell that one [is attached to] is not the smell of one’s object of attachment, rather, it is the smell of [flowers and plants].

If one thinks that: “Since it smells so nice, therefore, I like it very much,” then one should think that it is not the smell of the body but merely that of the perfume. This is because, the natural smell of the body [is never fragrant!]

(2) Being attached to other scents that are [actually] unrelated to [one’s object of attachment] is not a suitable reason [for being attached to someone else’s body and so forth] [8.66 – 8.67]

<p>8.66 a Since it has a naturally foul odor, b Isn’t it good to be unattached to it? c Why do those who crave for the meaningless things of the world d Anoint it with pleasant scents?</p>	<p>8.67 a However, if that pleasant scent is sandalwood, b How can it arise here in the body? c Why am I attached to others d Because of scents of something else?</p>
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b" The body does not pass beyond its perishable nature [8.68 – 8.69(ab)]

<p>8.68 a If the naked body in its natural state b Is very frightening due to its long hair and nails, c And yellowish foul-smelling teeth d Being coated with the odor of dirt,</p>	<p>8.69 a Why do I clean it with effort, b Like cleaning a weapon that will cause me harm?</p>
<p>If one leaves the body on its own without taking care of it, not cutting the hairs, nails, brushing the teeth, bathing it and so forth, one can imagine how it would look like. After a month, such a person will look like a frightening ghost.</p>	
<p>One just needs to think and reflect, [such a scenario] will happen as described as it is a fact. However, one just have to look at the [effort] people put in to look after their bodies. They would spend hours in saloons to [maintain] their hairs, nails and toes, wasting so much time on it out of attachment for the body.</p>	
<p>However, one must not misunderstand the advice [given], the Buddha is not advising one to look like a ghost, not brushing one's teeth, cut one's hairs and nails. Personal hygiene is important for one's health, so one needs to take care of it. But the point is to not spend one's life doing something which is so meaningless, allowing attachment to set in and overtake one.</p>	
<p>It is a completely different case if one is such a dedicated practitioner that, one's mind is never interested in the affairs of this life, all one cares about is to engage in practice. If due to that, one cannot find time to maintain one's body, then this is fine.</p>	
<p>However, there are some who are not like this, yet pretend to be practitioners by looking [shabby], then this is a meaningless waste of time and being foolish. Therefore generally, [maintaining] personal hygiene and keeping healthy is important.</p>	

c" Reflecting on how it is a thing of revulsion [8.69(cd) – 8.70]

<p>8.69 c Hence this world is completely disturbed by insanity d Due to the effort of those who are confused about themselves.</p>	<p>8.70 a When my mind is despondent in the charnel grounds b Through having beheld nothing but skeletons, c Will there be any joy in the charnel grounds d Which are cities filled with moving skeletons?</p>
<p><i>Those who are confused about themselves:</i> This refers to oneself who holds onto wrong concepts/ erroneous thoughts. By conceiving that which is selfless to possess a self, following on that, conceiving that which is not mine to be mine. One also conceives the impure to be pure, the dirty to be clean.</p>	
<p>[Such erroneous thoughts] give the opportunity for attachment for one's own body and those of others to arise in one's hearts. Driven by it, then there would be nothing else in one's mind as [there is no space] for other thoughts. One would have to do many things [due to following after attachment, like] paying [too much] attention to [taking care of the body].</p>	
<p>The vast majority of people in the world are like that, who are completely overwhelmed by attachment to all sorts of objects, including the body. They spend their entire lives just following after attachment.</p>	
<p>Hence, due to this, sentient beings become the object of compassion for bodhisattvas, who look at sentient beings suffer due to possessing so many wrong concepts: while there is no 'I', they hold onto an 'I', holding onto impure, dirty things as pure and clean. When the bodhisattvas see this, they develop so much compassion.</p>	
<p>Imagine the body of the person one is attached to, it will eventually die one day. The body will be brought to the charnel grounds and be left there. When the person is alive, one has attachment for the body, but even when the [the body] takes its last breath or having stopped breathing for a while, one is still attached [to it] as the body looks the same.</p>	
<p>However, after one or two days, it will start to rot. By that time, one's attachment [will definitely] stop completely. Hence, there will come a time where, whatever attachment one may have for the person's body will cease.</p>	
<p>In reality, one's body and those one is attached to, will eventually become like that one day, nothing more than a skeleton which one would not be attached to. The only difference is that, while one's object of attachment is still alive, it is merely a moving skeleton with the mind still within the body.</p>	
<p>As it is stated in an earlier verse, [the body] is essentially a skeleton which only happens to be moving due to the mind within it. It is also moving due to ignorance, anger and attachment. This is essentially what one is attached to.</p>	
<p>Hence, is [such an object] not inappropriate and incorrect for one to be attached to?</p>	

3' Reflecting on how [desire for the body] produces all sorts of unwanted [consequences] [8.71 – 8.84]

a' Brief presentation [8.71]

<p>8.71 a In this way, the unclean b Is not found without paying a price; c Through accomplishing their purpose I exhaust myself d And will be harmed in the hells and the like.</p>

b' Extensive explanation [8.72 – 8.84]

1" Not obtaining what one desires [8.72 – 8.75]

a" There is no opportunity for enjoying one's desires [8.72]

<p>8.72 a A child is unable to increase his wealth, b So with what can he be happy when he is in the prime of life? c When life is spent due to accumulating wealth and the like, d Having aged, what use will sex be?</p>

b" Due to the suffering of exhaustion, one is not capable of enjoying one's desires [8.73]

<p>8.73 a Some lustful negative people b Wear themselves out by working all day c And when they return home d Their exhausted bodies lie prostrate like corpses.</p>

c" Due to the object's intermittence, it is difficult to come upon the object of one's desire [8.74]

<p>8.74 a Some have the suffering of afflictions of long-distance travel, b And of being faraway. c Although they long for women, d They will not see them for entire years.</p>

d" Due to being controlled by others, one receives many unwanted [consequences] [8.75]

<p>8.75 a Those who wish for benefit, out of confusion, b Even sell [themselves] for the sake of that, c But not attaining that, they are driven d By the winds of others' actions that lack purpose.</p>
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Perhaps this section [8.71 – 8.75] is explaining about the disadvantages of being a lay householder having a family. The whole purpose of having a family is so that people can be together, having a [marital sexual relationship].

However, due to [wanting that], then there is so much preparation that goes into it. [One needs to prepare for the] marriage, the house and so forth. In order to stay together, one also needs to eat and survive. To do so, one has to spend so many hours working and doing business. [Ironically, this takes away] the time to stay together.

2" It is connected to the fault of numerous unwanted [consequences] [8.76 – 8.84]

a" Lacking independence and quickly throwing away one's life [8.76 – 8.77]

<p>8.76 a Some sell their own bodies b And without any power are exploited by others. c Even when their wives give birth d Their children fall at the foot of trees and in isolated places.</p>
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<p>8.77 a Fools who are deceived by desire, b Wishing for a livelihood, although afraid of losing their lives, c Go to war, thinking, "I shall make a living." d They become slaves for the sake of profit.</p>
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b" Being under the control of others and constantly besieged by various sufferings [8.78 – 8.79(ab)]

<p>8.78 a Some lustful people even have their bodies cut, b Some are impaled on the points of sticks, c Some are stabbed with daggers, d And others are burnt– such things as these are seen.</p>
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One can be seeking for and desirous of different things. Whatever one may be attached to, one works very hard to obtain it, one endures [much sufferings] as one wants it so much. In the process, one suffers much physically and [mentally].

This is similar to what was explained earlier. Essentially, when one follows after one's attachment, one becomes very unhappy in this life with so many problems. This is merely the start [of one's suffering]. Due to the non-virtue one accumulates in the process of following attachment, [other] problems will come in all other future lifetimes one after another.

When one follows after attachment, one suffers so much. Just in this life, there are so much unhappiness and pain, [through receiving] physical, verbal and mental [harms from others or within oneself].

[Examples of being attached to the five sense objects:]

The teaching states that, [in such a case,] one is likened to moths, which are so attached to the light of a butter lamp [*form*]. When they fly towards it, they would burn themselves.

It is said that, hunters are aware that deers are very attached to *sounds*. They would then make some beautiful sounds to distract the deers [from them]. This is where the hunters would be able to [hunt them down].

<p>There are some insects that are attached to the <i>smells</i> of certain plants. Due to attachment to its smell, they would enter into the plant, which then [devours] them.</p>
<p>Fishes are attached to <i>taste</i>. When they see the worms, which are baits of the fisherman, due to attachment to its taste, they would then bit into it. The fishing hook then ensnares them and they are done for.</p>
<p>Attachment to <i>touch</i>: elephants enjoy mud baths due to its cooling [properties]. When they see [a pool of mud], they would run towards and plunge themselves happily into it. Some of them may then become stuck and would not be able to get out.</p>
<p>These are examples to help one understand how one suffers due to running after one's [object of] attachment. One is attached to all the five desirable [sense] objects of form, sound, smell, taste and touch. Due to [attachment] for these, one encounters so many problems.</p>
<p>When attachment is manifest and one runs towards the object of attachment, one would never think [ahead of] what would happen to one after that. One only sees what attachment sees. One would never even imagine what would come after it. One merely follows after it, get caught and then suffers [as a result].</p>
<p>These are just explanations of many faults/ disadvantages/ problems one will experience following after one's attachment.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">8.79 a Due to the torment of collecting, guarding, and losing it, b I should understand wealth to be infinite problems.</p>

[Recalling the previous lesson:]

In the previous two lessons, methods for overcoming attachment to the body were explained. Essentially, these are using: 1) Imagination, 2) Reasoning, 3) Analogies , if these still do not work, then one is advised to 4) directly observe how a corpse rots over time.
While the body is by nature impure, filthy and dirty, but this is not how one views the body. One [instinctively] conceives of one’s own and others’ bodies as clean and pure. However, this is not the reality.
In the previous lesson, it was shown in a verse how some people are attached to the body due to the smell it gives off. However, such smells are not the natural smells of the body, rather, these are smells from perfumes. Yet, many use that as a reason to justify being attached/ be desirous of the body, thinking: “What is wrong with putting on some nice smell?”
However, is it not correct to be attached to the body [merely because of some] foreign and artificial smells, which are not the nature of the body? Hence, it is really meaningless to be attached to the body because of some artificial smells of perfumes.
It was explained that, the body is by nature filthy, impure and unclean. This is because, if one leaves the body alone without taking care of it, then slowly the hairs and nails will grow, the body becomes rather unsightly, even looking like a ghost.
The explanations so far have been showing how attachment to one’s own and others’ bodies bring a whole host of problems and sufferings. In essence, when one follows after one’s attachment: <i>One will not achieve what one wants, one will encounter all that one does not want.</i>

c" It acts to hinder liberation and puts to waste the leisures and endowments [8.79(cd) – 8.81]

8.79 c Those who are distracted by their attachment to wealth d Have no opportunity to attain freedom from the sufferings of [cyclic] existence.	8.80 a Desirous people b Have many disadvantages such as these and little benefit, c In the same way ox and the like drawing carriages d Eat a few mouthfuls of grass.	8.81 a Even ox and the like can achieve [this]. b Those who are pained by their actions c Destroy the perfect leisures and endowments so difficult to find d For the sake of something of little benefit which is not so rare.
Due to attachment to the body, possessions and wealth, one then clings on very strongly to these things. Since it is following attachment and distracted to such things, it would not have any mental space for other things, like not able to find time and opportunities for real practice. Particularly, it would have no mental space whatsoever to practice the Three Higher Trainings.		
Particularly, if one is unable to manage and weaken one’s attachment for the five sensual objects to a reasonable extent, the attachment of the desire realm, then there would not be any chance to practice calm abiding. If one is unable to achieve calm abiding, then there is absolutely no way to achieve special insight. If there is no special insight, then there is no liberation.		
If one is unable to achieve liberation from cyclic existence, then what is left? One would then have [no choice but] to continue on with samsara repeatedly. Hence, [for one] there will be no end to samsara [if one does not do anything about it].		
When one follows after attachment, one would encounter many problems in life. Even though one may get some pleasures, but it is only a very tiny [experience of] pleasure lasting only for a short period. However, this comes with a cost. In exchange for that, there will be so many problems [one will have to experience].		
Whether it is attachment for pleasant forms, sounds, smells, taste or touch, or for all of them, when one follows attachment for these [objects], one would have to put in so much effort [just to be able] to meet with such objects. However, by the way, one encounters so many problems [due to doing that].		
When one follows one’s attachment and runs after such objects, even if one were to succeed in the beginning, one may experience some sort of pleasures. However, it will only be a small experience. Not only would the experience be small, it does not increase and only last for a short time. One should think about this as it would be one’s own [personal] experience.		
Hence, the text likens one to the ox or horse that pulls a very heavy load like a carriage. It is constantly having the burden on its shoulders of pulling it and traveling on. Occasionally, if they do get an opportunity to stop and if they are lucky, they may get to eat some mouthful of grass. When that happens, they may feel the pleasure.		
But shortly after, they would have to move on with their heavy burden. One is just like that, one follows after attachment and experiences so many problems along the way. When one does get some pleasure occasionally, it is very small, does not increase and lasts only for a very short time.		
By running after all sorts of objects like money, power, possessions, properties, food and so on just to survive and take care of this life, working very hard for the happiness of this life is actually [very meaningless]. This is because, one is very much like the animals as even they also know how to work very hard to stay alive.		
Being able to make a good living by running after the happiness of this life like wealth, power, properties and so on, is inconsequential. This is because, even a foolish animal knows how to do that, looking for food and so on. In fact, there some species of animals that are more intelligent than humans with regards to finding food. taking care of themselves and so on.		

To use one's human life of freedoms and endowments one has achieved for such a [meager] purpose, the [yield/ profit one gains from this] is very low. This is because, one spends so much effort to gain such small [short term] pleasures, while having to experience so much sufferings and problems. It is really a waste when one uses one's life this way.
In particular, such a human life of freedoms and endowments that one has achieved, gives one so much power to achieve the state of full enlightenment. Such a life is something more special than the lives achieved by, for example, the gods. In terms of being able to achieve the state of omniscience, their kinds of lives are no where near [compared to what one has.]
Even though some animals are physically more powerful than one, but generally, it is very difficult to achieve enlightenment on the basis of an animal body.
When one has achieved such a human life of freedoms and endowments, one should reflect, feel and conclude to the fact that one has such a special opportunity. On this basis, one can achieve so much, all the way to enlightenment.
Through realizing that while one still possesses such an opportunity, as much as possible, one should make use of it to learn and understand the subject matter of the Three Scriptural Collections, then practice the Three Higher Trainings.
One can also use such an opportunity to engage in virtue, one's daily practice, recitations, retreat and so forth, so that one does not let such a [rare] opportunity go to waste.
This is not a topic that one has not heard before. [One knows it very well.] What one needs to do then is to meditate on it repeatedly and to remember it. The point is, through reflecting on these points, one would be able to develop the wish to extract the essence from one's own human life of freedoms and endowments, making one's current life meaningful.
As one already knows, there are three different ways to extract the essence from a human life of freedoms and endowments in accordance to the path of the practice of the three types of persons: those of small, middling and great capacities.
If one follows one's attachment and become distracted, then one's attachment to one's own or others' bodies, wealth, properties, enjoyments and so forth, will become an obstruction/ hindrance to achieving a permanent everlasting happiness of liberation. If one fails to achieve liberation from samsara, then the only other option left for one is endless stay in samsara.
One may live one's entire life motivated by taking care of oneself merely for this lifetime due to being attached to one's body and life, even though one may even be working very hard for it and appear to be very capable, but there is actually no difference between oneself and the animals as they also that as well.
Hence, although one may achieve not just a human life, but a human life of freedoms and endowments, one would still not be any different from even the animals.
Hence, the whole purpose of this [instruction] is for one to think about it, so that one can do something meaningful with one's human life of freedoms and endowments. One needs to be better and do better than the animals.

d" Developing the mind that strives for liberation by reflecting on the disadvantages of [desire] [8.82 – 8.83]

<p>8.82 a The objects of desire will certainly disintegrate b And then I shall fall into the hells and the like. c The hardship of exhaustion arises d For the sake of what is not very great.</p>	<p>8.83 a If buddhahood itself is achieved b With just one millionth of that difficulty, c The desirous have greater suffering than d Practitioners of enlightenment, but there is no enlightenment.</p>
One experiences some pleasures to the [objects of] forms, sounds, smells, taste and touch that one is so desirous of and attached to. However, such pleasures will not last for a long time and will disintegrate. Even the objects of one's desire themselves do not last, will also disappear eventually.	
The pleasure one gets from coming into contact with pleasant forms, sounds, smells, taste and touch will disappear/ disintegrate when these objects themselves disappear/ disintegrate. Hence, sensory pleasures are fleeting and unstable.	
<p><i>The end of birth is death, the end of gathering is dispersal, the end of accumulation is depletion.</i></p>	
No matter how famous, popular and well-liked one has been, all of these soon will crumble and fall apart as nothing lasts.	
Even though this is the nature/ reality of one's life, yet knowingly or unknowingly, one works so hard, putting in so much effort in one's job or business to gather wealth, power, possessions, fame and status.	
To achieve all such goals is not easy as well, one has to do and say all sorts of things, in the process, one accumulates so much negative karma, the [suffering] result of which will ripen in future lives.	
Motivated by the attachment to this life, one works very hard for it, by engaging in business, acquiring power, property, fame, reputation and so forth. What one does not achieve is the real, long-term, permanent, everlasting happiness that does not decrease and disappear. What one gets in return for all such endless effort and suffering are just some fleeting pleasures	
The majority of the people [in the world] are like that, they work so hard, getting so exhausted physically and mentally.	
Hence, instead of working so hard for the affairs of this life, which brings only fleeting pleasures, with whatever time, effort and dedication one puts in one's life now merely to achieve the happiness of this life motivated by attachment, if one can put a mere portion of these and direct it to practice Dharma and achieve enlightenment, one will definitely achieve it.	

Shantideva is saying that, one continually exhausts oneself physically and mentally by working so hard [for this life]. What one gets in return is still a life full of problems and unhappiness, getting a little fleeting, unstable pleasures occasionally that does not last. To saying nothing of enlightenment, even something satisfactory one can rely and depend on is not achieved.

Hence, one should reflect and realize the faults of one's attachment, through that, one should try and generate the wish for liberation in one's heart.

e" Reflecting on how attachment to desires is the source for all [faults] [8.84]

**8.84 a Having contemplated the sufferings of hell and the like,
b For the desirous ones,
c Weapons, poison, fire, ravines, and foes
d Do not compare.**

The negative karma one accumulates motivated by desire and attachment for the sense objects will result in rebirths in the lower realms. Depending on its severity, the heaviest of these will throw one into the hells, the middling will result in one being as a hungry ghost, the small will cause one to be an animal.

Everybody agrees that the pain from being harmed by weapons, poison, fires, enemies, falling over a cliff and so forth are frightening and terrible. But for the wise, who is seeking permanent everlasting happiness, someone skilled in what to discard and adopt, all such sufferings that are considered frightening are nothing, compared to the sufferings of the lower realms.

One can indeed be harmed by weapons, poison, fires and so forth, causing a lot of pain. At the most, one can lose one's life, but such things themselves can never throw one into the lower realms. However, if one follows one's attachment and desire to the five sense objects, for example, then one's attachment and desire can lead one to the lower realms.

ii) Cultivating joy in [solitude] [8.85 – 8.88]

1' Brief presentation [8.85(ab)]

**8.85 a Having in this way developed disillusion to objects of desire,
b I should generate joy for solitude.**

For someone who really sees, feels and understands from the heart about the faults/ disadvantages of having attachment to sentient beings, bodies, worldly possessions, fame, gain and so forth, such a person should then seriously consider going into isolation. Such feelings are said to be stronger than the realization and worries that one has, when one has ingested poison.

Such a person who feels about the faults of desire in such a way from the depths of his heart should then generate an aspiration, a mind of delight and enthusiasm to go into retreat and live in the solitude of physical isolation.

2' Extensive explanation [8.85(cd) – 8.88]

a' A point on the excellences such as that of place [8.85(cd) – 8.86]

**8.85 c Within pacified forests
d Devoid of disputes and afflictions,**

**8.86 a The fortunate ones, at joyful mansions of vast flat stones
b Cooled by the sandalwood moonlight and
c By the stirring peaceful forest breeze free from noise,
d Think of what is of benefit for others and stroll there.**

Devoid of disputes: Refers to not having any companions, wishes, wants or desires for any objects, gains and so forth.

Devoid of afflictions: When living in isolation, such as in a forest and so forth, due to the power of the environment, the mind naturally becomes pacified and calm. Attachment and the like settles down easily.

The kings have the freedoms to enjoy their lives, living in big, spacious and beautiful palaces, with the best facilities and servants attending to them like fanning them from the heat and so forth.

Just as the king who has the freedoms and fortunes to enjoy his palace, food, clothing, attendants and so forth, likewise, the fortunate one who has developed bodhicitta, have no desires and needs for anything, is able to enter into and live in solitude.

Kings sometimes do leave their palaces and go to the cities to see how their subjects are doing [out of concern for their welfare]. Likewise, the fortunate bodhisattvas who possess bodhicitta, having no desires and living in solitude, may sometimes leave their hermitage and move around. However, they do so for the sake of all sentient beings.

It is said that, if one is able to live with such an attitude in such an environment, then even in this life, one will experience much happiness [in the sense of] real peace/ [contentment]. A list of the characteristics of the kind of suitable environment that is ideal for living in solitude was explained earlier. Such descriptions came from the *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras*.

b' The qualities of having obtained independence [8.87]

**8.87 a They dwell for as long as they wish
b In empty houses, at the foot of trees and in caves,
c Having abandoned the suffering of owning and guarding [possessions],
d They are carefree without concern.**

Such practitioners are able to stay as long as they wish, be it a month or a year, in places like vacant buildings, foots of trees or in caves. Whatever these may be, such a person should not regard such a place as belonging to him: “This is my empty house!” He may even think of ‘renovating’ it! This should not happen.
When one starts to develop the idea that [such a place one is living in] as ‘mine’, then self-grasping is introduced. When this occurs, then there is only problem.
When one lives in such solitude, there are no enemies to irritate and disturb one. There would not be someone one has to worry about and take care of. One also does not need to be [sensitive and socially acceptable], one does not need to rely on those who are higher, there would also not be any request for help from those who are lower.
<i>d They are carefree without concern:</i> Hence, one is free from all such [encumbrances], not needing to rely on anyone.
This verse perhaps goes along with one of the prerequisites of calm abiding: <i>Having little desire.</i>

c' The qualities of contentment [8.88]

8.88 a Utilizing freely without attachment, b Having no ties with anyone, c Even lords have difficulty finding d That which is the enjoyment of happy contentment.
When one lives in isolation, one has the freedom to go whenever one wishes, stay however long one wishes, do whatever one wishes. There are therefore no ties that bind one, like having to worry about possessions, [reputation], and so on. Since one is [in solitude], one does not have to [attend to] friends, strangers and enemies.
“Lords” here can refer to the lords of the gods like Brahma or the lords of humans like powerful kings. Even they have difficulties finding and experiencing such satisfaction, freedom and contentment in their hearts.
Such happiness of freedom to enjoy life is said to be found when one lives in isolation. It therefore comes from peace, satisfaction and contentment. Such a freedom is not even possessed by the powerful kings and the rich of the world.
One can see in this world, even though the wealthy [possess so much wealth], so long as they are still not contented and satisfied, they [would remain unhappy].
<i>In fact, the level of unhappiness is commensurate with the level of dissatisfaction/ lack of contentment one has. The more one thinks one does not have enough, the more one suffers. Whereas for those who are really contented and satisfied easily, the happier they are.</i>
The benefits of living in isolation were explained earlier. Here, after explaining about the faults of attachment, there is again an explanation on the benefits of living in isolation. [Does it seem like a fault of repetition?] There is no fault here:
The earlier explanation on the benefits of living in isolation serves to motivate [/inspire] a person to [develop the wish] to go into isolation. The explanations here on the benefits of living in isolation that comes after the [explanations] on the faults of attachment is for someone who has already entered into isolation, it is to reinvigorate his enthusiasm to stay in isolation.
This is because, sometimes when one has entered into isolation, one may experience some difficulties. To reinvigorate the desire to remain in isolation, this section <i>Cultivating joy in solitude [8.85 – 8.88]</i> is therefore taught.
The essence is, if one lives in a beautiful place with cool breeze, pleasant environment, a [pristine] view with the mind of contentment, it is said that the happiness that one experiences would [greatly surpass] the experiences of the powerful rich, and [royalties], which cannot even be compared to the peace, calm and satisfaction experienced by such mediators.
Although what have been explained are facts, but this is not what one [usually] thinks about. Most of the people in the world would think that, to be happy, one [necessarily] needs money. The richer one is, the happier one would become. This is what one believes in and is what drives one so hard daily.
<i>One believes that living in isolation is insane, as it brings suffering, misery, dissatisfaction, and many problems.</i>
Looking at one’s own [mindset], which is essentially the [mindsets] of everybody in this world, one is essentially seeking only for pleasant [sensual] happiness. [Almost] no one is wishing and seeking out mental peace, calm and happiness. One is [continually] looking for money, power and so forth merely to satisfy one’s senses.
It is alright if one’s mental happiness and satisfaction come about when one experiences bodily [sensual] pleasures. If one works very hard to experience bodily [sensual] pleasures, if by the way one feels mental peace and calmness, then that is fine. However, such situations [hardly] even occur. There is [hardly] any satisfaction [even after gaining sensual pleasures].
This is the entire reason for [the existence of] the Buddhadharmā, which is about finding the real happiness of mental peace, calmness and satisfaction. This is the reason for explaining the importance of a mind that is serene, pacified and disciplined.
A large section of this chapter is dedicated to [explaining] the prerequisites and achievement of calm abiding. [The goal of achieving] calm abiding is just like the rest of [the goal of] the Buddhadharmā, which is to achieve mental happiness, calm and peace. [Verses 8.3] up to 8.88 are [instructions] for the preliminaries for developing calm abiding.

[Summarizing earlier lessons:]

<p>The prerequisites for developing calm abiding were explained in previous lessons: 1) Dwelling on an appropriate area. 2) Having little desire. 3) Being content. 4) Completely giving up many activities. 5) Pure ethical discipline. 6) Completely getting rid of thoughts of desire/ discursive thoughts.</p>
<p>If one attempts to achieve calm abiding after fulfilling these prerequisites, it is said that the achievement of calm abiding is relatively easy.</p>
<p>It is said in the teachings that, to cultivate calm abiding, one has to rely on isolation. But prior to that, one needs to repeatedly reflect on the faults and disadvantages of living a busy life, repeatedly reflect on the benefits of living in isolation to the point that one develops a real enthusiasm, liking and delight for living in isolation to achieve calm abiding.</p>
<p>Once one possesses such enthusiasm and delight, together with the gathering of all other necessary prerequisites, then one attempts to achieve calm abiding.</p>
<p>In earlier verses of this chapter, many disadvantages, faults of living a busy life and following after delusions, especially attachment, were explained. In essence, by doing so, there will be so many problems and unhappiness in this life. Such a lifestyle and giving in to attachment will bring about many problems in the future life as well.</p>
<p>When one is attached to the lifestyle of a busy modern life and following after the delusions and attachment, in every moment of one's life, one is just accumulating the karma to continue to circle in cyclic existence. Hence, with such a lifestyle and mindset, there is no hope whatsoever [of achieving] freedom from suffering, liberation from samsara.</p>
<p>One is just wasting one's human life of freedoms and endowments one has acquired, living in such a lifestyle being attached to the small happiness of this life and being [completely involved] in it. This is how one wastes such a [precious life].</p>
<p>People work very hard just to achieve some happiness in life. The effort put in is so much, but what one gets in return is merely some fleeting pleasure and happiness. In the process, one experiences much pain and suffering. One also accumulates so much negative karma. Of course, most people do not see, recognize, acknowledge nor accept [such a fact].</p>
<p>If one sees the point for oneself how that is the case, recognizing these faults of living a normal busy life, [achieving some] mere small [pleasure] in return for working so hard and concurrently accumulating so much negative karma, letting the mind follow after attachment and delusions continuously, one will generate some kind of renunciation.</p>
<p>It is not the first time one has lived such a usual way of life, following after delusions and attachment by working so hard day and night, merely to get some small happiness in return, one has been doing so since beginningless rebirths. What one has achieved are just some small fleeting happiness, but one encounters so much problems and sufferings in the process.</p>
<p>[In verse 8.83,] it says that since beginningless rebirths, if a mere [millionth] fraction of all the effort one has put in to achieve all such fleeting happiness were put in to achieve enlightenment, one would have done so by now.</p>
<p>It is the same with this life. All the hard work, effort, time [under difficult circumstances] that people put in to achieve some happiness in this life, if only a mere fraction of such effort is put into developing the mind to practice, it would be certain that some progress would have been achieved by now. One would have to think about all such [advice] for oneself.</p>
<p>One has to see for oneself the faults and mistakes of living and being attached to such a busy life, taking a liking to the hustle and bustle of life. One has to realize the faults of following attachment. By seeing and realizing these for oneself, one would be able to set aside mental space and time to develop one's mind in the Dharma.</p>

3) How to cultivate calm abiding [8.89 – 8.178]

<p>Verses 8.1 to 8.88 are instructions on gathering the conditions/ prerequisites for developing calm abiding. The next section [8.89 to 8.187] explains about the way to develop it. However, if one has read the text, there is no mentioning of any [instructions] on developing calm abiding. Rather, all [these later verses] are about developing bodhicitta.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: I am just wondering why [this is so, as] I couldn't get the answer [that I want]. Does anyone have answers?</p>
<p>According to <i>Gyalsab Je's</i> outline, the way to meditate on calm abiding has two sections: a) The way to meditate on equalizing self and other [8.89 – 8.112] b) The way to exchange self and other [8.113 – 8.187]</p>

- a) The way to meditate on [equalizing] self and other [8.89 – 8.112]
- i) A brief presentation [8.89 – 8.90]

<p>8.89 a Having through such ways as these b Thought about the excellences of isolation, c I should completely pacify conceptualizations d And meditate on bodhichitta.</p>	<p>8.90 a First of all I should make an effort b To meditate upon the equality between self and others: c I should protect all as I do myself d Because of equal happiness and suffering.</p>
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It is only by abandoning the external hustle, bustle of life, relying on isolation and pacifying the internal disturbing thoughts, will one achieve the real peace and happiness in this life. One will also be able to achieve the perfect long-term happiness.
Verse 8.89 is saying that, when one's mind has been completely pacified of all sorts of disturbing discursive thoughts, one then attempts/ strives to generate bodhicitta.
Although there is no mentioning of calm abiding, perhaps, by depending on isolation, when one is able to at least subdue and pacify one's gross distractions, disturbing thoughts and discursive conceptualizations, would one then be able to achieve some single-pointedness of mind.
With such a single-pointedness of mind, one then meditates on bodhicitta, the main subject matter of this chapter.
Many of the great treatises have stated clearly that, the generation of bodhicitta has to be preceded by the generation/ realization of not just calm abiding, but a union of calm abiding and special insight. [Union of calm abiding and special insight come before the generation of bodhicitta.]
[Generally,] whether it is calm abiding [<i>Zhi gnas</i>], meditative stabilization [<i>ting nge 'dzin</i>] or concentration [<i>bsam gtan</i>], <i>It is a mind in which, when one chooses to place its attention on an object of observation, It is able to firmly remain on the object as firm as a mountain.</i>
<i>Yet, if one chooses to move and engage in [other] objects, It has the power to move its attention, engage and concentrate on that as well.</i>
When one has calm abiding, one has complete control and mastery over one's mind in that, if one so decides to place one's attention on a chosen object of observation, one can do so easily, as well as stay on it firmly as a mountain for as long as one wishes. If one wishes to move one's attention to another object of one's choosing, one can also do so easily.
Whereas before developing calm abiding, one does not have real control over one's mind. Whatever and wherever the mind tells one to, one just follows after it and goes everywhere. Hence, prior to achieving calm abiding, one does not have real control over one's mind. But after achieving calm abiding, one would gain some mastery and control over one's mind.
According to this system, when one meditates on bodhicitta, one has to meditate on <i>Equalizing self and other</i> and <i>Exchanging self and other</i> . Hence, prior to meditating on [the latter], one must first meditate on [the former]. Hence:
8.90ab First of all I should make an effort to meditate upon the equality between self and others.
It is said that, if one does not meditate well on Equalizing self and other, one would not be able to generate the actual real bodhicitta. Hence, one has to meditate and actualize Equalizing self and other. This is because, oneself and all sentient beings are the same/ equal in wanting happiness and not wanting suffering. Since that is the case:
8.90cd I should protect all as I do myself because of equal happiness and suffering.
Meditating and cultivating on the equality of self and other essentially mean: <i>To cherish others as one cherishes oneself</i>
<i>Just as one works for one's happiness, one also works in the same way for the happiness of others. Just as one works to eliminate one's own suffering, one also works in the same way to eliminate the sufferings of others.</i>
Hence, to Equalizing self and other means to generate such a mind.
8.90 c I should protect all as I do myself: This means that, just as one needs to work hard for one's happiness, likewise, one needs to do the same to work for others' happiness. Just as one protects oneself from undesirable sufferings, one will also do the same for others. The reason given is: d Because of equal happiness and suffering. How does the reason work?

[Using emptiness to show how the equality of self and other can be attained:]

The general meaning for the Equality of self and other is usually explained as: <i>Everyone is equal in wanting happiness and not wanting suffering.</i>
Even though this is true, but if one were to [investigate] deeper, looking for the <i>basis</i> of the equality, its essential fact is that: <i>Everyone is equal in being empty of existing inherently from its own side.</i>
Whether it is oneself or others, if one were to look for the 'self/ I / person' or 'others' on its basis of designation, one would not find anything that is the 'self/ I / person' or 'others' on its basis of designation. [Above that,] even the basis of designation of the 'self/ I / person' or of 'others' [itself also] does not exist from its own side.
There are debates on whether there is a valid base/ basis of designation or not. There are essentially two schools of thought, one asserts that there is such a valid base, whereas another asserts there is not.
The concept/ term valid base seems to suggest that there is something right there from its own being the valid base. This contradicts the fundamental position that nothing can exist inherently from its own side. Hence, the latter school rejects it.
This is because, if there is something which is a valid base with the connotation of [existing] there from its own side, then it cannot be [reconciled] with the fact that phenomena are merely imputed by thought.

<p>This is because, if there is something there, then whether one imputes it or not, it [exists right] there without being merely imputed by thought. One then needs to understand that there are certain things that are clear [without disputes], for example:</p>
<p>The basis of designation of the 'self/ I / person' itself does not exist from its own side. Hence, the 'self/ I / person' exists by being merely imputed in dependence upon a basis of designation. In dependence upon a basis of designation, the thought thinks 'self/ I / person'. That is how the 'self/ I / person' exists, in relation to such a basis of designation, merely imputed.</p>
<p>Likewise, 'others' also exist by being merely imputed in dependence on a basis of designation. It is also very clear that the latter basis of designation also does not exist from its own side. Hence, that which is the 'I' is that which is merely imputed in dependence upon a basis of designation. Likewise, 'others' [exist that way] as well.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Therefore, what is 'I' and 'others' are relative. In dependence upon 'I', then there is 'other'. Relative to the existence of 'others', there is [the existence of] 'I'.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hence, there is no inherently existent 'I' and 'other' There is no inherent difference between 'I' and 'other' There is no inherent 'I' and 'other'.</i></p>
<p>Even though there <i>is</i> the difference between 'I' and 'other', however, such difference is not established from its own side.</p>
<p>While it is easy to say that the 'I' is merely imputed and exists in mere name; the basis of designation of the 'I' itself also exists in mere name, but if one examines one's own experience, the way one's 'I' and its basis of designation, one's aggregates, all <i>appear</i> to one as something existing right there from its own side, not merely imputed by mind.</p>
<p>Not only is there an <i>appearance</i> of a real 'I' and basis of designation, one's body and mind, one also <i>assents</i> to the appearance completely, <i>holding</i> onto and <i>believing</i> that there is a real 'I' and body and mind.</p>
<p>This is the same when one thinks of 'others'. Their basis of designation also appear as something right there from its own side. Above that, one also completely assents to those appearances. Hence,</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>In one's own experience, 'I' and 'you', body and mind are as real, distinctly and clearly different as black and white.</i></p>
<p>One also believes that that is the case. Hence, 'I' and 'you' are completely different, unrelated and unconnected. Therefore, 'you' are there and 'I' am here. This is the complete opposite of Equalizing self and other.</p>
<p>However, if one examines and questions one's experiences, it is very clear that, even though one may believe that there is a real body and mind, one's basis of designation, but if one were to look for these, one would be able to see that there is actually no real body and mind, one cannot find a real basis of designation existing from its own side.</p>
<p>Since one cannot find the real body and mind to exist from their own sides, then how would one find a real 'I', that which exists in relation to the body and mind, to exist from its own side as well?</p>
<p>Hence, the 'I' is that which is merely imputed by thought existing in mere name in dependence upon the body and mind. If this is the case, then [the way] 'others' [exist] must be the same as well.</p>
<p>[Analogy to show non-difference of phenomena within the sphere of emptiness:] Imagine one takes a knife and starts cutting up space, would there be a southern, western, northern and eastern space? <i>Khenrinpoche</i>: Can you cut the sky?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Just as one cannot cut space with a knife resulting in different pieces of space, Likewise, those who have realized emptiness realize that the 'I' exists in mere name, hence empty of existing inherently. Hence, in that sphere of the emptiness of the 'I', there is no real 'I' and 'other'.</i></p>
<p>Once the realization of the emptiness of the 'I' is generated, one would also realize the emptiness of 'other'. Within such a 'space' or sphere of emptiness, there is no real 'I' and real 'other'. There is not that distinct differentiation like what one [experiences] now. All such [distinctions] dissolve away.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>With such an understanding and experience that there is not that distinctive differentiation Between 'you' and 'me' at the back of the mind, hence 'self' and 'other' are equal.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Such a yogi is therefore able to work for the happiness of others in the same way as he would himself. He is also able to eliminate the sufferings of others just as he would himself.</i></p>
<p>If one thinks about it, in the absence of such an understanding, it would be difficult to say that one can get such a feeling of the equality of self and other. One would have a very strong experience of 'you over there' and 'me right here'.</p>
<p>Without this understanding of the ultimate nature of 'self and other', it would be quite difficult to tear down such a solid [conception] that 'you and me' are completely unconnected and unrelated to each other.</p>

[Debate to establish that, even though bodhicitta can be generated without realizing emptiness, it would be through belief and not by the power of the fact:]

<p>One should already know that there are two systems of cultivating bodhicitta: the Seven-fold cause and effect instruction and Exchanging self and other. It is said that the former are instructions for the dull facultied trainees, whereas the latter are instructions for the sharp facultied trainees. What makes a sharp and dull facultied bodhisattva?</p>
<p>For a sharp facultied bodhisattva, prior to becoming a bodhisattva, he would have realized emptiness already. After which, he would then actualize bodhicitta. The dull facultied bodhisattva first generates bodhicitta before realizing emptiness.</p>
<p>The dull facultied bodhisattvas would necessarily have generated bodhicitta, otherwise they cannot be called bodhisattvas. However, to actualize bodhicitta, one must develop in one's mind the aspiration for full and complete enlightenment.</p>
<p>The question then is, how does the dull facultied trainee develop such an intention for full and complete enlightenment? Student 1: He has accumulated a vast amount of merit. Student 2: He sees that all sentient beings had been his mothers.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: When the real bodhicitta arises in the heart, what is that mind looking for? One part of it is seeking full complete enlightenment. Such a person realizes that he can achieve it. Does he need to feel from his heart the purpose for achieving the full complete enlightenment and that he can actually achieve it?</p>
<p>Is the thought thinking: "I must achieve enlightenment for all sentient beings" merely a prayer? Is it simply a wish without knowing its purpose and feeling that it is actually possible?</p>
<p>The point is, <i>does the mind of bodhicitta understand and know the purpose of achieving enlightenment, as well as that it is possible to achieve it?</i></p>
<p>Student 2: Yes, such a mind knows the purpose, due to remembering the kindness of sentient beings. It also knows that it can achieve full enlightenment due to the fact that others have achieved it and shown how it is done.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: Are you saying that, a dull facultied bodhisattva really believes it can achieve enlightenment? Student 2: Yes.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: For anyone to see that he can achieve full complete enlightenment, does he need to <i>realize</i> that the two afflictive and knowledge obscurations can be abandoned? Student 2: Yes.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: That means he <i>realizes</i> that he can abandon the two apprehensions of the self of person and self of phenomena, his own ignorance. Student 2: Yes.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: If he <i>realizes</i> that all of these can be abandoned, he essentially <i>realizes</i> the antidote. Student 2: Yes.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: Then he <i>realizes</i> emptiness. Student 2: Not yet. Although he may not have realized emptiness, but he recognizes that the antidote to ignorance is to develop the wisdom realizing emptiness. Even though he has not realized it, but he knows that this is the method and will apply it [eventually].</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: To see for oneself that, the apprehension of true existence, one's own ignorance can be abandoned, [then generally,] such a seeing can be either through reason or mere belief. However, it is rather difficult to think that it can be a mere belief. Since that is the case, then there is only [seeing it through] reasoning. This would mean one <i>realizes</i> emptiness.</p>
<p>To see that ignorance can be abandoned, one must firstly see how it is a wrong and factually discordant consciousness. It is [only through that,] that one can eventually feel confident that ignorance can perhaps be abandoned.</p>
<p>Perhaps it is really difficult to feel that it is possible to overcome one's ignorance merely through faith or because someone says it [through renown]. Firstly, one must <i>realize</i>, and not just say, that ignorance is a wrong consciousness. Hence, without the real understanding/ [realization] of emptiness, it would probably be rather difficult.</p>
<p>Hence, in Equalizing self and other, when one sees how oneself exists in mere name, that there is no existence from its own side, one then also comes to understand that others also exist in mere name, that they do not exist from their own sides.</p>
<p>With [such an understanding,] there is not the strong feeling of 'you and me' that are distinct, real and unconnected. Within such a mindset, one is then able to feel for others in that, just as the merely labeled 'I' wants to be happy and not suffer, the merely labeled 'others' also want to be happy and not suffer as well.</p>
<p>Therefore, generating the correct view, realizing emptiness, is extremely important. These verses are essentially a brief explanation on how to Equalizing self and other. Next come the extensive explanations:</p>

ii) An extensive explanation [8.91 – 8.112]

1' Explaining the purpose of meditating on [equalizing] self and other [8.91]

2' The way to meditate on [equalizing] self and other [8.92 – 8.93]

3' The benefits of such meditations [8.107 – 8.110]

4' One can develop such [an attitude] if one familiarizes oneself with equalizing self and other [8.111 – 8.112]

1' Explaining the purpose of meditating on [equalizing] self and other [8.91]

**8.91 a Although there are many different divisions and aspects such as the hands,
b They are same in being the body that is to be thoroughly protected.
c Likewise all the different migrating beings in their happiness and suffering
d Are the same in wishing to be happy just as I do.**

Qualm: As there are infinite different sentient beings, it is not suitable to generate the mind thinking 'I' with regards to them. Therefore, how can their acceptance and rejection of happiness and suffering be suitable to equal one's own happiness and suffering? Verse 8.91 serves to answer this:

Reply: Although one's body has *different* parts of the head, torso, arms, legs and so on that make up the body, nevertheless one regards all of these [parts] to be the *same* as being 'mine/ my body'.

Likewise, although there are many sentient beings like the gods, humans and so on, their happiness and suffering are not different. Focusing on how they are the same, one holds all others as the 'self' and thinks:

"I shall establish that happiness and clear away this suffering."

This is the meaning of meditating that all of them are equal to oneself. Understanding such an argument and whatever are coming later are difficult if one does not have at least some idea of what was explained, about how one and other are equal in being empty of existing inherently.

The 'I' is that which is merely imputed upon its basis of designation. The basis of designation of the 'I', the body and mind are composed of many parts. Hence, these do not exist from its own side. Hence, what is 'I' is that which exists in mere name in dependence upon its basis of designation, the body and mind. Hence, there is no real truly existent 'I'.

Likewise, it is the same with other sentient beings. There is not the real difference between oneself and others. Even though there is the difference, but there is no inherent difference, holding to oneself and others as being distinctly unrelated right there from its own side.

Since this does not exist, the person who understands this will be able to regard the happiness of others as being the same as his happiness and regard the suffering of others as the same as his suffering. Therefore, he is able to work for the happiness of others and eliminate the sufferings of others.

Within such an understanding, the yogi is able to feel that, all the different migrating beings, in their happiness and suffering, are likewise the same in wishing to be happy just as he does.

Student 3: For the dull facultied bodhisattva, since he has not realized emptiness, would he be apprehending an inherently existing enlightenment?

Khenrinpoche: It is possible to have both, he is apprehending a truly existing full and complete enlightenment, but he is also seeking full and complete enlightenment. For example, when one eats food, there are times when one is apprehending truly existent food, at the same time of apprehending that the food is truly existent, one is also eating food.

Student 3: But he does not realize that. This is because, for ordinary beings [who have not realized emptiness], they do not realize the difference between these two. Since he does not realize something that he is achieving, then would his wish be a fully qualified wish?

Khenrinpoche: If it is an actual mind generation, then it is necessarily a fully qualified mind generation. If it is a fully qualified mind generation, then such a person has a fully qualified aspiration for complete enlightenment. Hence, there is no need to discuss about the faculty of that person.

2' The way to meditate on [equalizing] self and other [8.92 – 8.93]

a' Abandoning the [position that] it is inappropriate to equate discarding pleasure and taking on suffering [8.92 – 8.93]

b' Explaining the reasons why it is appropriate to meditate on such an equalization [8.94 – 8.106]

a' Abandoning the [position that] it is inappropriate to equate discarding pleasure and taking on suffering [8.92 – 8.93]

<p>In <i>Gyaltshab Je's</i> commentary, he raises a hypothetical Qualm: Since others' sufferings do not harm one's body, [and] one's own body does not harm the body of others, it is incorrect to say that the elimination of their suffering equals the clearing away of one's suffering.</p>	
<p>In earlier lesson, the meaning of <i>Equalizing self and other</i> was explained, essentially: Just as 'I' wants happiness, others are also the same in also wanting happiness. Just as 'I' does not want suffering, others are also the same in not wanting suffering.</p>	
<p>Meditating on Equalizing self and other means that, the mind sees/ regards [itself] and others as equal, then just as it is concerned about wanting its own happiness and not suffering, it has the same concern and wish for the happiness and not the suffering of others.</p>	
<p>Someone may raise an objection: "It is not the same. The suffering of others do not harm me. Likewise, my suffering does not harm others. Then how is it that the elimination of others' suffering is equal to the clearing away of my suffering?"</p>	
<p>This is a very natural way of thinking for everyone. All of us think this way. The answer to this is shown in these two verses:</p>	
<p>8.92 a My suffering b Does not cause any harm to the bodies of others. c But that is my suffering. d Due to adhering as "I," it becomes unbearable.</p>	<p>8.93 a Likewise the suffering of others b Does not befall me. c Nevertheless, that suffering of me, d Due to adhering as "I," will be hard to bear.</p>
<p>Although one's suffering does not directly harm the bodies of others, but one's suffering directly harms one. Since one is harmed by one's own suffering, one finds it unbearable, being unable to tolerate such sufferings.</p>	
<p>Likewise, although the suffering of others do not directly harm one, but due to holding others as equal to oneself, then one will also not be able to tolerate their sufferings.</p>	
<p>The point is this: One's suffering harms one directly because one feels one is being harmed. Hence, one is unable to tolerate it. Likewise, once one possesses the mind that equates others as 'self, I, person', as "my sentient beings", then one would not be able to bear the sufferings of others.</p>	
<p>The reason one is harmed by one's suffering is because of holding/ clinging onto a 'self, I, person' since beginningless rebirths. Even from the very first moment of this life when one took rebirth in one's mother's womb, due to holding/ clinging onto a 'self, I, person', then whatever suffering that befalls on this 'self, I, person', one finds it difficult to tolerate.</p>	
<p>Nothing exist intrinsically from its own side, hence there is no 'self, I, person' that exists from its own side. There are also no inherently existent others and no inherently existent suffering.</p>	
<p>Since nothing exists inherently, hence, it is possible for one to generate the mind that is unable to bear the suffering of others precisely because 'I and others' [are equal and the same in] not existing from its own side intrinsically.</p>	
<p>Due to the non-inherently existent 'I and other', from the time one regards others as one's 'self, I, person', cherishing and holding onto other sentient beings as one's 'self, I, person', then one is able to generate the mind that is unable to bear/ tolerate the suffering of others.</p>	
<p>This is the reason bodhisattvas are unable to bear the suffering of others when they see that they are suffering. Although the suffering of sentient beings do not directly harm the bodhisattvas, but because they hold onto sentient beings as being their 'self, I, person', hence they are unable to bear/ tolerate their sufferings.</p>	
<p>[Such situations] also happen to ordinary beings. One can imagine how parents are worried about their children.</p>	
<p>If they happen to have only one child and something bad were to happen to that child, then they are unable to bear that their child is suffering. Even though the child's suffering does not directly affect them, but due to them having conceived their child as being "my child, he is mine", they therefore experience anguish and are unable to bear it when their child suffers.</p>	
<p>However, an outsider does not feel the same way towards that child as do his parents. The difference hence lies in whether the concept of "this child is mine, this is my child", that is whether the 'self, I, person' is involved or not.</p>	
<p>Since the parents feel that "this is my child" and holds onto that child as their own 'self, I, person', hence when their child suffers, they also feel the suffering.</p>	

[Example to show how it is not difficult to hold others as one's self:]

In general, generating such a mind that holds others as one's 'self, I, person' is not something difficult.
For example, one may own something very beautiful, valuable and may be in the midst of negotiating with someone to buy it. Before the deal is done and one sells it away, if some damages were to happen to it, one would feel so much anguish. However, the prospective buyer would not feel the same anguish nor a sense of loss as does one.
However, once the transaction is completed and the item is sold, then even if some damages were to occur to it, one would not feel any pain nor anguish at all. It is now the buyer's turn to feel the pain.
Such a change [in attitude] happens immediately after the completion of the transaction. The buyer has immediate idea that "this object is mine" [as it becomes relevant/ starts to matter to] the 'self, I, person' as it is involved in regarding it as "mine".
Such an idea happens immediately. It is not the case where one has to sit in meditation for hours to feel that "this is mine". Hence, the point is that, holding onto something as 'mine', [inducing] the 'self, I, person' is something that occurs immediately and very easily. Likewise, it is the same with <i>Equalizing self and other</i> .
For the transaction to be complete, there are many conditions that gather: there are the buyer, the object and the seller and so on. For the buyer, once the transaction is complete, he would regard the object as 'mine'.
However, from the side of the object that is being transacted, it does not have the idea that "I am yours and not his!" Hence it really does not belong to anyone from the side of the object, but due to the gathering of all such causes and conditions, it is transacted. The buyer buys it, due to the gathering of such conditions, the object has now become 'mine'.
Hence, the object being labeled as 'mine' is literally merely labeled and only exists in mere name. [Being 'mine'] does not exist from the side of the object. The object that one considers to be 'mine' came into existence merely through one's concept. Due to the gathering of causes and conditions, the transaction is complete, one's mind then regards it as 'mine'.
<i>Hence this shows that even though 'this is mine', but it being 'mine' is actually one's own mental projection/ creation.</i>
One's possessions are not inherently established as one's own possessions since it has not always been that way. It is precisely because one sells it to someone else that, it becomes someone else's object. If the object is inherently 'mine', then such a situation would not be possible as the 'ownership' would not change. But it did change ['ownership'].
In one moment, it is 'mine', in the next moment when one sells it, it is 'not mine' as it now belongs to someone else. This shows that the change [in ownership] happens within a short moment. This also shows and implies by the way that, there are not any inherently existent 'I and other' as well.

[Relating the example to the meaning:]

Likewise, the 'self, I, person' that one cherishes so much, does not exist from its own side. 'Others' that one feels to be very disconnected, different and separated from oneself also do not exist from their own sides as well.
Hence, there are no inherently existent 'self, I, person' and 'other', just like there are no inherently existent 'possessions'.
<i>Essentially, the most important point being explained here is that: The 'self, I, person and other' exist as mere projections, creations of the mind, merely imputed by thought. Hence, if one regards others as one's 'self, I, person', then it is possible to equalize self and other.</i>
<i>It is precisely because 'I and others' do not exist from their own sides inherently, that it is possible to regard others as one's 'self, I, person'. Since it is possible to generate such a mind that views and holds others as one's 'self', that it is then possible to feel the suffering of others although their sufferings do not directly harm one.</i>
<i>If one is able to feel the suffering of others and in the process unable to bear such sufferings, then it becomes possible to generate the wish within oneself to free others from their sufferings.</i>
Hence, the most important point [for equalizing self and other] to work is that, the 'self and others' do not exist as naturally established from their own sides, rather they exist as mere name, merely imputed by thought, being mere creations and projections of the mind. Hence, it is possible to meditate on equalizing self and other.
Hence, [the concept of] equalizing self and other is not an extremely difficult meditation to do. One can recall the examples shown above. Imagine that someone gives one something, from one moment to the next, the object first belonged to others, in the next, it belongs to one. Hence, all it takes is just a moment [and the 'existence' of ownership changes].

[Quoting scripture:]

<i>Buddha said: "If your mind is tamed, subdued, obedient and enters the path, then it will be most easy to control and shape As it will be a very good listener. In the world, there is no better mind like that."</i>
<i>"If your mind is untamed, unsubdued and disobedient, then it will be extremely difficult to control and shape As it never listens. In the world, there is no other mind that is more difficult than this."</i>

Hence, before the object is given to one, it belongs to other. After it is given to one, then it belongs to one. Before receiving the gift, one does not have the concept that holds onto it as ‘mine’, as one thinks that it belonged to others. When it is given to one, one immediately conceives of it as ‘mine’. Even though the mind changes immediately, the object itself did not.
Hence, this shows that the mind can change easily, provided one [puts in effort]. With practice, familiarity and habituation, it is possible to change the mind and it does change very quickly, provided it is trained.
<i>Hence, the point Buddha was trying to make is that, it is very important to change and subdue the mind, as the mind can be changed. This is because, if one does not subdue one’s own mind, then it is not possible to subdue the minds of others.</i>
In essence, by holding others as one’s ‘self, I, person’, then when others suffer, one will be able to generate the mind that is unable to bear their sufferings.
Therefore, the elimination of others’ sufferings is equal to the clearing away of one’s suffering.

b' Explaining the reasons why it is appropriate to meditate on such an equalization [8.94 – 8.106]

1" An extensive explanation [8.94 – 8.102(ab)]

2" Summary [8.102(cd) – 8.103]

3" Abandoning objections [8.104 – 8.106]

1" An extensive explanation [8.94 – 8.102(ab)]

a" Stating the reason [8.94]

b" Establishing the pervasion [8.95 – 8.96]

c" Dispelling the hindrance of thinking that it is inappropriate to meditate on [equalizing] self and other [8.101 – 8.102(ab)]

a" Stating the reason [8.94]

<p>8.94 a I should dispel the suffering of others b Because it is suffering, just like my own suffering, c And I should benefit others d Because they are sentient beings, just like my body.</p>
<p>This is straightforward as one can use the following logical statements: <i>I should dispel the suffering of others, because their suffering is just like mine.</i> <i>I should also establish others in happiness, because they are sentient beings.</i></p>

b" Establishing the pervasion [8.95 – 8.100]

(1) The actual established pervasion [8.95 – 8.96]

<p>8.95 a When both others and I b Are similar in wishing to be happy, c What is the difference with me? d Why do I strive for my happiness alone?</p>	<p>8.96 a And when both I and others b Are similar in not wishing to suffer, c What is the difference with me? d Why do I protect myself and not others?</p>
<p>This is also straightforward, since oneself and others are equal in not wanting suffering and wanting happiness, then why is it that one only works for one’s own happiness and not that of others? Why is it that one only works to overcome one’s own suffering and not that of others?</p>	

(2) Dispelling hindrances to the [pervasion that it is appropriate to remove others' sufferings] [8.97 – 8.100]

<p>This is a similar argument as before: “I do not protect sentient beings when they experience suffering because their sufferings do not harm me.” The objections and replies are shown in verses 8.97 to 8.100:</p>	
<p>8.97 a OBJECTION: I do not protect them b Because their suffering does not cause me harm. c RESPONSE: Then why protect [myself] against future suffering d If it causes me no harm?</p>	<p>8.98 a The conceptualization thinking b That I shall experience that is wrong. c The person who died thus is one d And that reborn is another.</p>
<p>8.99 a If whenever there is suffering b That itself must protect from that, c The suffering of the foot is not that of the hand, d Why then does it protect from that?</p>	<p>8.100 OBJECTION: a Although this may not be reasonable, b It is engaged in due to apprehending a self. c RESPONSE: Whatever unreasonable self and others d Should at all costs be abandoned.</p>
<p>The objection raised is this: “I need to guard against my own suffering because it actually harms me; I do not need to protect others’ suffering because these do not harm me, so it is of no concern to me.” Such thoughts are natural and arise easily.</p>	
<p>When one finds such thoughts arising, then what should one do?</p>	

[Using impermanence to understand how there cannot be the same person in the present and later moments:]

One essentially needs to understand impermanence: there are gross/ coarse impermanence and subtle impermanence. A good example of coarse impermanence is death. When one dies, one goes from this life to the next.
However, change also occurs over a shorter period of time, it can occur within a year, a month, a week or a day. Within a day, there are morning and night. One can essentially reduce these to a moment of time.
One knows one is going to die. One also accepts [the existence of future lives]. When one thinks of the future, one worries if one were to born, for example, in the hells. When one thinks of the <i>future</i> suffering one would have to experience when born there, one becomes terrified. Hence, one works hard to avoid such a situation by cultivating virtue <i>now</i> .
Then someone can raise a qualm: “Why are you protecting yourself against [the future] that is not harming you now?”
This is a response to the objection that one naturally feels about having to protect others from their sufferings. One does not do that because one thinks that it is of no concern to one as it does not harm one. One then feels there is no need to do so.
If that is the case, then the reply would be this: “For example, why do you cultivate virtue to protect yourself from a suffering that has yet to arise and hence not harming you now?”
One would reply: “It is only a matter of time that I will have to experience my future suffering. When I die and have to go to hell, it is myself who will be experiencing it. Therefore, I have to protect myself from my own suffering. Hence, it is a completely different matter [compared to protecting others from their suffering].”
However, such thoughts are also incorrect. This is because, the mind that holds the person of a former and later moment to be the same is a wrong consciousness.
One works hard [to protect oneself from] suffering in one’s old age. Such thoughts arise because one holds the person now and the person in old age as one and the same. Likewise, one also holds the person of this life and the person of the future life, say a hell being, to be the one and same as well.
Such a thought holding the person of a former and later moment as one and the same is essentially an erroneous wrong concept, as it is against reality. This is because, how is it possible for the person of a human life now to be the same as the person of the hell being in the future?
The human person of this life, with its human body and consciousness, is the result of virtuous projecting karma; whereas the hell person in the next life has hell being’s aggregates, which is the rebirth result of non-virtuous projecting karma. Hence, these two persons are not one and the same as they are different.
When the human consciousness of this life ends, the consciousness will no longer remain as a human consciousness. When the virtuous karma which has projected this rebirth is exhausted, this life would come to an end.
The last moment of the human consciousness would then act as a substantial cause, with the non-virtuous projecting karma say, to be born as a hell person being the cooperative condition coming together, then the next life would possess the body and consciousness of a hell being.
It is not the case where a human body changes, transforms and becomes the body of the hell being, nor is it that the human consciousness itself changes, transforms and becomes a hell being’s consciousness.
This is something one has to really think about. It is clear that the aggregates of a human in this life are not the same and one with the aggregates of the hell being in the next.
A usual example to illustrate this: The flame of a butter lamp can be [lit] to another and in that way, from one flame there comes two, four and so on. Although the flame is being ‘passed’ [from one to the next], it is not that the first flame has changed or transformed and become the second flame.
Even though without the first flame, there would not be other subsequent flames, this does not mean that the first flame has become the second flame and so on.
If one understands this example, then one can apply it to the meaning: It is not that the human consciousness has become the consciousness of the hell being. Rather, the last moment of human consciousness acts as a substantial cause, together with the cooperative condition of the non-virtuous projecting karma, to [produce] a hell being consciousness.
A human consciousness does not exist from its own side, but exist as a mere creation/ projection of the mind which is merely imputed by thought in relation to the human body. This is why it is called a human consciousness.
If one is born in the next life as a hell being, then one possesses the body of a hell being. In relation to such a body, the consciousness of such a being would then be called a hell consciousness, which does not exist from its own side.
Nevertheless, there is a continuation of consciousness. Hence, it is not as if the human consciousness itself transforms and becomes a hell being’s consciousness.
Therefore, once this human body disintegrates and ceases to exist, then there is no basis to call that consciousness a human consciousness.

In general, one can assert a good or bad rebirth through the gathering of various causes and conditions like karma and so on. However, the specific details of each [rebirth] experience, what the exact karma for a particular rebirth is, is essentially beyond anyone as it is an extremely hidden phenomenon.
However, one should not conclude from such reasoning that, since the person of this life is not the same as the person of the next, then whatever one does in this life would not have any effects in the next.
This would then contradict the basic principles of karma where, one would not encounter the results of karma one did not accumulate, and whatever has been accumulated will not cease on its own accord.
The person of the past and of the future, the person of an earlier moment and the person of a later moment and so on, are not the same but different, precisely because they exist in different time periods. It is based on the particular time period one is focusing on, [could one then say] the ‘person of this moment’ and a ‘person of the next moment’ and so on.
Hence, the persons of the earlier and later moments are not one and the same. The person of the morning existed then, but such a person of the morning time cannot not exist at night time.
This is because, if the person of the morning time has not disintegrated and ceased [to exist, one cannot say there is] a person of the night time. Hence, the person of the morning time must cease to exist before there can be a person of the night time as there is a continuum. Hence, at night time, the person of the morning time does not exist whatsoever.
Hence, the person of the earlier moment is not the same person of the later moment. Even though this is the reality, one nevertheless finds it emotionally and even intellectually difficult to accept.
<i>This is all due to an extremely strong grasping at permanence, believing that things will never change and always remain the same. One naturally holds on strongly to the idea that [mistakes and mixes up] earlier and later moments to be one.</i>
Are oneself as a human in this life and the person as a hell being in the next the same? Since they are not the same, then the person of the morning and the person of the night also cannot be the same as well. Oneself of the morning and oneself of the evening are not the same. Oneself of the past does not exist in the present nor the future. This is because, the time has passed.
Hence, the person as being imputed in dependence on the time that existed in the past would then not exist. When one is alive, the mind one has now is called a human consciousness, but when one is born as a hell being in the next life, one would not call such a mind a human mind.
Hence, the person of the morning is not the person of the night. This is because, at night time, the person of the morning does not exist [anymore].
Hence, if one understands all such reasonings, one would understand the reasons used to refute the objection that: Others’ sufferings do not harm me, hence these are not one’s suffering, hence, there is no need for one to do anything about them.
Using the above example to show: Why does one need to work for one’s future old age even though it has not arrived? This is because, one holds the person of the future and the person of the present as one and the same. Likewise, the reason one works for the future life as one thinks [the hell person one may be in the next life is] the one and same ‘self, I, person’ now.
That said, it is incorrect to conclude that there is no need to cultivate virtue since these two are not the same person anymore. Hence, [such lines of reasoning are not meant for one to arrive at such a conclusion].
All such reasonings are a response to the natural objection one has that comes from not being concerned about others’ suffering. This is because [one instinctively thinks that] others’ sufferings do not harm one.
Therefore, the response to such a thought would be that, why does one protect oneself from one’s future suffering since it does not cause harm to one now?
Based on that, one would again object, saying that it is not the same [issue]. This is because, one has the mind to protect oneself against future suffering, due to holding onto the person of the future, be it the person of old age or the next life, to be the one and same person at this moment. Such a thought is essentially a wrong conception.

Student 1: I cannot feel the physical pain of others, hence how can I generate the wish that his physical pain is the same as mine?

Khenrinpoche: It is possible and necessary to train and generate the mind that regards all sentient beings as connected to oneself as ‘my sentient beings’, just like how a mother would regard her only child as ‘my child’.

Just like a mother who feels the pain when her child hurts himself, even though the mother does not physically feel his physical pain, but due to seeing her child in pain and because of the concept and attitude thinking that: “This is my child,” then the mother develops the mind that is unable to bear the suffering of her child.

As long as the thought being unable to bear the suffering of others arises, the goal is achieved, one does not need to feel the physical pain of others. Not [to mention that] there is no need to, in fact, it is impossible. Otherwise, one would have difficulties accounting for karma. One experiences the results that one has accumulated. Hence, it is not a possibility that, when someone breaks his leg, one would experience the same physical pain as his.

Hence, when the child breaks his leg, he would be in physical pain. Such a physical pain cannot be experienced by his mother. Nevertheless, the mother would still be able to generate the thought that is unable to bear the suffering of her child.

It is mentioned in the teaching that, prior to cultivating and meditating on bodhicitta, one must first have trained and actualized the mind in renunciation, the determination to be free from suffering. This is because, renunciation is generated by focusing on one’s own suffering, whereas generating compassion for others only occurs in dependence upon seeing their sufferings. Hence, one needs to first see and feel one’s own suffering. As it is shown in Lama Tsongkhapa’s *Three Principle Aspects of the Path*:

How to Generate the Mind of Enlightenment
[7] Swept away by the current of the four powerful rivers,
Tied by the tight bonds of karma, so hard to undo,
Caught in the iron net of self-grasping,
Completely enveloped by the total darkness of ignorance,

[8] Endlessly reborn in cyclic existence,
Ceaselessly tormented by the three sufferings –

If one applies these two verses to oneself, through understanding [one’s own] suffering, one develops renunciation, the determination to be free. Through applying these two verses by thinking about the sufferings of others, one develops compassion for others. Therefore:

Thinking that all mothers are in such a condition,
Generate the supreme mind of enlightenment.

If one breaks one’s legs, hands, or if one has a headache, it is one’s own personal experience, one experiences it as an unpleasant pain. If one sees another person in a similar situation, someone who has broken his leg and so on, due to having experienced it before, one can empathize with that as one knows [exactly] how it felt like. Although one’s leg may have recovered by then and one may not be in any physical pain, but due to having had such an experience before, one can understand and empathize his pain.

Hence, by seeing how others are suffering, it is possible to empathize with them, one’s mind that is unable to bear their suffering can arise. It is then possible to develop the wish for others to be free of their suffering. Such a wish may even motivate one to do something about it.

Khenrinpoche: One time my mother told me, when someone told her about tooth aches, she would not understand what it was like: “These are bones, how would anyone get any pain?” She has hence no concept of toothaches. It is only after she herself had gotten the toothache that caused her so much pain that she could not bear it that, she was able to fully understand how much pain and suffering the other person went through. Otherwise, because she did not have had any experiences about that for a long time in her life, when someone said: “Toothache,” she would have no idea. It is only when she herself had gotten it, that she knew [how the pain felt like] very clearly.

[Stating the situation and reason why one is unconcerned about others:]

One has many reasons, doubts and qualms about cherishing others and does not see the correct reasons [clearly]. Of which one must have thought about is this: “They are of no concern to me, their sufferings do not affect me, so why should I care?”

One does not see nor feel any need to help eliminate others’ sufferings because one feels their sufferings do not harm one, hence, one would not be concerned.

If one were to investigate right to the core of such attitudes, the source of it would have emanated from:
*One's very strong innate belief that "I and others" are totally unrelated and unconnected.
 Not only that, "I and others" are inherently unrelated and unconnected.*

[Responding to such disregards:]

If that is true, then if someone were to ask: "Since the person you will be [in the future life or] in old age and the person you are now are completely unconnected, different and not the same, then why do you bother to practice Dharma now [for your future life], or why do you care what happens to you when you are old by planning for retirement?"

Behind the attitude that does not care about others because of thinking that others' suffering does not affect one, there is a very strong belief that "I and others" are different, unconnected, separate, not the same. If that is the case, then one should also apply the very reason to oneself: "There is no need for me to work for my future life or old age. This is because:

The person of the future life or the person of old age is completely unconnected, different and not the same as me now."

One again raises objection: "Even though the persons of future and present are separate, however, this does not mean that the suffering will not harm me later as the person who will have to experience the suffering in the future will still be me. Hence, I must do something now." Even though such a reply may sound logical, but it is actually not. This is because:

The apprehension that regards and holds strongly to the 'I' of today and the 'I' of the future to be one, is a wrong concept.

One only wants to guard from one's own suffering in the future. One does not see and feel the need nor the point to protect others from theirs. This is because, it will be 'oneself' that will have to experience such suffering in the future, and it will not be 'oneself' that will be experiencing the suffering of others. Shantideva's response:

*8.99 If whenever there is suffering
 That itself must protect from that,
 The suffering of the foot is not that of the hand,
 Why then does it protect from that?*

When one's leg is suffering, even though it is not [felt in] one's hand, but does one's hand remove the suffering of the leg? The point here is to use whatever 'logical' excuses one's negative mind uses and [show its absurd consequences] back to it.

*8.100 OBJECTION: Although this may not be reasonable,
 It is engaged in due to apprehending a self.
 RESPONSE: Whatever unreasonable self and others
 Should at all costs be abandoned.*

Even though it is true that the hands and legs, for example, are separate, different and unconnected things, just as the 'I of the present' and the 'I of the future' are separate different unconnected things, but:

*Due to being habituated to holding onto a 'self, I, person':
 "These are my hands and legs, my present and future 'I' are the same,"
 One [is very willing] to work to eliminate such sufferings.*

What one needs to do here is to [unravel] the response given to the objection.

Student 1: I cannot see that my hands and legs as separate. This is because, it is within my [collection].

Khenrinpoche: If your leg is hurt, such a painful sensation is not felt on your hands, isn't it? **Student 1:** But I feel it.

Khenrinpoche: Do you feel it in your hand? **Student 1:** No.

Khenrinpoche: You only feel it in your legs. **Student 1:** Yes.

Khenrinpoche: In the heart also! **Student 1:** Yes.

Khenrinpoche: Now, are your hands and legs separate? **Student 1:** The hand is not my leg.

Khenrinpoche: That is why it is clear that, when your leg is in pain, your hand does not feel it! This is because, they are separate. **Student 1:** Yes.

Khenrinpoche: It is also clear that, you are not experiencing now the physical pain that you may experience ten years later!

Khenrinpoche: However, you feel the burden now of the suffering that will come. This is why we prepare now [to avoid it then. This is the same with your hand and leg.] Although they are separate and your hand is not suffering, but it is [very willing to] help your leg. [All such reactions] are due to holding onto the 'I' as one. **Student 1:** Yes as one continuum but not inherently one.

Khenrinpoche: Think of the [instinctive] experience that does not [analyze but is] innately felt inside oneself. Why do I work for my own future? **Student 1:** It is inherently existent.

Khenrinpoche: Even though that is our experience, but that is completely incorrect. The mind that views the 'I' at all instances of one's existence as being one and the same is wrong. **Student 1:** Agree.

One is trying to understand verse 8.100 in that, how is the response given there a [suitable] response to the objection?
<i>Whatever unreasonable self and others:</i> One can read this as the attitude and concept that holds ‘self and others’ as separate . Hence, such a conceptual mind is a wrong perverse consciousness. Likewise, the concept conceiving ‘self and others’ as inherently existent is also wrong.
Since the apprehension of the self is wrong due to clinging onto wrong object, this leads to all sorts of problems and suffering, hence, it should at all cost be abandoned.
That said, it is still possible for one to think that the two situations mentioned are different. <i>Gyaltsab Je’s</i> commentary states:
<i>The two cases [A & B] are not the same:</i> <i>A [In the former case, of myself and others,] the two beings involved are separate and have no connection.</i> <i>B [Whereas] the feet and hands of any one person are one collection of parts,</i> <i>And the person in his younger and older years, or else in his previous and succeeding lives, is one continuum.</i>
<i>Therefore in this latter case [B] it is logical that one of the members should undertake To remove the suffering of the other, whereas in the former case [A] it is not logical.</i>
This is essentially stating that there is a difference [between the two cases A & B, as] one’s hands and feet belong to the same collection, [the present person and future person belonged to the same continuum], whereas ‘I and others’ are [neither] the same [collection nor continuum].
Hence, one may think: “Although ‘my hands and legs’ are separate, but they belong to the same collection; although ‘my present I and future I’ are separate, but they belong to the same continuum. Hence, it is appropriate to remove my suffering but it is a completely different [matter] when referring to ‘me and others’.”

c" Dispelling the hindrance of thinking that it is inappropriate to meditate on [equalizing] self and other [8.101 – 8.102(ab)]

<i>8.101 a That called “continuum” and “collection”</i> <i>b Are like falsities such as a rosary and an army.</i>
What one calls a continuum is a gathering of many former and latter moments. Just like the continuum of consciousness, it is formed by many different former and latter moments. Just like the flow of a river, it is a continuum that consists of earlier and later flows. It is the same with a rosary.
<i>What a continuum is, is none other than that which is merely designated in dependence upon a gathering of many different parts of moments. There is no inherently existent continuum.</i>
<i>Hence, [phenomena] like continuum and collections are falsities, Without depending on such different parts or moments, there is no reason to call it a continuum. Therefore, what a continuum or a collection is, is only designated, merely labeled by the mind.</i>
However, one does not innately think this way. Whenever one thinks of a continuum or a collection, one innately grasps at [these phenomena] as inherently existent continuum or collection right there from its own side. In reality, it is not the case.
A continuum or collection is a falsity. They are merely designated by thought. It is the same with a collection like an army or a forest. Whatever collection it may be, it does not exist from its own side. For example, an army is that which is merely designated in dependence upon the gathering of many factors like many individual soldiers, their weapons and so on.
Hence, the thought merely designates ‘army’. Hence, there is no ‘real army’ existing right there independently from its own side. It is that which is merely designated in dependence upon [the gathering of] many different things.
Likewise, when one thinks of ‘forest’, one does not think of dependently-arisen merely labeled forest. [One thinks] ‘forest’ as something real right there from its own side. But there is no forest without the trees.
Whether it is a collection or a continuum, the manner/ way one innately conceives of them is that they are inherently existent from their own sides. In reality, such an inherently existent collection or continuum does not exist but is merely designated.
One also feels that there is a ‘self, I, person’ that is the ‘owner’ of one’s past, present and future experiences [mixed up] together. Even though one may think that the past and present are different, but [one still feels] that there is this ‘self, I, person’ that is the owner and controller that experiences all of these. It is thus very natural for one to think this way. Hence:
<i>8.101 c The possessor of suffering does not exist, d Who has control over this?</i>
In essence, there is no independent ‘self’ acting as a controller that experiences all such sufferings of the three times. Since collections and continuum do not exist from their own sides inherently, then the phenomenon that is designated in dependence upon a collection or a continuum, whatever it may be, also cannot exist inherently as well.
The person is that which is merely imputed in dependence upon the body and mind, a collection and a continuum respectively. Since the body and mind do not exist inherently, then the person which is designated in dependence upon these also cannot exist inherently. This helps with the understanding of the selflessness of persons.

**8.102 a The owner of suffering being non-existent,
b There can be no distinction in all.**

Since the ‘self, I, person’ does not exist independently and inherently, hence, there cannot be an independent and inherent experiencer of suffering. Since there is no inherently existent ‘self, I, person’, there cannot be an inherently existent ‘other’.

Hence, there is no inherently existent suffering that is experienced by this ‘self, I, person’, ‘my inherently existent suffering’, then there also cannot be an inherently existent suffering that has to be experienced by others.

Hence, self and other, one’s suffering and others’ sufferings are equal.

2" Summary [8.102(cd) – 8.103]

8.102 c Because it is suffering, I shall dispel it: d Therefore, what is the point in that?	8.103 a OBJECTION: Why should I avert the suffering of all? b RESPONSE: There is no ground for argument; c If I avert it, I should avert all. d If not, I am just like sentient beings.
All the preceding verses [8.94 – 8.102b] are summarized here. The essence is that, Because it is suffering, I shall dispel it.	
Therefore, what is the point in that: means what is the point is differentiating my suffering and the suffering of others?	
[By now, the verses have established] that there is no independent inherently existent person. Since that is the case, then what is the point in debating about eliminating [or not eliminating] the suffering of others?	
Qualm: Since there is no inherently existent person, then why does one need to work so hard to eliminate [the non-inherently existent person’s] suffering?	
Reply: There is no need to debate about this. Even though it is true that phenomena like ‘self, I, person, other and suffering’ all do not exist independently/ inherently/ ultimately, but these do exist conventionally, as self, others and suffering.	
Therefore, the debate here is not from the ultimate perspective, [whether there is self, others and suffering ultimately or not, because] conventionally, there is a conventionally existent self, other and suffering.	

Student 2: Since the present self is not the same as the future self, then is the future self an ‘other’?

Khenrinpoche: It is very clear that, the ‘I’ of tomorrow is not the ‘I’ of the present. This is because, tomorrow is not today. If tomorrow does not exist now, then how can the ‘I’ of tomorrow be the ‘I’ of the present? This is because, the ‘I’ of tomorrow exist [by being] designated in dependence upon [its basis of designation, which are] the time of tomorrow. Since tomorrow is not today, hence, the ‘I’ that is designate in dependence upon that time of tomorrow cannot exist now.

The ‘I’ of tomorrow and the ‘I’ of today is designated in dependence upon the same continuum of consciousness and not someone else’s continuum. Hence, the ‘self, I, person’ is not designated in dependence upon another continuum of consciousness. Since the ‘I’ of tomorrow and the ‘I’ of today are designated in dependence upon a specific continuum of consciousness, hence, it is incorrect to say that the ‘I’ of tomorrow is ‘other’.

Therefore, the ‘I’ of tomorrow is not the ‘other’ from the division into the two: “self and other”.
However, it is an ‘other’ in the division of: “one and other”.

[Summarizing the way to meditate on Equalizing self and other:]

1) One’s rebirth has no beginning. Hence, one’s consciousness will continue on with numberless rebirths to come.
2) In all such lifetimes since beginningless rebirths, one has had to rely and depend on others.
3) All beings had had been one’s mothers and loved ones.
4) There is not a sentient being [anywhere] who has not been one’s mother or loved one.
One needs to use logic and reasoning to arrive at a definite ascertainment/ feeling/ understanding from the depths of one’s heart that, there is not a sentient being anywhere who has not been one’s mother or loved one [before].
It is of course not possible to expect that, one can just think about such a topic and immediately arrive at an ascertainment. Hence, this is a method to approach this topic that one can work on for a period of time. This is especially so for those who are intent on meditating on this [topic].
Through thinking and meditating this way, when one gets a feeling in the heart of a real and definite ascertainment, that all sentient beings have been one’s loved ones, mother and so on. Then the next meditation to think is that:
5) Of all the happiness one has experienced since beginningless rebirths [those that one can recall or cannot even recall], one also generates the wish for these to happen to others: “How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings have happiness and its causes, may they have these, I shall cause them to have these.”
6) Whatever suffering one has experienced, particularly, any pain or suffering that one may be experiencing now, then one uses that experience and generate from one’s heart the wish that others may never experience such suffering.
7) When one attempts to generate such thoughts in one’s life by wishing sincerely that others have happiness and not experience suffering, then somehow, all the qualms mentioned by Shantideva in this chapter will arise.
For example, one may meditate on these topics and may even generate some of these thoughts, but then the [qualm] might arise: “Why is the suffering of others my concern? Even if they suffer, [that will not affect me,] just like when I suffer, they will not experience it as well.” If such doubts or qualms arise, one cannot ignore them but must [strive to] remove them.
7a) The qualm is mainly the thought: “There is no need for me to eliminate the suffering of others, because their suffering does not harm me.”
If that is the case, then one should recall one’s own efforts of working very hard to prepare for one’s old age. One is essentially preparing a future suffering that has yet to harm one at the moment.
One plans, puts in time, resources and effort to ensure one lives well in one’s old age. This is because, one is afraid of the suffering when one is old. However, the suffering of the future has yet to occur, so it is not existent now. There is also no guarantee that it will happen in the first place.
The ‘self, I, person’ now and the ‘self, I, person’ one will be in old age are not one and the same. Although they are different, one believes strongly, innately, naturally, [and instinctively] that they are the same.
For example, if one drops something in a fast flowing river, then it will swiftly be carried away. At a later time when one returns to the same spot looking at the ‘same’ river, one would actually feel and say that: “It is this river that swept my belonging away.” Even though it is not the same river, one would see it as one and the same.
The mind holding onto the earlier and later moments of the river is a wrong and mistaken consciousness. This shows that the instinctive thought holding onto the ‘present I’ and the ‘future I’ as one and the same is a completely wrong concept that needs to be eliminated. This helps one to reduce the idea that ‘self and others’ are different, independent and unconnected.
Through such reflections, perhaps one can accept that, the suffering one will experience is yet to happen, but naturally another qualm 7b) will arise: “Although [my ‘present I’ and ‘future I’] are not the same; and the suffering of the future is not harming me now, but [it will be] my mind of the present that will continue on into the future.
Likewise [for the present life, it will be] the continuation of my body that will exist when I am old.
Since the ‘present I’ and ‘future I’ are connected by the same continuum of consciousness and body [in old age], hence, it is appropriate to eliminate my own suffering and achieve my own happiness. However, this cannot be equal to [the elimination of others’ suffering and the achievement of their happiness.]
Such qualm arises mainly due to one’s grasping at a ‘real and independent’ continuum of consciousness and body, whereas there is not. These do not exist from their own sides truly. When one thinks of a continuum, one naturally feels and conceives of it as a real independent continuum right there that one can point to.
But since a continuum has to depend on earlier and later moments/ parts, if it is a real continuum, then it has to be found either in the earlier moment or the later moment. One cannot find it in both. What is left is the present moment. However, the present moment cannot be mentioned without the past. It is only in dependence of the past that there is the present moment.
If one divides the continuum of the present and look for it, one would also not be able to find such a ‘real continuum’.

When one thinks of a collection or a continuum, it appears naturally to one's mind as if it is something real right there existing from its own side independently. Yet when one looks for it, one would not be able to find it.
Such reflections help one to realize that there is no true inherently existing continuum.
7c) Even if one gets some understanding that there is no independent collection or continuum through reasoning, one would still feel very strongly that there is a 'real I', be it the [present I or the future I], that pervades all times, that is the experienter of suffering which is always existent. The way such an 'I' appears and is felt and believed to be inherently existent.
Essentially, it all amounts to whether there exists such a 'real I, that exists inherently in the way it appears. It is through repeated reflection that one is able to delineate/ settle the view of selflessness.
The 'self, I, person' has to exist in relation to the collection of the body and the continuum of the consciousness. This is because, the 'self, I, person' is that which is imputed in dependence upon such a body and mind.
If one has understood the earlier analysis, one would have understood that, be it the collection or the continuum, if the basis of designation of the body and mind do not exist inherently from its own side, then the 'self, I, person' phenomenon which is designated in dependence upon the body and mind cannot be inherently existent as well.
Understanding how the body and mind to be not inherently existent helps one to understand the 'I' does not exist inherently.
Hence, the teachings explain that the 'self, I, person' one cherishes the most, that which one considers as the most precious and important of all times, that which exists in reality, does not exist in the way one believes it to be/ the way it appears.
Hence, 'self, I, person' is like an illusion, is a falsity. Hence, with the proper lines of reflection, one would then be able to develop the thought that, the 'self, I, person' can only exist in mere name, is merely imputed by thought.
The 'self, I, person' that appears as real, right there independently from its own side, although it appears so clearly in such a way that it feels as if one can almost touch it, and when searched, one can definitely and confidently find it, that it is actually possible to see that such an 'I' does not exist in such a way, that it is possible to see the emptiness of such an 'I'.
8) From the experience of seeing the emptiness of 'self, I, person', when one focuses on any phenomenon that exists in both samsara and nirvana, one would also be able to realize that these are all the same in that, they are empty of existing inherently, that can only exist in mere name like illusions.
Just as one sees the emptiness of the 'self, I, person', due to such a realization and understanding, when one thinks and sees others, one will also be able to see their emptiness.
Although 'I and others' exist, but one realizes that others do not exist in the way they appear. Even though they still appear as truly existent right there 'pointable' from its own side, but one realizes that it is a hallucination in that, even though they exist, they only exist in mere name, and not exist in the way they appear as inherently existent.
9) If one gains experiences of such points, then as the teachings say, it is possible to regard others as how one regards oneself.
This is the summary on the section of equalizing self and other. In order to generate bodhicitta through the method of exchanging self and other, one must firstly be able to meditate on the method of equalizing self and other.
10) There are essentially two obstacles in equalizing self and other: 1) the feelings that 'I and other' are unconnected and inherently existent; 2) the sufferings of 'self and other' are also unconnected and inherently existent.
Hence it is said in the teachings that, the bodhicitta that is generated through cultivating exchanging self and other is very powerful. This is because, such a bodhicitta is [established] by strong reasoning. This gives a very strong support making the ensuing bodhicitta very powerful. This is because, it is supported by the realization of emptiness.
Khenrinpoche: Do you see the points and how these all connect?

[Final obstacle to equalizing self and other:]

What one needs to see in one's own experience of how one views the world and others innately, without being taught. One views oneself as inherently real, the most important and precious in the whole of existence.
Hence, there will be a 'real I' here and a 'real others' right there. It is not just 'I and other', but a distinctly 'real I and other' without any possibility for change, unrelated without dependence whatsoever. One then has to see whether is such the reality.
Even though this is how it appears and how one believes oneself and others to exist, one has to see for oneself that [such a concept] is completely false. This requires one to analyze how one's own mind operates, that oneself and others do not exist in the way one believes it to exist.
Looking at one's own effortless natural experience, the sense of 'I' is very real in that, it is self-established, independently and inherently existent from its own side. Such an experience is also the same for 'others'.
The fundamental reason for the possibility of equalizing self and other lies in the truth that: 'self, I, person' is merely imputed by thought, likewise, it is the same for others. Such an understanding breaks down the [strong grasping] that 'I and others' are unrelated, unconnected, independent. It is said that, when this is removed, one would be able to equalize self and other.

Student 1: The text says that the reason the ‘present I’ helps the ‘future I’ is due to seeing these two as inherently existent. My qualm is this: “I agree that is no inherently existent ‘I’, but the reason my ‘present I’ is helping the ‘future I’ is due to a causal relationship, not due to them being inherently existent.”

Khenrinpoche: Of course, one still has to accomplish one’s own purpose. [The text] is not saying that, once you realize emptiness you do not accomplish your own purpose. The point here is that, if you do realize emptiness of the self, you will also realize the emptiness of others. Such a realization of the emptiness of ‘self and others’ is the same emptiness. The main argument is that, [such a realization] makes it possible to equalizing self and other.

Ven Gyurme: Does it mean it will necessarily happen? **Khenrinpoche:** Of course. **Ven Gyurme:** Then what about arhats?

Khenrinpoche: Arhats also have to become enlightened, they do not remain as arhats forever.

Student 2: The ‘self of present’ and ‘self of future’ are different. How does that help one reduce grasping at the ‘I and others’ to be different?

Khenrinpoche: Proving that the ‘present I’ to be different from the ‘future I’, removing the wrong concept [that they are the same, is meant to address] the first qualm that ‘Your suffering does not harm me, so why is it my concern?’ Hence, there is such a mind that thinks that ‘I and others’ are different. Hence, one thinks there is no need for oneself to eliminate others’ suffering.

To address such a qualm, one [asserts the consequence] of such a negative thought back to oneself, thinking: “Since [the present I and future I are also] different, then why does one work now to eliminate one’s own future suffering?”

One will then [raise a following qualm: “Even though my future suffering does not harm me now, but it will harm ‘me’ in the future. The suffering of others do not harm ‘me’ in the future.” This happens due to an innate belief that the ‘present I’ and ‘future I’ are the] same.

This is the most important point for this chapter. Although this chapter is called “Teachings on Concentration,” but the main subject matter [for reflection] are actually these points.

[Another line of reasoning to establish why one should work for others:]

The meditation on bodhicitta is vitally important. In the teachings on generating bodhicitta, it is said that, every single happiness one has experienced and will experience, including the peace of nirvana, are the results of virtuous karma.
In the presentation of karma and its effects, Buddha said that every single experience of happiness/ pleasure in one’s continuum is the result of virtuous karma. If that is the case, since virtue does not arise without a cause or from [incompatible causes], then where does it arise from?
In the final analysis, it is all due to Buddha’s enlightened activities . Hence, Buddha is the empowering condition, the cause of virtue in all sentient beings’ minds. Simply put, all [virtues] came from Buddha’s blessings.
If all of one’s happiness in one’s continuum, which is the result of one’s virtue, which came due to Buddha’s enlightened activities, then where did Buddha come from?
Buddha came from bodhisattva. Bodhisattva came from meditating on bodhicitta, hence, bodhisattva came from bodhicitta.
Hence, from here one can see that, bodhicitta is therefore the source of all [the three times] temporary happiness in samsara and also even nirvana. Bodhicitta itself came from cherishing and respecting sentient beings who are suffering. Hence, it came from suffering sentient beings. Following from such a reason, one would have to assert that:
<i>Sentient beings are the most precious. This is because, they are the source of every single happiness. For those who [realize] this, they would then be able to see how all sentient beings are more important than themselves. They would see the reason to work hard for sentient beings to achieve their happiness [and eliminate their sufferings].</i>

[A reply to the qualm that meditating on compassion will increase one’s own suffering:]

Hence, since they see the point [of working for sentient beings], there is probably no concept of difficulties in their [mindsets]. Even if they do meet with difficulties or challenges, it will never become a condition to be tired or discouraged.
In fact, this makes them even more determined. This is because, in their hearts, they do not find it difficult. Hence, this does not [disturb their minds]. This is due to their incredible determination. The point is that, bodhicitta is [established] on reason.
Hence, in the perspective of those who have bodhicitta, the conditions that are usually considered as challenges are not so [for them] in that, they are not affected by it negatively. They do not become discouraged.

In fact, [such challenges make them] become even more courageous and determined. Hence, whatever difficulties or obstacles there are, like being sick, encountering spirit harms and so on, not only are they not affected by these, they are even able to utilize every single of such experiences to become a cause for enlightenment. Hence, it is said in the teachings:
<i>Transforming adverse conditions as the [path] for enlightenment.</i>
Hence, for them, difficult conditions do not make them become discouraged. These make them become even more determined, to have stronger compassion and work even harder for sentient beings. As the great Kadampa masters have said:
<i>If you have bodhicitta, it is your bodhicitta that will quickly purify your obscuration. If you have bodhicitta, it is your bodhicitta that will enable you to quickly complete the accumulation of merit.</i>
All such teachings on generating the ultimate good heart of bodhicitta, is to help one generate the thought to benefit others. This starts from something as small as a mere prayer wish to be able to help others.
It is said that, the meditation on bodhicitta is more powerful than the tantric practice on the meditation and hundreds of thousands of recitations on Vajrasattva to purify negativities.
This is the answer to the qualm that meditating on compassion increases one's own suffering:

3" Abandoning objections [8.104 – 8.106]

a" It is not valid [to assert that] a bodhisattva falls prey to suffering [because of] reflecting on the sufferings of sentient beings [8.104]

<i>8.104 a OBJECTION: Since compassion will multiply suffering greatly, b Why should I diligently develop it? c RESPONSE: If one were to contemplate the suffering of migrating beings, d How could the suffering of compassion be more?</i>
Whatever compassion one thinks one has in one's heart is not the real compassion that is founded on [/established by] valid reasons/ base/ support. Such 'compassion' are based on attachment, hence, these are called 'biased compassion'.
Hence, what one labels 'compassion' would not possess any valid support. This is because, these are all based on the delusion of attachment, which are wrong concepts. This is why, one's 'compassion' brings more suffering as it is founded on delusion.
Whereas, the real and pure compassion, in dependence upon which bodhicitta arises, since it is founded on valid reasons, is completely different [from one's usual sense of compassion.]
The essence is that, if one meditates correctly on compassion, such a meditation will not cause one to have more suffering.
<i>Khenrinpoche:</i> Hence, the answer is this: Don't worry, please meditate with the backing of good reasons, it will bring more happiness.

Student 3: How does one differentiate a real compassion from a wrong compassion based on attachment?

Khenrinpoche: If it is a valid compassion, then when one sees others suffer, this will increase such a compassion, the mind that is unable to bear the suffering of others. If it is not real compassion, then when it feels it is unable to bear the suffering of others, such a mind will lead one to give up, lose hope, become less determined, brings one unhappiness and more suffering.

So look within yourself what sort of compassion you have.

Ven Gyurme: If that is the case, then it follows that, when one generates real compassion, it will never degenerate.

Khenrinpoche: This is why, when it comes to whether compassion will degenerate or not, I think those who generate bodhicitta with the realization of emptiness as a support will probably never degenerate.

In the presentation of mind generation into twenty two types by way of similes, the first is called *Earth-like* mind generation. The second is called *Gold-like* mind generation. This [latter mind generation] is only achieved when one attains the *Middling path of accumulation*. It is said in the teachings that, when one reaches this stage, one's mind generation will never degenerate.

If that is the case, can one then assert that, by such a point in time, one would necessarily have the realization of emptiness? This is something to think about.

[Stating the effects of equalizing self and other and a resultant qualm:]

The essential point to equalizing self and other is this: Just as one would eliminate one’s own suffering, one would also generate the thought to eliminate others’ sufferings.
The point is, others are equal to one in that, just as one would eliminate one’s own suffering and accomplish one’s own happiness, likewise, one would also accomplish others’ happiness and overcome their suffering.
One trains here to regard others as one. When one develops such an equality, then when one sees others suffer, one would naturally develop the mind that is unable to bear/ tolerate their sufferings.
Qualm: “Even though it is suitable to regard others as equal and I should eliminate their sufferings, but when I see them suffer and become unable to bear it, would that not be an additional suffering?” The point is to overcome, eliminate suffering and not create nor add on to sufferings that one already has.
If one has equalized self and other, one would regard others as one. When one sees others suffer, one would naturally feel a sense of unease unable to bear their suffering. This is usually regarded as object to be abandoned. Then what is the point?

a" It is not valid [to assert that] a bodhisattva falls prey to suffering [because of] reflecting on the sufferings of sentient beings [8.104]

<p>8.104 a OBJECTION: Since compassion will multiply suffering greatly, b Why should I diligently develop it? c RESPONSE: If one were to contemplate the suffering of migrating beings, d How could the suffering of compassion be more?</p>
Khenrinpoche: How does the response address the qualm? For those who possess bodhicitta in their minds, when they meditate on compassion for suffering sentient beings, not only would their own suffering not increase, but such meditations would in fact bring an end and exhaust their own suffering.
For practitioners whose bodhicitta is conjoined with the wisdom realizing emptiness, when they meet with sufferings, due to such a mind generation being supported by a valid mind of wisdom, such difficulties do not negatively affect them. In fact, they are able to transform all such difficulties as conditions to increase their happiness in the practice of bodhicitta.
For such special beings, whose bodhicitta is supported by wisdom, then whatever external difficulties encountered do not cause any mental anguish nor disturbances. In fact, this serves to increase their practice of happiness.
Hence, the stronger their compassion, the nearer they would get towards full enlightenment. Hence, not only would the meditation on compassion in this context not contribute to more sufferings, in fact, it will bring more happiness.
However, such is not one’s own experience as one is unable to do this. Even when there is some good heart manifesting in one’s mind, but when someone were to confide their problems to one, one would also become affected and disturbed.
This is because, whatever good heart that manifested was not supported by a valid mind. In fact, the vast majority of the time, [one’s good heart] is based on wrong conceptions. Whatever love and compassion that one has is completely biased. This is not real love and compassion, rather, it is just some kind of concern and affection for those one considers to be on one’s side.

b" The need to reflect upon suffering [8.105 – 8.106]

<p>8.105 a If by one suffering b Much suffering would be destroyed, c Kind people would produce it d For themselves and others.</p>	<p>8.106 a Thus Supusha-chandra, b Although aware of the harm the king would cause him, c Did not prevent his own suffering d Because it would eradicate the suffering of many.</p>
8.105 says that, if one’s experience of a particular suffering would lead to the elimination of a great suffering, then there is point and is appropriate to go through and experience it.	
For example, even though there is pain and discomfort when one goes for an operation, but one [willingly] accepts it. One would not go for it without any reasons as there would be a great purpose [of being cured].	
Likewise, if the experience of one’s suffering is very beneficial and contributes to the happiness for all or many sentient beings by eliminating their sufferings, then instead of avoiding such experiences, it is something one must go through.	
It is said that, bodhisattvas voluntarily accepts sufferings. However, in the first place, it is rather difficult for them to suffer mental anguish due to the level of their minds. Even if they still do experience discomfort or unhappiness, but because they know that it is beneficial for all sentient beings, then they would voluntarily accept such experiences.	
There is an account of the bodhisattva Supusha-chandra mentioned in the <i>King of Concentration sutra</i> .	
He and seven thousand other bodhisattvas were living in the region controlled by a king where the Buddha’s teaching was in decline. They were all thus banished by this king to the forest.	

One day, through his clairvoyance, he saw that if he were to return to the [city] controlled by the king and teach Dharma to the king's subjects, many of them would be liberated from their sufferings. If he did not, all of them would not be freed. However, he also knew that if he went ahead, the king would behead him. Nevertheless, he still went ahead.
He then went to the city and stayed for seven days. During the day, he would reveal the Dharma to many beings. At night, without eating and resting, he would circumambulate the stupa that contained the relics of Buddha.
[When the king came to know what Supusha-chandra was doing], he became upset and told a butcher to kill him. The butcher then killed bodhisattva Supusha-chandra. No matter where he cut into the holy body, blood did not spill, only milk came out.
Even though the bodhisattva died, but due to seeing such extraordinary signs, the king generated great remorse. He then gathered all the mortal remains of the bodhisattva's holy body and enshrined it in a stupa. This account shows the point that, if having to experience a suffering leads to a greater benefit to sentient beings, then one should do so.
Even though the bodhisattva knew that he would be killed, but as a result of his teachings and sacrificing his life, tens of thousands of sentient beings achieved high rebirths as humans and gods, many were liberated from samsara and others generated bodhicitta. Due to all such great benefits, he [voluntarily] went through with the suffering of being killed.

3' The benefits of such meditations [8.107 – 8.110]

a' [Single-pointedly] applying oneself to the welfare of others is not [in itself] great suffering [8.107]

<p>8.107 a One whose continuum is familiarized in this way, b Since he takes joy in pacifying others' sufferings, c Will enter even Relentless Torment d Just as a swan enters a lotus pool.</p>
For those special beings whose minds are completely trained and habituated in having equalized and exchanged self and other, their only mission in life is to completely dedicate themselves to the welfare of others. They really do not have many problems in their lives as they enjoy pacifying others' sufferings, even if they have to experience sufferings themselves.
They are likened to the swans who joyfully enter the pond. It is said that, having trained their minds, such bodhisattvas have no difficulties taking on sufferings to work for sentient beings. In fact, they have no difficulties even going to the lowest of the relentless hot hells, if there were benefits in doing so.
One sees here that, it is the power of the mind that assumes primacy. Even through limited experience, one knows that, if one is doing something that one really enjoys, one would never feel that it is a burden, but [as sheer pleasure and happiness].
Just like when one was younger, one may have enjoyed very much playing in the sun. There were occasions when one was so engrossed in it that, even though it was very hot, one did not get disturbed by the heat and would continue playing.
This proves the power and primacy of one's mind, which decides and controls everything.
In fact, this applies to everything one does. If one really wants and enjoys doing something, due to one's enthusiasm and seeing the point of doing so, then there is nothing really difficult in doing it.
It is same with learning the Dharma and coming to class. If one really yearns and is enthusiastic [for the teachings], then it is not difficult at all. Of course, if there is no real interest nor yearning, then it would become really difficult. Then not only does one's suffering not decrease when one comes to class, in fact, one gets even more stressed and unhappy.

b' As the bliss of that is supreme, one engages in [working for] others' welfare [8.108]

<p>8.108 a Will not the ocean of joy b If all beings are free c Satisfy me? d What is the use of desiring liberation?</p>
Whatever happiness one achieves through one's individual liberation is nothing, when compared to the bliss and satisfaction one will get when one is able to benefit and liberate all sentient beings. Such a happiness through benefiting all sentient beings is unparalleled, the happiness through achieving one's own liberation does not even come close to comparison.

c' One's own arrogance comes to be pacified [8.109(ab)]

<p>8.109 a Due to that, although working for the welfare of others, b There is no conceit or amazement.</p>
For those who possess the real intention and do work solely to benefit others without any other motivation, then such a person will never feel a sense of superiority, importance, conceit, amazement and claim credit: "I have done this and that..." Such persons [would feel that their work to benefit sentient beings is not so important,] this is because:
As bodhisattvas, they regard this as their job, something they have to do. Since it is something they have to do, they would not feel any sense of being inflated [with pride] as it is merely a job. Hence, those who really work for sentient beings would not possess any arrogance or pride.

d' [The pleasure and benefits of equalizing self and others] do not depend on reciprocation and fully-ripened effects [now and later] [8.109(cd)]

<p>8.109 c Because of the joy in others' welfare unequivocally, d There is no hope for ripening effects.</p>
<p>Such extraordinary bodhisattvas, also do not expect any gains or returns from anyone in this life, having people appreciating what they have done, being praised, receiving rewards or present and so on. Not only that, they do not even have any expectations for any [positive] results in the future. Hence, they have no wish for anything that has to do with samsara.</p>
<p>Hence, the entire point is that, if one has the real wish from the heart to benefit others and says that, without any other agendas, motivation nor expectations, then one would never experience any difficulties.</p>
<p>Hence, this shows that, those who really works for others from the heart only experience bliss and happiness.</p>
<p>One therefore, just have to try one's best, think about what it means to benefit others. When one is in a position to help others in one's daily life, then one has to ensure it is only about helping others without others motives or agendas.</p>
<p>If it is really done sincerely, it is said that, there is only peace and happiness.</p>

e' It is due to such reasons that meditating on equalizing self and others is appropriate [8.110]

<p>8.110 a Therefore just as I protect myself b From unpleasant things however small, c In the same way I should act towards others d With a mind of protection and a compassionate mind.</p>
<p>Since self and others are equal without any difference, one should meditate on equalizing self and other in that, just as one protects oneself from suffering, one should also protect others from suffering.</p>
<p>For example, just as how one goes the extra mile to stop others from criticizing oneself, making so much effort just to protect oneself from such 'harms', one should also do likewise to protect others from such a harm.</p>
<p>Hence, if one meditates and trains one's mind in developing this equality of self and other, one would [definitely] develop it.</p>

4' One can develop such [an attitude] if one familiarizes oneself with equalizing self and other [8.111 – 8.112]

<p>8.111 a Although not [my] possessions, b Through familiarity c I have come to regard d The drops of sperm and blood of others as "I".</p>	<p>8.112 a So in the same way, why should I be unable b To apprehend the bodies of others as "I"? c It is not difficult to posit d My body as also "other."</p>
<p>It is said that, if one is not habituated to equalizing self and other, then doing so would be difficult. However, if one is habituated [with such a practice], then it will be possible.</p>	
<p>One's body came from the egg and sperm of one's parents. Hence, it does not belong to one. However, one regards one's body as 'mine'. The thought thinking "this is my body" is just natural and effortless. But if one analyzes, what one has come to regard as 'mine' actually does not really belong to one, as it is part of one's parents bodies and not one's body.</p>	
<p>Hence, why is one calling something that is not 'mine' as 'mine'? The egg and sperm, into which one's consciousness enters into, do not belong to one. One enters to that and through the power of familiarity and appropriation, one comes to regard [one's body] as 'mine'.</p>	
<p>That which one presently considers as one's own body came from one's parents' egg and sperm. However, does such a concept/ feeling/ idea of 'my body' exist right there from the side of one's parents' egg and sperm from the first moment? No, it has never been one's body from the side of the egg and sperm. [Such a combination] was the basis of designation.</p>	
<p>One's consciousness then enters it. Due to the relationship [between body and mind], one imputes 'this is my body.' Hence, from the side of the egg and sperm, [such an aggregate of the body] is not 'one's body'.</p>	
<p>Even though it is one's body, but its existence as 'one's body' is something that is merely designated in dependence upon the egg and sperm, its basis of designation. In relation to it, one merely designates 'This is my body.' Hence, there is nothing coming from the side of the egg and sperm. But through familiarity, one has accustomed oneself to it as 'my body'.</p>	
<p>So in the same way, why should I be unable to apprehend the bodies of others as "I" if one is accustomed to it?</p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: Are you getting the point? If one understands the example, one should extend it to the meaning. One is trying to prove here that, it is always possible to equalizing self and other.</p>	
<p>Hence, if one is accustomed, then it is possible to regard the bodies of all sentient beings as 'one's own body'. One would then be able to progress to the wish to benefit them.</p>	
<p>Hence, on the basis of equalizing self and other, when one reflects on the advantages of cherishing others, One would then be able to progress to work for the elimination of their suffering.</p>	

b) The way to exchange self and other [8.113 – 8.187]

i) A brief presentation [8.113 – 8.187]

1' The way to exchange self and other [8.113]

**8.113 a Having understood myself to be faulty
b And to be an ocean of excellences with respect to others,
c I shall cultivate completely discarding cherishing myself
d And adopting others.**

Through understanding the faults of cherishing oneself to be the source of all problems and suffering, while the benefits of cherishing others is the source of all the happiness and qualities, then the way to exchanging self and other is to do the reverse: **One discards one's self cherishing while cultivating the mind to cherish others.**

2' The reasons it is appropriate to familiarize oneself [with such attitudes] [8.114]

**8.114 a In the same way as the hands and so forth
b Are asserted as limbs of the body,
c Likewise why are embodied creatures
d Not asserted as limbs of migrating beings?**

One's hands and feet are not the same, as they are different objects/ phenomena. But because they are parts of one's body, one has the interest to protect them and all other parts of one's body.

If that is the case, although sentient beings are numberless, many and different, one should meditate on cherishing them all. Right from the onset, if one is able to regard others as one, then it is said that one will be able to cherish and protect them.

ii) An extensive explanation [8.115 – 8.187]

1' Explaining the way to exchange self and other [8.115 – 8.139]

a' An extensive explanation [8.115 – 8.135]

1" Familiarizing oneself with cherishing others [8.115 – 8.120]

a" The capacity to exchange self and other and the pacification of conceit [8.115 – 8.116(ab)]

**8.115 a Through familiarization a mind of "I" arises
b Towards this body devoid of a self;
c In a similar way, why would a mind of "I" not be produced
d Towards other sentient beings also through familiarization?**

**8.116 a Although I enact others' welfare in this way,
b Conceit or amazement will not arise.**

These two verses are similar to 8.111 and 8.112. Once the mind is trained, then it is able to see others as one. Within such an attitude, one then works for others. One would then not generate any conceit or amazement.

The earlier two verses belonged to the section on equalizing self and other. Here, these two verses belonged to the section on exchanging self and other.

b" Instructions on making effort in this meditation without [expectations for] the fully-ripened effect [8.116(cd) – 8.117]

**8.116 c It is just like not hoping for
a return
d Due to having fed myself.**

**8.117 a Therefore, just as I protect myself
b From unpleasantness however slight,
c In the same way I should familiarize myself
d With a mind of protection towards migrating beings and a compassionate mind.**

Even if sentient beings are experiencing just some small suffering, one should protect them from it.

c" Doing more for the sake of others [8.118]

**8.118 a Hence, out of his great exalted compassion
b The Protector Avalokiteshvara even blessed his name
c To dispel the fear
d Of being among migrating beings.**

For example, in the midst of a crowd, there are some people who feel very uneasy, meek and have a fear of relating to others. This is not really a big suffering, but even with this, the Savior Chenrezig blessed His name and prayed that, just by thinking of His holy name, may sentient beings be freed from such fears/ sufferings.

Perhaps, feeling very small amidst a crowd, anxious, uneasy and being unable to speak, are essentially due to a small and tight mind. If it is more open and spacious, then one would not have such feelings and behaviors. The way to open up one's mind is perhaps to think of benefiting others.

If one thinks deeper, many of one's fears, problems, worries, anxieties and so on, all come from one's ego thinking about and focusing only on oneself constantly. This makes a very small and tight mind. Whereas others who really think of benefiting others would think big. Such people will not have such stressed or uptight mind.

It is unsure that just by remembering Chenrezig's name, one's uptight and uneasy mind would suddenly become the opposite.
Perhaps there is some relation in that, if one works on one's mind, making it more vast and expansive through the thought of benefiting and cherishing others, on the basis of such a cultivation, if one then relies on Chenrezig and prays to Him, then due to [the blessings] of His prayers and compassion, then perhaps [it may work].
By recalling Chenrezig and what the qualities of His exalted mind embodies, one makes aspirational prayers to Him to open one's mind to cherish others, then there would be some benefits. Essentially, like the great beings, when one reaches the level where one's heart is completely dedicated to others, then perhaps thenceforth there would not be any problems in life.

d" One will be able to develop [such an attitude] if one familiarizes oneself with it [8.119]

<p>8.119 a I should not turn away from what is difficult; b By the power of familiarization in this way c I will become unhappy even when someone d Whose name when heard once frightened me is not around.</p>
The teachings say that, if one gives up merely because it is difficult, then it is not right. It also says that, if one strives at it, one will be able to develop such an attitude.
For example, there are people whose names when merely heard, instill fears in others. However, it is also really possible to come to know such a fearful person and become friends to the point that, when such a person is not around, one misses him.
This shows that, what one felt was an impossible situation can become a possibility.

e" One should meditate on exchanging self and other with the desire to free both self and others from suffering [8.120]

<p>8.120 a Whoever wishes to quickly protect b Himself and others c Should practice that holy secret – d The exchanging of self for others.</p>
Those who wish to free themselves and others quickly from both the extreme of samsara and nirvana should practice this.
This instruction of exchanging self and other should not be made known to the Hearers and Solitary Realizers. This is because, [such a practice] cannot fit their minds, making them unsuitable vessels for such teachings.
Since such an instruction of exchanging self and other is the final, ultimate and highest secret of the Mahayana, hence, it should not be taught to those who are unripe for it.

Student: What can one do now to take on the suffering of others?

Khenrinpoche: Start with making aspirational prayers. At the moment, it is of course difficult. At the most, what one can do is to generate the wish or prayers. This is the reason why the mind needs to be trained gradually. One cannot just [perform such a task] immediately. Hence, one needs to train gradually and consistently. [So the question is whether] is one willing to train or not.

The teachings clearly say and one also knows intellectually that, [one needs to] firstly meditate extensively on the faults of cherishing oneself to the point that one is convinced that [these are faults]. Is one doing that?

Secondly, one should meditate extensively on cherishing others to the point that, one actually feels that it is true. It is then that [one can start to train in taking on others' suffering].

Therefore, there are many stages where one cannot [ignore and bypass]. One must repeatedly develop such thoughts, which takes a long period with consistent effort. Even if one cannot put [such trainings] into action, one [can at least] verbalize it by thinking of [such a task] and expressing one's intention to do so. One then practice as much as one can.

This is why, when it comes to taking the bodhisattva vow, there is a gradual way to do so. After training one's mind in all the various stages for developing bodhicitta, when one reaches the point where one develops some experience of the thought of bodhicitta, one then generates it through a ritual without any commitment.

When one's mind becomes stronger, one then adopts bodhicitta through a ritual that comes with a commitment. This is adopting aspirational bodhicitta with a commitment. It is after then that, one gradually takes on the engaged bodhisattva vow. Hence, this shows that, [to be able to take on others' suffering,] it requires a step-by-step approach.

Therefore, if one aspires to benefit others, one has to start with a mere wish through aspirational prayers. One then trains the mind [gradually. In the meantime,] one does whatever one can at one's level. Starting from here, one takes the first step, trains gradually and correctly in achieving all the steps. Hence, it requires such kind of determination.

However, just because one feels it is difficult and therefore does not even start, thinking there are too many [trainings], then one will never achieve it. That is for sure.

Therefore, one should ask oneself this question:

- 1) Without doing anything that manifests into external actions
- 2) Generating a mere thought
- 3) Sincerely from one's heart
- 4) Which is not mere hollow words
- 5) "May I be able to benefit all sentient beings"

Would such a thought be of any use? If there is, what benefits would one get from this?

[How generating the mere thought sincerely wishing to benefit others itself is greatly beneficial:]

It was explained in the last lesson that, meditating on compassion does not increase suffering. Rather, it actually exhausts and brings suffering to an end. One needs to know why this is so.

It was shown in earlier verses that, if one manages to equalize self and other, this means that, just as one works to eliminate one's own suffering and achieve one's own happiness, likewise, one also does so for others thinking that: "I have to do the same for others." With such an attitude, one will not find any difficulties [in working for others].

The happiness that one can experience through freeing sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering is said to be much greater than the happiness of peace one experiences when one liberates only oneself from samsara.

[Even though] this is the case, how is it that the happiness that come from working for others and freeing them from their sufferings is greater than the joy one experiences for one's own individual liberation?

For those who completely dedicate themselves to others without any self interest, their prides naturally become pacified. They also do not expect anything in return. Many reasons were shown why it is possible to equalize self and other, that one can actually do so. Hence, is there any benefit if one were to generate the mere thought to benefit sentient beings?

Student 1: The thought of benefiting others trains one to expand one's mind, brings one happiness by familiarizing one away from self cherishing. **Student 2:** Aspiring it enables one to be able to benefit others in the future. **Student 3:** Even though aspiration is good, but if there is no action then there's no benefit. **Student 4:** It helps me to change for the better slowly.

Student 5: It is beneficial because karma is created by the mind. By merely thinking of benefiting others, there is virtuous karma. **Student 3:** Even though one can say it is mind training, but if one merely says benefiting sentient beings in words, then there's actually no real benefit to them. It is the action that counts.

Khenrinpoche: It is good that everyone has different ideas. As it is said in the teaching, everything is the production, projection, fabrication of the mind. Before there is any [progress], the mind must move literally. There must be the thought.

If the thought to benefit others arises sincerely and strongly from the depths of one's heart, the karma accumulated is virtuous karma. It also prepares the mind by leaving a potential/ imprint in the mind to actually be able to benefit others.

Whether such a thought actually directly translates into direct action or not, a positive imprint is left in the mind for one to be able to do so. [Such an imprint] may ripen in this life, one may then do something beneficial to others. Even if not, it [leaves the potential] for one's mind to be able to benefit others in future lives, from life to life.

Hence, one has to firstly develop the intention/ thought. This leaves an imprint on one's mind. From this, one will eventually be able to really do something for others and not just as a thought.

As shown in earlier verses, if one is able to develop such a thought to benefit others sincerely, then one will experience many benefits. There will be a decrease in one's ego, self-preoccupation, jealousy and so on, and there will be peace in one's heart.

When the thought to benefit others arises strongly and sincerely, this leads to calm, peace and happiness in the mind. This is because, the stronger one's intention to benefit others, the weaker will be one's self cherishing.

One's mind become more disciplined and subdued. As the teachings say: *Subdue your mind completely*. When one's self cherishing weakens, then there is definitely more peace in one's heart. Eventually, one will actually be able to benefit others.

The thought of strong sincere intention to benefit others makes the work of benefiting others easier, one would not find it difficult. Even when one's thought of benefiting others does not translate into direct action that benefits others, but [such an intention] changes one from the inside. This then slowly shows in the manner one conducts oneself physically and verbally.

This will have an effect on the people one interacts with. One will at least not harm them or cause lesser harm. One would then be able to offer some peace and happiness.

One understands that, merely remembering and reciting the name of Avalokiteśvara will protect one from many fears and sufferings of samsara. Perhaps the reason this has such an impact on sentient beings is because of the powerful prayers that He had made while on the path to benefit others [when they] just hear or recite His name.

All such powerful prayers that He had made in the past all originated from the thought to benefit sentient beings.

Merely possessing the good heart mind of compassion, the thought to benefit others brings, peace to oneself. [Above that,] it also brings peace to those around one. This also have a positive impact on the environment, sentient beings and [the energies] within it, merely by one's presence. This is all due to the power of one's good heart intention/ thought to benefit others.

Having the real strong and sincere good heart/ thought of benefiting others definitely has many advantages which can benefit others. It can even benefit others directly.

Although the person may not be doing anything [physically and verbally] to directly benefit others, but merely being around such a special person who possesses such a good heart of compassion and bodhicitta itself, can alleviate whatever problems one may have in life. Hence, merely by being in his presence has that effect.

[How merely listening and reading the teachings are insufficient, one needs to think:]

<p>Khenrinpoche: Are the meditators meditating on bodhicitta in the mountains actually benefiting sentient beings?</p>
<p>Hence, merely generating the thought to benefit others is not without any point/ purpose/ use. In fact, there are great benefits.</p>
<p>Of course, there are different stages in cultivating and generating the good heart mind of enlightenment as taught in the Lam Rim. Firstly, there is the mere generation of the mind of enlightenment. Then there is the adopting of bodhicitta through a ritual. Then there is adopting the engaged bodhisattva vows.</p>
<p>Hence, it is not sufficient merely to generate the mind of enlightenment alone. One has to [progress on] the various stages of cultivating this bodhicitta.</p>
<p>It is like making mentally imagined offerings. One mentally imagines making many different kinds of pleasant offering substances that fill the entire space. Even though in reality there are no actual substances but mere mental projection/ visualization, but one is making offerings and will still get the benefits of accumulating merit.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: Do you accumulate merit just by mentally imagining all kinds of substances and offer them?</p>
<p>Student 1: If you think about benefiting others, it means you are reducing self cherishing and increasing the mind cherishing others. This means you are accumulating merit. But merely thinking of benefiting others does not actually benefit others. This is because, one is accumulating merit for oneself. To benefit others, there has to be some [physical and verbal] actions.</p>
<p>Student 2: Even hearing about [them practicing can] inspire one. One has to start somewhere and the best way is to meditate in isolation. Even if he does not immediately benefit humans, other [non-human] sentient beings also receive benefits from the ‘energy’ he [radiates]. When one is near or hears of some compassionate person who thinks of benefiting others, it helps.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: The point I have been trying to make all this while is not sufficient to say yes or no. You have to know the reasons. This is the purpose of a long term study program, which gives time to think. It is insufficient to merely read or listen.</p>
<p>One has to develop a [conclusion] for oneself, which must be based on reasons. Hence, [one’s studying] should not remain [at the] superficial [level] but has to go deeper to get definite ascertainment in one’s heart with regards to the topic in question.</p>
<p>If one does not use one’s intelligence, wisdom and pursue the topic whether by listening or reading, with a fresh and alert mind that really wishes to know, then that will be the reason why one gets bored listening to the Dharma.</p>
<p>[One would think:] “I’ve heard this and that before.” In a way, it is very simple, one merely and superficially goes through this and that point. One then thinks one knows and says this or that. Due to thinking one has heard all such topics before and knows the words, one then gets bored because one thinks one is not learning anything new. That is why one has to think.</p>

2" Making effort to abandon self-cherishing [8.121 – 8.124]

a" Self-cherishing is the cause of all fear [8.121]

<p>8.121 a Because of attachment to my body, b Even a small object of fear frightens me; c Who would not abhor as an enemy d This body that gives rise to fear?</p>
<p>Due to one’s self cherishing, one cherishes, clings on strongly and is very attached to one’s own body. One is even afraid of such small things as insects. One thinks: “It is going to bite me and I will fall sick or contract diseases due to that.” If a small insect can actually bring so much worries, then it goes without saying what more worries one gets from other situations.</p>
<p>This small example highlights the fact that, due to one’s self cherishing, one develops attachment to all sorts of things like one’s body. One has strong worries and fears that are related to it, which gives rise to many problems.</p>
<p>The point is, there is no need to cling onto one’s body. This is because, it is the source of all of one’s suffering, the suffering of conditionality/ all pervasive compounded suffering. This is the basis for all other sufferings.</p>
<p>Essentially, this refers to one’s contaminated aggregate of the body. Hence, the wise are so called because, they see that contaminated aggregate of the body is the source of fears and problems. Hence, they are not attached nor cling onto it.</p>
<p>Since [one’s body] is the source of problems, the advice for one is not to become attached and cling onto it.</p>

b" Reflecting on how [self-cherishing] acts to [move] one towards negativities [8.122 – 8.124]

<p>8.122 a Wishing for a procedure to alleviate b The sicknesses of hunger, thirst, and the like of the body, c I kill birds, fish and deer d And ambush [travelers] at the roads.</p>	<p>8.123 a For the sake of profit and honor b I kill even my father and mother c And appropriate the property of the Three Jewels. D Thus I will burn in Relentless Torment.</p>	<p>8.124 a What wise man would desire, b Protect and venerate this body c Who would not scorn it d And regard it as an enemy?</p>
<p>Due to one’s strong attachment and clinging to one’s body, whenever one becomes sick, hungry, feeling too cold, hot and encountering other miserable situations, one then puts so much time and effort to remove all such discomfort and problems.</p>		

<i>I kill birds, fish and deer:</i> One even kills or harms many other beings merely to keep this body alive.
Motivated by one's self cherishing, one is so attached to oneself, one's body and so on. To fulfill all such desires, one would steal, rob and some would even kill their parents, who were so kind in bringing one to the world.
Motivated by self cherishing, some also steal the possessions and properties of the Three Rare Sublime Ones. When one does so, one will only burn in the lowest of hells.
Because the wise ones, those who wish happiness, see how self cherishing leads to attachment, which then leads to all sorts of non-virtues, would not regard the body as something to be cherished nor protected out of attachment. Since one's attachment to one's body brings so much worries and fears, then one should work on one's attachment and reduce it.

3" Reflecting on the faults and benefits of primarily cherishing self and other [respectively] [8.125 – 8.139]

a" A list of the disadvantages and benefits of cherishing self and other [respectively] [8.125 – 8.130]

(1) An extensive explanation [8.125 – 8.129]

(a) In terms of giving [8.125]

<p>8.125 a “If I give them, what shall I enjoy?”— b Such thinking for my own purpose is the way of ghosts; c “If I enjoy them, what shall I give?”— d Such thinking for others’ purpose is a quality of the gods.</p>
Such thoughts like: “I will have nothing if I were to give away my possessions like food, money and so on,” belonged to those who consider themselves more important than anyone else. Such a person would have difficulties practicing generosity.
Such thoughts for one's own purpose is said to be the way of the ghosts. Due to one's self cherishing, one always thinks one is more important than others, when there are opportunities to give, one's self cherishing would say: “No, [my own welfare] is more important.” This leads to miserliness, which accumulates the karma for rebirths as hungry ghosts. Hence:
“If I give them, what shall I enjoy?” Such thinking for my own purpose is the way of ghosts.
This shows the faults and disadvantages of one's self cherishing. Due to it, in this case, one becomes miserly. One merely [hordes] and finds it difficult to give. Due to this, one accumulates the cause to be born as a hungry ghost.
Whereas someone who considers others as more important would think: “If I were to use such possessions, then others will have nothing to enjoy. [So what shall I give for them to enjoy]?” Such thoughts for others' purposes is a quality of the gods.
Those who are able to cherish others, considering them to be more important, are able to give and share their possessions with others. It is said that, when one does so, then <i>From giving comes wealth, from ethical discipline comes good rebirths.</i>
Without self cherishing and at least with the thought to benefit others, considering others as more important, one would then be able to share and give to others. This will result in wealth for oneself in this and future lives. One can even be born in the god realms where there are a lot of enjoyments. Hence, such thoughts lead to such good outcomes. Therefore:
Such thinking for others’ purpose is a quality of the gods.
Miserliness and generosity are merely a thought. Miserliness is a mental grasping tightly holding onto the object, it has nothing to do with physically grasping tightly onto one's possessions.
The opposite to this, generosity, is also just a mind. As soon as the mind thinks: “I'll give it away,” whether one has actually given away one's possessions or not does not matter, with [such a thought] and without clinging, one is already giving [and one accumulates the intention of generosity]. Hence, generosity is a mind.
If from one's heart, one has already mentally dedicated something [away] to others, then one would not have the idea that it is still one's. Even though the object may still be there in front of one, one would not have any attachment towards it.
This is different from saying or [superficially] thinking of giving it away, but [deep down] one still thinks it is ‘mine.’

(b) In terms of harming [8.126]

<p>8.126 a If, for myself, I cause harm to others, b I shall fall into the hells and the like; c If for the sake of others, I cause harm to myself, d I shall acquire all that is magnificent.</p>
For one's selfish purposes following one's self cherishing thought: “I want this and that,” to get what one wants, one then harms others by killing, injuring, stealing and so on. One accumulates nonvirtues which throw one into the hells and so on.
Whereas, if one is motivated by concern and the thought to benefit others, then if one dedicates one's body, possessions and roots of virtue to sentient beings, one will take good rebirths as humans or gods.

(c) In terms of praise and renown [8.127]

**8.127 a Desiring eminence for myself
b I shall become of unfortunate migrations, bad and stupid;
c If it is shifted to others
d I shall acquire honor in good migrations.**

Motivated by self cherishing, one pursues fame, high positions of power, possessions and so on. Such actions will cause one to be reborn in the lower realms. Even if one takes rebirth as a human, but due to such nonvirtues, one will be born into a low caste, have unpleasant physical appearance and become foolish.

If instead of wishing these for oneself, one reverses such desires and wishes it sincerely for others and habituates oneself with such thoughts, one will accumulate the karma for good rebirths. In one's future lives, one will receive praise and respect.

(d) In terms of activities [8.128]

**8.128 a If I employ others for my own purposes,
b I myself shall experience servitude and the like;
c If I use myself for the sake of others,
d I shall experience lordliness and the like.**

Due to self cherishing, if one were to enslave others and force them to work for one's comfort and happiness without giving them any choice, then this will lead one to be born similarly to be enslaved by others.

Whereas motivated by concern for others, if one were to work for their benefits and happiness, then one will be born in positions of power, status, having good physical appearance and so on.

If I employ others for my own purposes: In the commentary, it says *If I enslave others without giving them a choice*. Hence, enslaving is what it means, which is something one needs to think about.

(e) In terms of benefits and bliss [8.129]

(2) Summary [8.130]

**8.129 a Whatever joy there is in this world
b All comes from desiring others to be happy,
c And whatever suffering there is in this world
d All comes from desiring myself to be happy.**

**8.130 a What need is there to say much?
b The childish work for their own purpose;
c The Muni worked for others' purpose.
D Look at the difference between these two!**

Everything one does daily in every single moment is for oneself to be happy: "I want to be happy so I am doing all these things." However, one does not achieve what one wants but gets a lot of problems instead. These verses are saying that, one has been [wanting oneself to be happy] since beginningless rebirths, yet one has achieved nothing for oneself.

Considering what the Buddhas and bodhisattvas have achieved, these are just happiness, bliss and without problems. This is because, they mainly have the thoughts to cherish and benefit sentient beings. The verse says "Can you not see the big difference?" Hence, it is asking one to think carefully and meditate on the differences between the two!

This is the summary of the section on *A list of the disadvantages and benefits of cherishing self and other respectively* [8.125 – 8.130]. One has to analyze on the problems of one's own selfishness, the loss one experiences when one follows after self cherishing and the benefits, what one stands to gain, from cherishing others.

Hence, as much as possible, one has to read, listen, then sit down to think and meditate about these points so as to generate the mind/ thought to benefit others. It is said that, if one is really able to think of and cherish others rather than oneself, then there will be so much happiness of peace and bliss and so forth that one will experience.

b" Thus, the appropriateness of discarding self-cherishing [8.131 – 8.135]

(1) The unseen disadvantages [8.131]

**8.131 a If I do not correctly exchange my happiness
b And the sufferings of others,
c I shall not accomplish the state of buddhahood
d And even in cyclic existence shall have no happiness.**

If one does not correctly exchange one's perspective to focus on others to eliminate their sufferings and achieve their happiness, but merely being preoccupied with achieving one's own happiness and overcoming one's own problems, then the verse says that, not to mention not attaining enlightenment, one cannot even achieve any happiness in samsara.

If one analyzes carefully at oneself, it is very clear that, since beginningless rebirths till now, all what one innately thinks of is just oneself being the most important in the world. One focuses and prioritizes that above everything else.

[One has to ask oneself:] "Am I truly happy?" Whoever the person may be, so long as he thinks he is the most important, then it does not matter where he travels, visits or goes to, it will be very difficult to be a really happy person on the inside:

And even in cyclic existence shall have no happiness.

(2) The visible disadvantages [8.132]

**8.132 a Let alone what is beyond this world –
b Because of servants not doing work
c And because of masters not giving pay,
d Even the purpose of this life will not be fulfilled.**

Khenrinpoche: [The disadvantages are] visible, but do you see them or not?

(3) A presentation of the disadvantages in brief [8.133]

**8.133 a [By rejecting the method that] establishes foreseeable and unforeseeable happiness,
b The happiness of success will be completely cast away.
c And because of inflicting suffering on others,
d The confused will take upon terrible suffering.**

(4) The appropriateness of discarding self-cherishing [8.134 – 8.135]

**8.134 a If whatever harms,
b Fear and suffering in the worlds
c All arise from grasping at a self,
d Then of what use is that great ghost to me?**

**8.135 a If I do not completely forsake it
b I shall not be able to abandon suffering,
c Just as I cannot avoid being burnt
d If I do not cast aside fire.**

The apprehension of self is the source of all the problems. So long as one has apprehension of the self in one's heart, one will never be free of suffering, just like someone who will continue to be burnt so long as he holds onto fire instead of letting it go

Student 1: Is bodhicitta necessarily conjoined with refuge to the Three Jewels?

Khenrinpoche: As you all already know from the great treatises, bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment, mind generation, is called *the mind generation possessing the two aspirations*. In short, these are the aspirations for the welfare of sentient beings and to achieve full enlightenment. Simply put, bodhicitta is a mind that wishes to achieve full enlightenment to benefit and accomplish the welfare of sentient beings.

With regards to refuge, there are causal and resultant refuge. If one thinks about it, one would be able to see how mind generation is like resultant refuge. Hence, one can say that, for there to be a fully-qualified mind generation in anyone’s continuum, one must possess refuge.

As for the thought to benefit sentient beings, there can be varying degrees. However, so long as anyone who does good to benefit others, whether such a person is a bodhisattva or not, one should rejoice in his actions. The teachings also tell one that, whether anyone is a bodhisattva or not, one should also meditate on sentient beings as bodhisattvas. One needs to and should rejoice in the actions of such persons who are benefiting others. One should therefore praise and respect them.

(4) The appropriateness of discarding self-cherishing [8.134 – 8.135]

<p>8.134 a If whatever harms, b Fear and suffering in the worlds c All arise from grasping at a self, d Then of what use is that great ghost to me?</p>	<p>8.135 a If I do not completely forsake it b I shall not be able to abandon suffering, c Just as I cannot avoid being burnt d If I do not cast aside fire.</p>
<p>There are reasons why one should discard self-grasping. One faces many harms in samsara from all sorts of situations like enemies, spirits or even mosquitoes and so on, which causes one different fears and worries. Arising from self-grasping, one experiences the suffering of birth, aging, sickness, death, all the problems of present and future lives.</p>	
<p>The root of every single problem and suffering is one’s self-grasping, the thought grasping at the self, [like] the ‘I’ existing by way of its own character inherently, holding onto it as truly existent. Here it is referred to as the great ghost.</p>	
<p>One’s self-grasping has kept one circling in the three realms, it has prevented one from leaving the ocean of great suffering. All the disturbances and harms that one experiences from spirits, ghosts and so on, have their roots in self-grasping. Hence, the self-grasping is called the great ghost.</p>	
<p>Therefore, until one is able to destroy and abandon one’s self-grasping, there is no way one can abandon suffering. Holding on to a self and not abandoning it is likened to someone who, though not wanting to be burnt by fire but still holds onto it. Hence, “<i>So long as I do not let go of the fire, I will not avoid being burnt.</i>”</p>	

b' Summary [8.136 – 8.139]

1" The way to exchange self and other [8.136 – 8.137]

<p>8.136 a Therefore, in order to pacify the harms inflicted upon me b And in order to pacify the sufferings of others, c I shall give myself up to others d And cherish them as I do myself.</p>	<p>8.137 a “I am under the ownership of others,” b Of this, mind, you must know certainly; c Now, except for the purpose of all sentient beings, d You must not think of anything else.</p>
<p>Since self-grasping is the root of every single problem for oneself and others, to pacify and stop all the harms that oneself and others will experience in the present and all future lives, I shall give myself up to others and cherish them as I do myself.</p>	
<p>After having given up oneself to others, one must know with certainty that “I am under the ownership of others.” One needs such an ascertainment/ certainty from one’s heart that, once one has exchanged self and other, has given up oneself to others, then this will be one’s status, being under the ownership of others.</p>	
<p>With such an understanding, attitude and certainty in mind, one makes, holds onto and lives by the pledge of just working for others’ benefit. Everything that one does after having exchanged self and others is just to work for them.</p>	

2" [Stopping] misapplication [of the principle] once one has exchanged [8.138]

<p>8.138 a I should not accomplish my purpose b With these eyes and so forth that are under the ownership of others. c I should not do anything with eyes and so forth for [others’] purpose d That is contrary to them.</p>
<p>Once one has given up and surrendered oneself to others, one then belongs to others. Hence, even one’s eyes, ears, hand, legs and so on also belong to others. Therefore, whatever one does with such body parts should only be done for others’ benefits.</p>

Since one has dedicated oneself to others, it is therefore inappropriate to use one's body, for example, for one's own selfish purposes only. One should hence refrain from doing anything with one's body working for one's own purposes.

Since one has dedicated one's body to others, then one should not [use these body parts to] stare or glare at sentient beings, abuse or assault them with one's hands and so forth.

Although one should adopt such behaviors after having exchanged self and other, one should first mentally practice exchanging self and other. Once that is accomplished, then these are some of the examples of what one should do in practice.

3" Practicing unmistakably [8.139]

**8.139 a Thus sentient beings should be taken as principal,
 b Whatever I behold upon my body,
 c I should appropriate and use
 d For the benefit of others.**

For the reasons above, one should then prioritize the needs and happiness of sentient beings first, one then uses and partakes whatever possessions one has like food, clothing and so forth, for the purpose of accomplishing others' happiness.

2' The way to [exchange self and other through thought] [8.140 – 8.158]

a' Brief presentation [8.140]

b' Extensive explanation [8.141 – 8.158]

a' Brief presentation [8.140]

**8.140 a Taking someone inferior and so forth to be himself,
 b And taking himself to be the other,
 c [A bodhisattva] should meditate upon envy, competitiveness, and pride,
 d With a mind free of conceptualization.**

One has to understand this first position. If one does not understand this first point, one would not be able to understand all the later verses.

Whenever one meets with someone one considers as inferior, one would feel a sense of superiority: "I am better than you," pride would then arise. When one meets with peers, one would generate negative competitiveness. When one meets with those one considers superior than oneself, one is usually jealous. These are the usual reactions.

Such attitudes and reactions are wrong. Hence, one needs to abandon and eliminate them. Here, there is a method to overcome them, called *meditations on jealousy, competitiveness and pride*.

Firstly, this is exchanging places with people one considers as inferior. There is also the exchange of places with people one considers as peers that one competes with. There is also the exchange of places with people one considers as superior.

[Meditating on jealousy to overcome pride – Basis of exchange:]

Towards the person one considers as *inferior*, the usual feeling is pride. One then exchanges places with such a person and meditates on generating a sense of jealousy. Base on such a meditation on jealousy, one attempts to eliminate pride:

**Before the exchange, the usual 'I' that feels proud,
 Being the most important and is cherished so much by self-cherishing is the 'old self', the self before the exchange.**

**After having exchanged roles with the inferior person, oneself now becomes this inferior person, called the 'new self'.
 Such a 'new self' is not usually cherished by one's self-cherishing.
 Hence, 'oneself' becomes the 'other', which is the 'new self' after the exchange.**

**Here, one is not merely exchanging places with a specific inferior person,
 One is exchanging oneself with and has become all sentient beings, the 'other new self'.**

**With a mind free of conceptualization, one holds onto such an 'inferior I' without any doubt when one has become the
 'other new self'. When one thinks 'I am all sentient beings',
 such a 'new self' is to be cherished, looked after and the most important.**

**The inferior sentient beings [on the other hand] now becomes 'oneself' as a superior person.
 Hence the 'other' becomes 'oneself'. The superior sentient beings are now called the 'old self'.**

Hence, after switching places, oneself becomes other as the 'new self', other then becomes oneself as the 'old self'.

**After having exchanged places as a 'new self', one imagines what it feels like to be such an inferior person:
 When the 'new self' focuses at the 'old self', the 'new self' meditates on feeling jealous of the 'old self'.
 The purpose of the 'new self' meditating on jealousy towards the 'old self' is to overcome pride.**

[The way pride and self-cherishing are overcome:]

One needs to think how meditating on jealousy overcomes pride. The essence here of this meditation on jealousy is to overcome pride.
Before exchanging, the ‘old self’ is that which is cherished so much and considered to be the most important. Others’ welfare are something to be discarded, neglected and not cherished.
After exchanging, one then becomes ‘all other sentient beings’, this ‘new self’ then becomes the most important, to be cherished. One then works to achieve happiness for and eliminate the suffering of such a ‘new self’.
Before exchanging, one only cherishes oneself as the most important and discard, neglect and cherish others’ welfare. After exchanging, when one becomes all sentient beings, that which is to be discarded, neglected and not cherished is the ‘old self’.
After exchanging, one then completely neglects achieving happiness for this ‘old self’, which is to be completely discarded. That which is to be cherished is the other, the ‘new self of all sentient beings’.
Hence, the meditation here is to generate jealousy when the ‘old self’ has fame, reputation, power and so forth. One is training to see the ‘old self’ as the object of one’s jealousy.
Based on having understood from every angle how self cherishing is the source and root of all problems, one then goes all out to discard, neglect and destroy it. Through understanding from all angles how cherishing the ‘new self’ of all other sentient beings is the source of all qualities and happiness, one goes all out to cherish and benefit the ‘new self’ of others.
If there is a specific sentient being, be it a human or a non-human, that one gives the most difficult and worse of tasks, if one exchanges oneself with such a sentient being, perhaps one of the benefit is to know how it is to suffer being in that place.
When one places oneself in the position of such a person, one gets some idea how this person is suffering. One can then generate some compassion, which could lead one to cease harming the person.
When one takes the place of the lowly person, one then knows how it is like to be bullied, looked down upon. One also comes to know how arrogant and bad the ‘old self’ has been in treating others and putting them down, then it opens the possibility for oneself to change to a better person by stopping arrogance and so forth.
Through this, it is possible to stop pride, arrogance, looking down on others and then it becomes possible to respect others.
Through exchanging places with the lowly person and meditate on jealousy towards the ‘old self’, it is for sure this would hurt the self cherishing, thereby reducing it. However, such a method is also said to reduce pride, how is that so?

[Example to show the exchange of superior and inferior:]

<i>Khenrinpoche:</i> Are you getting some idea of what I am talking about? <i>Students:</i> Yes.
<i>Khenrinpoche: I must be very stupid! I read it for three days and still I didn’t get it. You people must be clever, you only heard it once and you can understand!</i>

1" The way jealousy for those higher than oneself is cultivated [8.141 – 8.146]

a" The way it is cultivated [8.141 – 8.144(ab)]

<i>8.141 a He is honored, but we are not; b We have not found [possessions] as he has. c He is praised, but we are disparaged; d He is happy, but we suffer.</i>	<i>8.142 a We do the work b While he abides in comfort. c He is renowned as great in this world, d But we as inferior with no good qualities.</i>
<i>8.143 a We have no good qualities; what to do? b All of us are to be endowed with good qualities; c There are those in comparison to whom he is inferior, d And there are those in comparison to whom we are supreme.</i>	<i>8.144 a The morality, views, and woes b Are not under our control but due to the force of afflictions.</i>

In the commentary it clearly says that ‘He’ refers to the ‘old self’, while ‘We’ refers to the ‘new self’.
[All such meditations] seems like relating to the eight worldly dharmas of seeking praise, fame, gain, [pleasures] and not wanting its opposites. The meditation here is on [generating] jealousy through the discussion on the eight worldly dharmas.
One must get the starting points in each of the meditations on jealousy, competitiveness and pride correctly. In each scenario, one takes the place of a specific [type of] person. The usual ‘I’ then becomes the ‘other’. One must firstly not mix this up.
Here while meditating on jealousy, after one has switched identities, one has become the inferior person.
<i>Since one has switched identities, one has then become the ‘new person’. The person which has become the ‘other’ is the ‘old person’.</i>
After having exchanged, the ‘new person’ then gets jealous of the ‘old person’. The purpose of the exchange is to overcome pride. One has to think how this is so. If one does not think deep, then it will be difficult to understand how this is so.

By keeping what the exchange and its purpose are in mind, one then uses the verses to prove them:
8.142 c He is renowned as great in this world: ‘He’ is the ‘old self’, who has a lot of followers, wealth and possessions. d But we as inferior with no good qualities: ‘We’, the ‘new self’, are of a lowly lineage who have no good qualities.
8.143 a We have no good qualities; what to do?: Using the reason “Since I have no good qualities”, the ‘new self’ is telling the ‘old self’: “Why are you so arrogant towards me and look down on me?”
Khenrinpoche: Are you following? It took me a long time to figure out, but I am still not exactly sure about the point. I thought to give up many times, but I kept on trying. I think if you think deep, there must be something.
One can take it that the ‘new self’ is telling the ‘old self’ and hoping that the ‘old self’ can listen: “In general, having more or less qualities, being lower or higher, these are all relative as there are [never any] definitive [positions].”
8.143b All of us are to be endowed with good qualities; d And there are those in comparison to whom we are supreme: In relation to myself as the lowly one, there are others who are even lower. Hence, I also have qualities compared to them. Hence, [whether who is high or low] is a matter of perspective.
8.143c There are those in comparison to whom he is inferior: The ‘new self’ is telling the ‘old self’: “Compared to some people, you are also lower, there are some who are better than you. Relative to them, you are inferior.”
8.144 ab The morality, views, and woes are not under our control but due to the force of afflictions: Perhaps the ‘new self’ is thinking: “It is due to my degenerated morality, views and miseries that the ‘old self’ is now tormenting and despising me.”
The ‘new self’ then tells the ‘old self’: “If you are mistreating, despising and harming me because you think I have degenerated morality, views and being miserable, then let me tell you that, I have no wish for all of these to occur.”
“It is not that I purposely go all the way out to break my morality, have degenerated views and be miserable. These situations did not happen under my control, but is due to being overwhelmed by my miserliness, negative emotions and afflictions.”
Khenrinpoche: As I have said before, you should not lose the basis upon which you are doing this meditation. If you lose that basis, then you will be lost now. But if you are able to hold onto [the basis], who the ‘he’ and ‘we’ are, then it is easy.

b" How it is practiced once it has been cultivated [8.144(cd) – 8.146]

8.144 c He must heal us in whatever way he is able to, and d Willingly we must accept any harm involved.	8.145 a However we are not his objects of healing, b So why does he belittle us? c What use are his good qualities to us? d He has good qualities.	8.146 a With no compassion for the migrating beings b Who dwell in the mouth of poisonous bad migrations, c Externally he is proud of his good qualities d And wishes to harm the wise.
8.144 cd He must heal us in whatever way he is able to, and willingly we must accept any harm involved: The ‘new self’ is then telling the ‘old self’: “You, who are supposedly superior and a bodhisattva, should do something to help rectify my degenerated morality and views. If you do so, then in the process even if I must bear with some hardships and difficulties [in training], I will accept.”		
8.145 ab However we are not his objects of healing, so why does he belittle us?: The ‘new self’ tells the ‘old self’: “[Rather than doing what you are supposed to do, and I am willing to bear with the hardships, instead] you are not doing anything to heal, restore and help me in anyway. Yet you, ‘a bodhisattva’, are still being arrogant, belittling and looking down on me.”		
‘New self’ is saying to the ‘old self’: “It is possible that you may have some good qualities, but since you are not [using it] to help me, then what use are all your good qualities to me?”		
8.146 With no compassion for the migrating beings who dwell in the mouth of poisonous bad migrations, externally he is proud of his good qualities and wishes to harm the wise: “Since you have no wish at all to benefit, help and free me from my sufferings, so you are bad and full of faults. Having no qualities, yet you are still proud of your qualities, pretending to have them. Not only that, you are even arrogant towards those who really have qualities, especially the [real] bodhisattvas.”		

[Advice for what to do with the explanations given:]

All such [admonitions] are saying that, pride and arrogance are bad. Khenrinpoche: I do not know what I have said so far is correct. But I have given you my thoughts anyway as a basis to work on. By taking the position of the lowly ‘new self’, you then meditate on jealousy to overcome pride and see whether this is correct and works for you or not.
If you get the concept, likewise then, you should try out the meditation on competitiveness with regards to peers and the meditation on pride with regards to superiors.
These meditations are under the outlines of exchanging self and other in thought [8.140 – 8.158] and not under the outlines of exchanging self and other in action [8.159 – 8.187].

It is said here that, exchanging self and other in thought is the unsurpassed method in eliminating self cherishing and developing the thought of cherishing others. Even so, you have to think carefully how this is the case.

The explanations given so far [8.141 – 8.146] are for the meditation on jealousy to reduce self cherishing. You have to try it out, meditate and see whether such a training actually does reduce your self cherishing or not.

It is specifically stated here that, through exchanging oneself with the lowly person, one meditates on jealousy towards the ‘old self’. This would lead to the diminishing of arrogance or pride. See whether that actually works and happens or not.

[Another explanation on how to exchange self and other:]

There is an inferior person one despises. In his place, one places one’s enemy.

There is a superior person and in his place, one places oneself and becomes the superior person.

One then observes the situation as a third party and looks at how the inferior enemy is jealous of oneself as a superior person.

Perhaps when one engages in such a reflection, where the inferior enemy is jealous of oneself as a superior person in which one is observing [as a third person], one would become very uncomfortable and tight.

One then comes to see the pain that jealousy brings to the mind. Such a pain would perhaps motivate oneself to abandon it.

If the mere imagination can bring so much discomfort in the mind, then it goes without saying that, if one is actually jealous, then the suffering will be more intense. Hence, this should perhaps move one to pacify one’s jealousy.

Based on this example for the meditation on jealousy, one should see how one can extend such lines of reasoning with the appropriate examples to the meditation on competitiveness and pride.

The effect of this meditation is different in that, what was shown in the text when meditating on jealousy is to pacify pride. However, according to this explanation, this meditation on jealousy serves to abandon jealousy itself. Hence, by extension from this example, the meditation on competitiveness and pride are to reduce competitiveness and pride respectively.

2" The way competitiveness is cultivated between those equal to oneself [8.147 – 8.150]

[Meditating on competitiveness to overcome competitiveness:]

Towards the person one considers as *a peer or slightly superior*, the usual feeling is negative competitiveness. One then exchanges places with such a person and meditates on generating a sense of competition. Base on such a meditation on competitiveness, one attempts to eliminate competitiveness:

*Oneself becomes the peer.
Hence, ‘oneself’ becomes the ‘other’. Oneself as the peer is called the ‘new self’.*

When the ‘new self’ focuses at the ‘old self’, the ‘new self’ meditates on feeling competitive with the ‘old self’.

The purpose of the ‘new self’ meditating on competitiveness towards the ‘old self’ is to overcome competitiveness.

3" The way pride over those lower than oneself is cultivated [8.151 – 8.154(ab)]

[Meditating on pride to overcome jealousy:]

Towards the person one considers as superior, the usual feeling is jealousy. One then exchanges places with such a person and meditates on generating a sense of pride. Base on such a meditation on pride, one attempts to eliminate jealousy:

*Oneself becomes the superior.
Hence, ‘oneself’ becomes the ‘other’. Oneself as the superior person is called the ‘new self’.*

When the ‘new self’ focuses at the ‘old self’, the ‘new self’ meditates on pride towards the ‘old self’.

The purpose of the ‘new self’ meditating on pride towards the ‘old self’ is to overcome jealousy.

In meditating on pride, one exchanges places with the person one regards as superior in whom one is usually jealous of. One takes that person’s place, there is thus an exchange of self and other. One becomes the ‘other’ superior ‘new self’. The ‘other’ superior person now becomes the inferior ‘old self’.

In all the three scenarios, one exchanges identities where one takes the identity of the ‘other’ person. After having taken the identity of the ‘other person’, oneself becomes the ‘new person’.

Through this meditation on pride, one takes the identity of and becomes the superior person, which is the ‘new self’, the ‘new self’ then meditates on pride. The purpose of this is to eliminate jealousy. The usual feelings of jealousy experienced by the ‘old self’ will be reduced.

Student 2: Based on the first scenario, one changes place with someone inferior. What is the purpose of Shantideva's teaching on such an exchange? Why can't I just meditate on the verses from 8.143 to 8.145 on the incorrect sense of pride in feeling superior towards the inferior person?

Khenrinpoche: That's the whole problem, it is because we don't understand Shantideva!

At the end of the meditation, there must be some impact on the mind. One has to come to understand what that is. In the commentary, the outline is termed specifically on meditating on a particular ['fault'] to eliminate a particular fault. Hence, the verses you have mentioned are not meant to be meditated directly, but are to be meditated on *after* you have done the exchange.

Hence, [these verses you have mentioned] are meant to be applied after the exchange. On its own it is [easily] understood, you don't have to go through the meditation to understand what these verses are saying, but these are to be applied after having exchanged self and other.

These are said to be methods to eliminate one's jealousy, pride and the usual [afflictions], but [they are also used to eliminate] self-grasping and self cherishing.

Since one is exchanging self and other, then self becomes other and other becomes self. Based on having exchanged places and then meditating on [the three scenarios], the idea is to eliminate self cherishing and increase the thought to cherish others more and more.

You need to think more and make charts. The final [effect] of such meditations is that, it must help you reduce self cherishing and increase [the mind that] cherishes others. This is the result that you need to get.

Student 1: How are the prayers on the *Four Immeasurables* related to equalizing self and other?

Khenrinpoche: In immeasurable love and compassion, one thinks and wishes others to have happiness and free of suffering. Since oneself are equal in wanting happiness and not suffering, hence, one prays for others to have happiness and free of suffering.

Student 3: When one meditates on jealousy, pride and competitiveness, would these themselves not create imprints of afflictions to experience such afflictions in the future? Would it not be more straightforward to meditate on the faults of these three to reduce them?

Khenrinpoche: In general, it is clear that these three attitudes must be abandoned, be it negative competitiveness, jealousy or pride.

If you think about this meditation on jealousy deeply, ultimately, it is not about being jealous of someone else, the effect is that one is directing the jealousy back to oneself: "Why should I have all such good things in life like fame, reputation or power? Such things are not good [for me], I should give them away to benefit others."

Ultimately, one should feel the unease, discomfort and being unbearable that: "I have all such power, fame, reputation, wealth and so forth, it is not right. These should be for others." Hence, the meditation is to promote the thought of benefiting and cherishing others. One must arrive at such a result and conclusion.

Through such a meditation, if one feels unbearable: "How can I be the one to have all these? It is wrong, it should be for others." Here, whatever one has, it has to benefit and to be dedicated to others. The whole purpose and idea is to develop a sense to cherish, benefit others and at least to reduce one's self cherishing.

In the case of meditating on jealousy, one takes the place of and becomes the inferior. One then generates jealousy.

Khenrinpoche: In the Mandala magazine, I saw [a quotation] from Lama Yeshe that says:

“Attitude is more important than action.”

4" The effects of cultivation [8.154(cd) – 8.158]

a" Reflecting on the disadvantages of self-cherishing [8.154(cd) – 8.155]

<p>8.154 c For hundreds [of lifetimes] in cyclic existence d He caused harm to me.</p>	<p>8.155 a Mind, because of desiring to enact your own purpose, b Such great weariness you have gone through c Over countless past eons d Has only achieved suffering.</p>
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It is said that, one has been circling since beginningless rebirths searching for all sorts of happiness. Due to that, one follows one’s self cherishing to look for it. But what one gets in return are nothing else but just problems after problems in samsara.

This is reminding oneself: Is this not the case for oneself?

One of the results of having properly reflected or meditated on exchanging self and other through meditating on jealousy and so forth is that, one should see and feel the faults of self cherishing and the benefits of benefiting others.

b" The proof that the benefits of cherishing others are limitless [8.156]

<p>8.156 a Therefore I shall definitely engage myself b In the purpose of others. c Since the words of the Muni are infallible, d I shall behold its good qualities in the future.</p>

One has to see and realize that, self cherishing brings sufferings and problems in this and all future lifetimes; and cherishing others brings happiness in this and all future lifetimes. Through seeing that, one [willingly] exchanges self and other.

By such understanding, one develops the enthusiasm of working for others in this and all future lifetimes. One will gradually experience all the positive results, including enlightenment. These were already taught by Buddha, whose speech is infallible.

A commentary mentions that, after having exchanged self and other, one works for others’ benefits. When one achieves the Mahayana path of seeing, one will be completely certain that one will definitely achieve enlightenment.

Khenrinpoche: I remember it is said that, when one achieves the respective paths of seeing one is on, be it Hinayana or Mahayana, one will see with certainty that one will achieve its respective enlightenments of that path.

c" Explaining just the benefits and qualities [8.157]

<p>8.157 a If in the past you had practiced b This act, a situation dissimilar to c The happiness of fulfillment of a Buddha d Could not have been possible.</p>

Qualm: One may be working for the benefit of sentient beings for a long time but one has still not seen any results.

Reply: If one had meditated on and familiarized oneself with exchanging self and other, had worked for others in one’s past lives, one would have achieved all the happiness up to enlightenment. One would not be experiencing the sufferings, including the lower realms, now. Instead, one engaged in meaningless activities. This is why one is still [in samsara].

Understanding this should motivate one to decide to meditate on exchanging self and other.

d" Instructions on making effort to cherish others [8.158]

<p>8.158 a Therefore, just as you held as “I” b These drops of sperm and blood of others, c Likewise [through] familiarity, d [I shall also come to regard all] others.</p>
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This is similar to the response shown earlier to the **qualm** that: “I cannot cherish others, there is no way I can exchange myself and others. How can that be?”

Reply: It is only a matter of familiarity. This is because, what one holds onto as one’s body and mind as ‘I’, is due to the gathering of one’s parents’ egg and sperm. With such a basis, one’s consciousness entered into the fertilized egg, which is not [one’s body]. However, due to the power of familiarity, one has come to regard [one’s body] as ‘I’.

Likewise, through familiarity, it is definitely possible to regard others as ‘I’. Hence, one can cherish [such an ‘I’].

3' The way to [exchange self and other through action] [8.159 – 8.187]

[How one can benefit others through thought and not just with physical or verbal actions:]

Merely by examining the outline alone, one can be certain that, benefiting others is not restricted to [physical or verbal] actions [alone]. This section is on exchanging self and other through action, whereas the previous section [8.140 – 8.158] is about exchanging self and other through thought/ attitude [see top of page 75].

Hence, benefiting others is not just [restricted to] one's body and speech, there is also the benefit towards others in thought.

However, most people would regard that to benefit others, one has to do something physically or verbally, otherwise, it is not considered as benefiting others. It is clear that, besides actions, one can benefit, and has to benefit others in thought.

However, the question one has to ask is: "How does that benefit others?" For example, how do the actions of the mind like meditating on bodhicitta, accumulating the collections of merit and then dedicating these to sentient beings, benefit them? This is what one needs to examine and find out.

a' The actual [way] [8.159 – 8.166]

1" [Dedicating] all of one's entire collection of [perfections] to others [8.159 – 8.160]

a" The actual [dedication] [8.159]

**8.159 a Having thoroughly examined [the purpose] of others,
b You shall steal
c Whatever appears on your body
d And use it for the benefit of others.**

After having exchanged self and others, how can one translate that into practical actions? One should consider what one should and should not do. Essentially, one will not harm others but dedicate and give whatever one has, to benefit others.

8.159 bcd You shall steal whatever appears on your body and use it for the benefit of others: The point is to renounce the idea that whatever are in one's possessions to be 'mine'. Once one gives up the idea 'this is mine', then it is easy to give.

Hence, the stronger the grasping that 'this is mine,' then the more difficult it is to give anything. Here, after having exchanged self and other in thought, then in action, one translates that into giving up whatever one owns to benefit others.

b" The appropriateness of being jealous of oneself [8.160]

**8.160 a "I am delighted but others are sad,
b I am high but others are low,
c I benefit myself but others do not."
d Why am I not jealous of myself?**

Having really realized the faults of cherishing oneself and the benefits of cherishing others, one then exchanges self and other. Then in actions of daily life, one would not act with the usual attitude as before, one of which can be being jealous of others. Instead of being, say, jealous of others, one directs the jealousy at oneself.

I am delighted but others are sad, I am high but others are low, I have possessions but others do not, I benefit myself by engaging in virtues but others are not: After having exchanged self and other, when one sees that oneself has [all such qualities and possessions] while other sentient beings do not, one feels a sense of unease and discomfort.

One is engaging in all the right actions and has all the possessions while sentient beings do not. The bodhisattva then tells himself: "**So what if I have all such qualities and possessions? Others are not experiencing happiness, so what's the point of myself having all these?**"

Perhaps this is similar to the earlier meditation on jealousy. One exchanges places with an inferior person and becomes the 'new self' of an inferior person. The original self becomes the 'old superior person.' In reality, the 'old self' is [just] oneself.

In this verse, it is the same meaning as before, meditating on jealousy towards oneself. Hence, the intent of the meaning is the same as what was explained before.

One who has exchanged self and other has really and already exchanged self and other [and not remain with the self cherishing thought as before], when one then examines one's own life, one finds that everything is going well for oneself, whereas it is not the case for sentient beings. One will then feel unease and think that it is inappropriate that others are not.

The fact that a bodhisattva has such an attitude is unlikely to look down on others and be arrogant. Hence, this means that such a meditation on jealousy can counteract pride. **Khenrinpoche:** The question is whether do you understand or not?

If not, then you need to think. I think I have made it clear [in the last lesson]. So I am not going to repeat again. You really have to think and meditate on this. The meditation on jealousy is to reduce pride through exchanging places with an inferior person and meditate as a 'new I' on jealousy towards the 'old I'.

This is supposed to reduce pride, if one does not think, then it will be difficult to understand the text.

Perhaps the earlier meditations on jealousy, competitiveness and pride are meditations where one takes oneself as the object of jealousy, competitiveness and pride. Through this, one comes to reduce pride, competitiveness and jealousy [respectively].

2" [Earnestly] devoting oneself to [taking] the lower position for the sake of others [8.161 – 8.164]

a" Examining one's own faults [8.161]

**8.161 a I must separate myself from happiness
b And involve myself with the sufferings of others.
c "Why am I doing this?"
d At that time I should examine my faults.**

Before exchanging self and other, one neglected others' welfare and was not concerned about their sufferings. One is merely interested in achieving happiness for oneself. After one has exchanged self and others, one dedicates one's possessions of wealth, clothes, food and so on to them and offer such happiness instead to them: ***I must separate myself from happiness.***

Hence, instead of enjoying all such things oneself, one dedicates and gives them to others.

By giving food, clothing and belonging to others, one separates oneself from the happiness that comes from enjoying them. When one gives these to others, they then possess such happiness as well as being freed from the suffering of not having such possessions. One then experiences such sufferings in their place: ***And involve myself with the sufferings of others.***

For one who understands the benefits of and [knows] how to exchange self and others, the advice for one in one's life is that, one should not look at the faults of others.

Hence, whatever one hears, sees or knows of what others say, instead of it being the conditions to be negatively critical and faulting others, one should use it like a reflection in the mirror as a condition to check and discover one's own faults. Instead of checking others, one should always check what one's mind is thinking and what one is doing physically and verbally.

Hence, by distancing oneself from one's own purpose, one should just check one's own faults.

b" Confessing [negativities] one has done to others [8.162 – 8.163(ab)]

**8.162 a Although others may do something wrong,
b I shall transform it into a fault of my own;
c But should I do something even slightly wrong,
d I shall openly admit it to many people.**

**8.163 a By further describing the renown of others,
b I should make it outshine my own.**

When something [is not in one's favor], one's usual reactions would be to always [blame] the source of the problems outside oneself and never [think that] it is within one. At the same time, one always covers, hides, camouflages and conceals all of one's faults, pretending not to have it, so that no one sees it.

Whatever problems and harms that one is experiencing or have experienced, one has to understand that these are all of one's own faults. Instead of thinking that it is due to [the conditions] of this situation or someone else, one should generate the determination to face it: "This is my fault and I deserve it!"

Even if it is just one sentient being harming one, one should not see it as the person's faults, but as one's own faults. One is then prepared to accept the experience of being harmed: "Even if I have to experience this suffering and be harmed, so be it."

When one harms others or do something wrong even in the slightest, instead of concealing it, one should take responsibility, openly admit and advertize to others: "I did that." If it is so for a slight mistake, then no need to mention if it is a big mistake.

Hence, one should openly admit all mistakes and confesses, for example, to Buddhas and bodhisattvas: "What I did was really wrong," with an ***attitude of regret*** for having engaged in such actions and having an ***attitude of restrain*** in the future.

One would usually despise others and promote oneself by advertizing: "I did this and that, hence, I am so good..." However, for someone who has exchanged self and other, doing something like that would be [completely] wrong. Such a person would instead describe the qualities of others and praise them.

Here it says that, even if one merely hears about the renown of others, whatever good things about others, one should add on to such praises by further describing those [qualities]. ***I should make it outshine my own:*** One should make the person even more famous, describe his qualities such that, these overshadow whatever fame or renown one may have.

Lama Atisha says that, one should openly admit and declare all of one's faults to others, meanwhile, one should not [habitually look for and discover] faults in others, investigating and then exposing them. These are not one's business.

One should also hide and conceal one's own qualities and mention the qualities of others. One should not be jealous of others who are superior, wealthier, more powerful and so on. One should not despise those who are inferior to one as well.

c" Devoting oneself to [taking] the lower position [8.163(cd) – 8.164]

**8.163 c Just like the lowest of servants,
d I should employ myself for all purposes.**

**8.164 a I am naturally fault-ridden.
b I should not praise myself for a portion of an incidental good quality,
c I shall never let even a few people know
d Of my good qualities no matter how.**

8.163 cd: One should work for others' purposes while holding the lowest of positions. Hence, one should regard oneself as a servant. Even among servants, one should regard oneself as the lowest of all.

Even if one does possess some small qualities from having learned, understood, reflected and practiced the Buddhadharma in retreat, one should not use these as reasons to advertize: "I did this and that, I have this and that qualities..."

One should not praise oneself, in fact, one should not even let others know about them, but conceal them instead.

3" A brief presentation of the way to practice application [8.165 – 8.166]

**8.165 a In brief, may the harms that
b You have caused to others for my sake
c Descend upon me myself
d For the sake of sentient beings.**

**8.166 a I should not be aggressive,
b Acting in a brutal way;
c Instead, like a newly married bride,
d I should stay bashful, timid, and restrained.**

8.165: Here one makes prayers: "All the harmful actions I have done to sentient beings, motivated by desire for power, fame, reputation, wealth and so forth since beginningless lifetimes together with the results of such harms, may it ripen upon me."

By thinking and praying for such experiences to ripen on oneself, this is for the purpose of benefiting others. One can regard this as repaying the debt one owes others.

One should not [behave] in an aggressive and arrogant manner, instead, one should behave like a newly-married bride, who are generally bashful, timid and restrained. Likewise, physically, verbally and mentally, one should also act in the same manner, be respectful and not be arrogant, while keeping in mind the great faults of self cherishing.

Student 1: This chapter explains about abandoning self cherishing and cultivating the mind cherishing others. Why are these subjects under the chapter on concentration?

Khenrinpoche: The main meditation here is the meditation on bodhicitta. Within that, there is meditating on the system of exchanging self and other to generate bodhicitta. Hence, it is put under [the chapter on] concentration. Bodhicitta is the most important meditation. If anyone wishes to meditate, then there are no better meditation topics than this.

The benefits of generating bodhicitta has already been explained before. There are so many benefits, in essence, it is said that, if one has the good heart of bodhicitta, then in the present life, one would be so happy. It will of course also benefit one's future lives, leading one towards liberation and enlightenment. Hence, the benefits are very great.

It is so clear from one's own life experience that, even a little problem like a small pain, slight discomfort and so forth, can [easily disturb] one. The reason one cannot even tolerate something small like these is simply that, one thinks one is the most important person in the world and cherishes this 'I' so much. Hence, the stronger such feelings one has, then every small problem becomes [unbearable]. Whereas, if one has a completely different [mindset/ attitude], thinking only of others and regarding them as more important [than oneself], then I don't think there will be all such problems that one already has.

Hence, this [topic on developing bodhicitta] becomes a very important meditation practice. Particularly, the subject matter of this text is about cultivating bodhicitta. Hence, if one wishes to meditate on bodhicitta, then this would mean meditating on exchanging self and other. **Khenrinpoche:** That's why they [teach this topic] here.

Student 2: At which point in this chapter does the person generates bodhicitta? Why is adopting bodhicitta and its vows done in the earlier chapter 3 before this chapter?

Khenrinpoche: Meditation on equalizing and then exchanging self and other would lead to the generation of very strong compassion. This then induces the wholehearted resolve. The entire purpose of this special meditation of exchanging self and other is that, the wholehearted resolve that arises is very strong. Following this, one is then lead to the generation of bodhicitta.

Through having exchanged self and other, one then progresses to developing a very strong wholehearted resolve in which, one takes up a personal responsibility that thinks: "I will free all sentient beings from their sufferings and achieve all their happiness by myself alone." This would then lead to the next thought of bodhicitta.

The first nine chapters of this text is divided into the three stages of generating bodhicitta: 1) Chapters 1 to 3: Generating the bodhicitta that has not yet been generated. 2) Chapters 4 to 6: Maintaining the bodhicitta that has been generated without letting it degenerate. 3) Chapters 7 to 9: On the basis of maintaining and not degenerating the bodhicitta, how to increase it.

This is what is said, but I am not sure whether it is related to what you are asking.

[Qualm: the sequence of the chapters in developing bodhicitta-]

In the practice of exchanging self and other, there are the practices of doing so in thought and in action. In terms of action, the essence is to hold a lower position, on that basis, one then works for the benefit of others. This is important, without which, it will be difficult to work for the benefit of others. By so doing, one is able to respect others and then help them.

There was a question about exchanging self and other as a way to practice bodhicitta in this chapter, which is a chapter on meditating on concentration/ calm abiding. Perhaps this is an uncommon way of cultivating calm abiding.

*After one realizes what such a practice is all about, one then makes the decision to equalize self and other.
Having done so, one uses the result as the object of observation in the development of calm abiding.
Likewise, having exchanged self and other, one uses that as the object of observation in the cultivation of calm abiding.*

Perhaps this is the reason the topic of exchanging self and other is put in this chapter. This is something one can think about.

Also, does the bodhisattva, who develops bodhicitta on the basis of practicing the instruction of exchanging self and other, need to realize emptiness prior to actualizing bodhicitta? I have already said something to the effect that, such a bodhisattva would need to have realized emptiness prior to generating bodhicitta in this instance. However, there may be a qualm:

This is because, chapter 9, the chapter on wisdom, comes after this chapter. If such a bodhisattva becomes a bodhisattva on the basis on practicing exchanging self and other needed to have realized emptiness prior to generating bodhicitta, then the topic of wisdom should have been explained before exchanging self and other in this chapter here.

b' When practicing the application of exchanging self and other, one should exert control over one's mind [8.167 – 8.187]

1" The way to annihilate brazenness [8.167 – 8.168]

<p>8.167 a Thus, you should [think] and abide in this way b And not act so. c If you transgress being under control, d You will be subjugated.</p>	<p>8.168 a However, although having been advised, b If mind, you do not act in such a manner, c Then since all faults will base themselves in you, d You will only be destined to subjugation.</p>
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One needs to make the mind serviceable and pliable in order to work for others' benefits in both thought and action.

*If one has no control over one's mind,
One will then end up working for others with the self cherishing thought,
Merely seeking for one's own purposes.*

Therefore, one must work for the benefit of others in both thought and action without any self-interests involved. Any sense or attitude of self-interest merely seeking one's own goals must be annihilated.

2" The [faults of adhering] solely to one's own benefit [8.169 – 8.173]

a" Ceasing to act solely to one's own benefit by reflecting on their [faults] [8.169 – 8.170(ab)]

<p>8.169 a That previous time when you could overcome me b Is different; c I see it and now wherever you go d I shall destroy all your arrogance.</p>	<p>8.170 a Even now may I cast aside the intention thinking about b "My own welfare."</p>
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This is perhaps a [monologue] with oneself: "In the past, because I didn't realize that you [self cherishing] were the root of all my problems, hence, I followed after you, but you ended up destroying me. But now, since I've seen through you for what you are, I will not give you any chance. You will have no more hold over me, as I am going all out to destroy you!"

b" Applying oneself to the welfare of others [8.170(cd) – 8.171]

<p>8.170 c By having sold you to others, d Without becoming discouraged, may I offer sustenance.</p>	<p>8.171 a If, having become non-conscientious, b I do not give you to all living beings, c Then it is certain that you will deliver me d To the guardians of the hells.</p>
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"Now that I've exchanged myself to others, I don't belong to myself but I am owned by sentient beings. Hence, I am going to sell you to others and offer, without any regrets [or discouragements], my abilities to help them in any way they may please.

Selling is like giving [it away]. The point is, after having exchanged oneself and other, one has essentially given and dedicated oneself up to others. The reason one needs to do this is that, if one fails to [give and dedicate oneself to others], then it would mean that one will still be following one's usual self cherishing thought, merely focusing on one's own welfare.

One would then abide in this way without any conscientiousness. Then it is certain that one's self cherishing thought working for one's own benefit will lead one to the hell realms, hand one over to the hell guardians and thereby suffer unbearably.

c" A brief presentation [of the faults of self-cherishing attitude] [8.172 – 8.173]

<p>8.172 a For ages have you delivered me like this b Whereby I have suffered lengthily; c Now, recalling all my grudges, d I shall overcome your intentions of self-purpose.</p>	<p>8.173 a However, if I wish to be happy, b I should not be happy with myself. c However, if I wish to be protected, d I should constantly protect others.</p>
<p>One's self cherishing thought merely working for one's own welfare and happiness has offered one to the hell guardians numberless times in the past. As a result, one has experienced much sufferings at their hands, being cut, burnt and so forth.</p>	
<p>Recollecting this now, one holds a grudge against and resentment towards this thought of merely benefiting oneself. One then generates the desire to vanquish and destroy this thought of just working for one's own happiness.</p>	
<p>If what one wants is real long term everlasting happiness, then one should not follow the thought of and be attached to merely working for one's own happiness. Rather, one should learn and familiarize oneself with the thought of working for others.</p>	
<p>Hence: 8.173 However, if I wish to be protected, I should constantly protect others. Others here refer to all sentient beings.</p>	

3" Examining the faults of the body [8.174 – 8.184]

a" The shortcomings of not knowing contentment [8.174 – 8.177]

(1) The [faults] of craving after the body [8.174 – 8.176(ab)]

<p>8.174 a To whatever degree b I take great care of this body, c To that degree I shall fall d Into a state of extreme anxiety.</p>	<p>8.175 a Having fallen in this way, if desires b Are unable to be fulfilled c Even by everything upon this earth, d What else will be able to [fulfill] desires of that?</p>	<p>8.176 a Being unable [to fulfill them, and craving for objects of] desire, b Afflictions and degeneration of attitude will arise.</p>
<p>People may think: "If I am working for others, then I need to take care of this body with some attachment." These verses are the answer to this qualm that thinks: "to work for others, one needs to take care of one's body out of attachment."</p>		
<p>The reality is that, one takes care of one's body out of great attachment to it. One then spends so much money buying clothes, giving it food, the best cushions, mattresses, pillows and so forth. Due to this attachment, even a small discomfort becomes a huge problem that is most difficult to bear with. This is one's situation now.</p>		
<p>But of course, one would beg to differ: "I have the money. If I need more clothes, a better bed or food I will buy more of them as I can afford them. I can solve the problem, if there are any discomfort, I will make it go away."</p>		
<p>Hence, one thinks [doing all these] are the solutions to repeatedly overcome small discomforts. Even if one has all the money to spend and buy more things out of attachment, but it can never be satiated. No matter how one tries, it will become worse then before. So long as one follows after attachment, even if one owns the entire world, one would still not be satisfied.</p>		
<p>The faults of not being able to satisfy desire, how one will never be satisfied in samsara, is indeed one of the faults of samsara. No matter how much one tries, one will never fulfill one's desires.</p>		
<p>If one fails to stop following after attachment/ desire, but continues to crave for objects, then:</p>		
<p>1) This will lead to the arising of more attachment and anger in one's mind. 2) It will be very difficult for virtuous thoughts to arise in one's mind. 3) Whatever virtuous thoughts that one may already possess will decline and degenerate. 4) Eventually, what one is left with is just unhappiness.</p>		
<p>These are just some of the faults of being attached to the body. Hence:</p>		

(2) The appropriateness of cultivating non-attachment to body [8.176(cd) – 8.177]

<p>8.176 c One will not know the exhaustion of success d Of not depending on anything.</p>	<p>8.177 a Therefore, I shall never allow an opportunity b For the desires of the body to increase. c Not holding to the attractive d Is a good possession.</p>
<p>These verses are explaining about contentment, which is important. Whatever one already possesses and owns, one should be contented and happy, without any hope nor expectations for more. One should practice contentment and have few desires. One should not give any opportunities for desire and craving for material gains and possessions to increase.</p>	
<p>Not holding to the attractive is a good possession: The attractive refers to material things like food, clothes and so on. Not grasping at them as something really good and pleasant is [excellent]. Whatever one has, if one is contented with and just enjoys it, then it will be good. Life then becomes easy. Since there is no grasping, these possessions become easier to protect.</p>	
<p>Without such an attitude of grasping in life, there will not be any causes for regret later on at the time of death. One would not have any grasping and clinging onto things. If one owns things with such attitudes, then it becomes a 'good possession'.</p>	

Khenrinpoche: I was talking about branded things. They label this and that brand, putting so much emphasis on that. Of course, these things are not cheap! In the first place, it is difficult to get. Once you get it, it is difficult to use. Within a year, you may only use it for two days, the rest of the year it is kept in the closet. You also worry about losing it or it being stolen.

On the day you are dying, then of course you will have so much attachment to it. You cannot let it go and die with such a strong attachment to it. Dying with such a mind, then of course there are so many stories of sentient beings taking rebirth inside, say, a bag, inside that object. You can imagine how someone can [be born] inside it, you can think of insects!

With the expansive bag or whatever that you have bought, if you find that there is a little hole or some damage to it, your mind become so [disturbed]. If it is a cheap bag, for example, then you can use everyday, it is easy to use as you don't have attachment to it. You can put it anywhere and not worry about it.

Even if it is a little torn, you are totally happy with it as you don't feel any difficulties. This is mainly talking about the problems of attachment. Whatever we label, then [we superimpose qualities above its true nature].

Therefore, a **good possession** is an object in which one can use and enjoy without any attachment. One uses it without it giving one any worries, problems or sufferings later on. **Khenrinpoche:** So try to get that!

b" The shortcomings of being [unmoving like a log] [8.178 – 8.179]

<p>8.178 a In the end it will turn to dust. b Unable to move, it is propelled by another. c Why do I hold onto d This terrible unclean form as “self”?</p>	<p>8.179 a Even when it is alive, it is better off dead. b Of what use is this machine to me? c How is it different from a clod of earth and the like? d Alas, why do I not dispel this pride!</p>
<p>The body is cherished so much by most people. Due to having so much attachment to it, one puts in so much time, money and effort to upkeep it. However, in the end, it will be cremated and become ashes.</p>	
<p>Even when one is alive, in reality one's body is not able to move on its own. It is not its own intrinsic nature to be able to move. The reason it can move is only due to the existence of another condition existing in the form of one's wind and mind. It is due to these within one's body that enables one's body to move.</p>	
<p>It was explained earlier, how the body is by nature dirty, produces filth and is horrifying. Hence, why does one hold onto such a terrifying and dirty form as a self? Why is one holding onto this terrifying filth factory as a self?</p>	
<p>If one does not employ one's body in virtue, using it to do something beneficial, then it is better off dead as it is no different from a corpse. It is also not different from soil, earth and rocks as well.</p>	
<p>Hence, why does one hold onto to one's body and [remain] so proud? There is no reason at all to be proud.</p>	

c" The shortcomings of [confusion] [8.180 – 8.184]

(1) Being [confused] about right and wrong [8.180 – 8.181]

<p>8.180 a Having accumulated suffering for no purpose b Because of honoring this body, c Of what use is attachment and anger d For this thing that is similar to a piece of wood?</p>	<p>8.181 a Whether I am sustaining my body in this way, b Or whether it is being eaten by vultures and the like, c If it has no attachment or hatred, d Why then am I so attached to it?</p>
<p>In pursuing whatever one thinks one needs for one's body due to one's attachment to it, one will then literally bring many different kinds of problems and sufferings upon oneself.</p>	
<p>Out of attachment to one's body, one puts in so much time and effort to take care of it. But at the time of death, in some cultures, it becomes food for the vultures.</p>	
<p>It does not repay one's kindness by saying or thinking: "When I was alive, you took care of me so much!" When it is being cremated or eaten by the vultures, it also does not object: "You should not be doing this to me!"</p>	
<p>The point is, one's body is in the nature of being 'deluded', as it does not know what is good or bad, beneficial or harmful. Yet, one is taking care of and being attached to such a 'deluded' object.</p>	

(2) Being [confused] about praise and [criticism] [8.182]

<p>8.182 a If it knows no anger when derided b And no pleasure when praised, c For what purpose d Am I wearing myself out like this?</p>
<p>When the body is being praised or criticized, from its own side, it would not be aware of it. Since it has no awareness nor feeling of being praised nor criticized, then why does one tire oneself out working for such a mindless object?</p>

(3) Abandoning objections to that [8.183]

<p style="text-align: center;">8.183 a OPINION: Anyone who desires this body b And I are friends. c RESPONSE: Since all desire their own bodies, d Why do I not find joy in theirs?</p>
<p><i>Gyaltsab Je</i> presents the <i>qualm</i> this way: “Although the body itself does not understand these, but I like it as I find it attractive and desire it. Hence, both it and I are friends.</p>
<p>Reply: If that is the case, then since all sentient beings also desire their own bodies, then why do you not find joy in theirs and regard their bodies as ‘mine’? Hence, it is inappropriate to be attached to one’s body and yet deride the bodies of others.</p>
<p>This is similar to the explanation on equalizing self and other in that, there is no difference between self and others. One dismantles the usual sense how one apprehends self and other to be concrete and distinct entities. Since there is no inherently existing ‘I and other’, hence, there is no distinct inherent difference between one’s and others’ bodies.</p>
<p>Hence, one should also cherish others’ bodies, protect and take care of them.</p>

(4) Though craving after the body is the source of much [negativities], one must guard [against] it to take the essence of leisures and endowments [8.184]

<p style="text-align: center;">8.184 a Therefore, in order to benefit migrating beings b I shall give away this body without any attachment. c Although this has many faults d I should uphold it like a worker’s tool.</p>
<p>Since it is inappropriate to be attached to one’s body and merely working for one’s own purposes, with the thought of extensively benefiting sentient beings, one should dedicate, give and use one’s body as a servant to benefit others.</p>
<p>One’s body is indeed a source of many problems. Once one possesses such a body, one has to take care of it, give it food, and clothe it. To protect it from the elements, one also needs a house [to stay in] and so forth.</p>
<p>To give it all such protections, one has to work so hard and suffer so much as a result.</p>
<p>Just like how a plumber or a smith uses his tools to complete his work, likewise, even though one’s body is by nature dirty, while maintaining and protecting it involves a lot of negativities and suffering, but if one wishes to benefit others, one still needs to protect it as it is a necessary tool [for one] to benefit others.</p>
<p>Merely taking care of one’s body involves bearing with so much difficulties, one also accumulates much negativities in the process. Despite these, in the end, if one failed to use one’s body and life to benefit and work for others, then bearing all such hardships and accumulating all such negativities will be for [no purpose].</p>
<p>Even though one will accumulate much negativities merely to take care of one’s body, but if one can use it to benefit others, then at least something good can come out of this.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">But if one is not careful and does not know how to think and lead one’s life, Then one’s body will become the transport portal/ vehicle where one is delivered to the lower realms.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">However, if one is careful, knows how to think and lead one’s life, Then this very same body will become the stage/ portal upon which one moves towards liberation.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Hence, depending on how one thinks, One’s body can either be the boat/ ship that carries one to the hells or to liberation and enlightenment.</p>

4" Exerting control over the mind [8.185 – 8.187]

a" Turning back obstacles to virtue [8.185]

<p style="text-align: center;">8.185 a So enough of this childish behavior! b I shall follow in the footsteps of the skillful, c Having recalled the advice concerning conscientiousness, d I shall turn away sleep and lethargy.</p>
<p>For the numberless of times, one has been engaging in the childish act of being distracted by one’s self-serving thought. One should have had enough of it already. Hence, <i>I shall follow in the footsteps of the skillful</i>, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, who are skilled, wise and proficient with regards to what to discard and adopt.</p>
<p>With conscientiousness and joyous perseverance, one should strive in giving up sleep and lethargy:</p>
<p>There are five obscurations mentioned in the teachings: 1) Attachment for sense objects, 2) Doubt, 3) Lethargy and sleep, 4) Mental excitement and regret, 5) Malice.</p>

b" Developing the strength of effort in the antidotes [8.186]

**8.186 a Just like the compassionate Sons of the Victor,
b I shall bear the rigors of what is appropriate;
c If I do not make a constant effort day and night,
d When will my suffering ever come to an end?**

This verse says that, one should follow the examples of the great compassionate bodhisattvas by working hard to develop concentration through depending on the antidotes. One needs a very strong and stable determination to do that.

If one does not have a strong determination to apply the antidotes consistently and continuously, then it will be very difficult to be free of suffering.

c" Placing oneself in one-pointed equipoise upon a virtuous focus [8.187]

**8.187 a Therefore, in order to dispel the obscurations
b I shall withdraw my mind from wrong paths
c And constantly place it in equipoise
d Upon the correct object of observation.**

To achieve the main principal goal of eliminating both the afflictive and knowledge obscurations, one needs to:

1) actualize and generate special insight, but before this can be achieved, one needs to 2) achieve calm abiding.

Hence, one needs to 3) turn one's mind away from all the wrong paths like following after desire/ attachment and so forth.

By depending on the *eight antidotes* to abandon the *five faults* as explained in *Maitreya's Differentiating the Middle from the Extreme*, one should place one's attention continuously on a correct object of observation.

Gyalsab Je summarizes chapter 8 in this verse:

***The destruction of the two obscurations from the root,
With superior insight to which reality is manifest,
Depends in turn on immovable concentration.
Hence, you should first become proficient in attaining calm abiding.***

Summarizing Chapter 8:

The reasons it is necessary to accomplish calm abiding [8.1 – 8.2(ab)]

One of the main reasons for actualizing calm abiding is this: if one does not have concentration and thus being under the influence of distraction, letting the mind does whatever it wishes, then this will lead to one accumulating much nonvirtues.
The arising and manifestations of many erroneous conceptions came about due to the predispositions/ imprints of such erroneous conceptions. To eliminate all such erroneous conceptions, one has to eliminate its source, primarily these imprints.
Hence, there is a need to destroy such imprints. That which allows one to do so is special insight. This means that one has to actualize special insight. To do so, one must first attain calm abiding. Hence, it is important to actualize calm abiding.
The <i>benefits of achieving calm abiding</i> are that: once one achieves calm abiding, many of the afflictions are unable to manifest as calm abiding stops the manifestations of many of such afflictions.
If one is able to stop the manifestations of these afflictions, <i>1)</i> then at least for the period, one will not have the conditions for nourishing and activating the imprints left on the mental continuum in the past through the accumulation of various karma.
If there is nothing to nourish the karmic imprints, all such karmic imprints will not ripen.
Since many of such afflictions are unable to manifest, then <i>2)</i> one will not be newly accumulating karma.
Since these are the benefits of calm abiding, then the <i>disadvantages</i> of letting one’s mind falling under the control of distractions in <i>the absence of calm abiding</i> [would have the opposite effects:]
<i>1)</i> When one’s mind is distracted and is under the control of erroneous conceptions/ afflictions, then it will only [intensify]. Be it anger, attachment and so on, it will become stronger and stronger. This will affect one in many future lives to come.
<i>2)</i> One also newly accumulates many karma for many more rebirths in samsara. As the afflictions have become much more intensified, then there will be many conditions to nourish and activate such karmic imprints one has already accumulated.
One has to see for oneself the importance and benefits of attaining calm abiding. One should come to the conclusion that: “I really need this attainment.”

Instructions on abandoning the class of things [incompatible] with calm abiding [8.2(cd)]

Abandoning the class of things [incompatible] with calm abiding [8.3 – 8.88]

Abandoning the bustle of the world [8.3 – 8.37]

Identifying the causes of attachment to the world [8.3(ab)]

Identifying the antidotes [8.3(cd) – 8.4]

To attain calm abiding, one needs to [firstly] abandon many of its discordant factors/ unfavorable conditions.
One of the discordant factors/ obstacles that impede the attainment of calm abiding is liking and living the normal busy life of hustle and bustle. Since it is a discordant factor, if one does not abandon it, then there is no way to achieve calm abiding. The reason people like, are attracted to and are thus involved with such lifestyles is essentially due to attachment.
Since attachment is the cause for this, then one firstly needs to understand the various faults of attachment. Hence, the text then explains the faults of attachment.

The methods for developing the antidotes [8.5 – 8.21]

Inner: Abandoning attachment to sentient beings [8.5 – 8.16]

Outer: Abandoning attachment to gain and honor [8.17 – 8.21]

Inner: Abandoning attachment to sentient beings [8.5 – 8.16]

The disadvantages of attachment [from the perspective of subject] [8.5 – 8.8(ab)]

One is attached to people and material things. Here, one is attached to sentient beings who one finds pleasant, beautiful and attractive. However, by following attachment to a sentient being one is attracted to, this does not mean that in return, one will find a sustained happiness [in this life or] that can even extend beyond the present life.
<i>In fact, the more one follows attachment for sentient beings, the further away one is from happiness, The closer one is towards pain and suffering, one also gets to accumulate more negativities. Hence, instead of acquiring happiness in return for the attachment and desire one puts in, One gets more problems, sufferings and negative karma.</i>
Therefore, if one were to ask: “By following attachment, will I repeatedly meet with pleasant objects from life to life?” Reply: “No, in fact, you will be further and further away from meeting with such objects.” By following attachment, one’s mind becomes distracted. The stronger one’s attachment, the less contented one becomes. This is obvious in one’s life.

When one has attachment/ desire for people, one can essentially forget about attaining liberation as there is no way one can achieve it so long as one follows attachment to people.
Even when one has developed some sense of disenchantment/ renunciation with samsara based on seeing its suffering, such a positive thought is completely overwhelmed by attachment to the point that, whatever disenchantment there is, it is all gone.
The precious human rebirth of eight freedoms and ten endowments one has obtained is a very good basis to achieve the everlasting peace of liberation. But by following desire/ attachment to people, this will render it useless and meaningless.

Abandoning them by knowing the disadvantages [from the perspective of object] [8.8(cd) – 8.16]

One has to think how, at the time of death, nothing is of any benefit to one except one’s virtuous practice/ Dharma. One’s friends, relatives, loved ones, attendants, entourage, supporters and so forth are essentially useless. One’s possessions are also useless. Even one’s own body one cherishes so much is also useless as it cannot benefit one at the time of death.
The one and only thing that will benefit one at the time of death is Dharma. Hence, one essentially has to do the nine point meditation on death and impermanence [to realize these points that acts to abandon attachment].
One also has to see that there is no benefit in associating with childish worldly people. This is because, by doing so, there is no benefit but only problems and harms as it will stir up negative emotions and karma. Hence, [to avoid being harmed], the first real step/ solution is to live in isolation, a place that is far away from the conditions that stir attachments in one’s mind.

Outer: Abandoning attachment to gain and honor [8.17 – 8.21]

One of the faults of attachment to material things is that, even if one do achieve all that one is attached to, wealth, power, reputation and so forth, for many people, such ‘achievements’ become a condition to feel arrogant. This causes them to despise others. This then accumulates the karma that will lead to a rebirth in the lower realms.
Having attachment to material gains, power, reputation, respect and so forth has no limits. This is because, the more one follows it, the stronger it becomes. One then cannot stop it as one will be seeking for more of these things.
In the process, one also accumulates more and more powerful nonvirtues, which will throw one into the lower realms.

The disadvantages of bustle [8.22 – 8.24]

The whole purpose of reflecting extensively on the many faults of [following] desire/ attachment is so that, it would motivate one to abandon associating with ordinary childish people and live in isolation instead.
One who has thought well on such topics and sees for oneself the futility of such a normal life of attachment, one will then wish to do something positive with one’s life. One should then live in isolation.

The benefits of relying on [solitude] [8.25 – 8.37]

If staying in isolation is that important, then the [external] place one depends on and lives in while maintaining isolation:
1) should have easy access to necessities of life like clothing, food and so on,
2) the make up of the environment, like the soil and so on, should not be a cause to develop sicknesses,
3) one’s companions should share the same enthusiasm and interests with one, their views should be harmonious with one,
4) the place should not have many human traffic where one can hear chattering noises nor where one can hear noises from fast-flowing rivers, waterfalls or the movements from wind,
5) the place should be free from the dangers where one could be eaten by wild animals and so on.
Finding a suitable place to live in physical isolation is an important external preparation. But what is more important is the internal preparation. The person who lives in isolation must be someone who must possess such characteristics that:
1) Has few desires 2) Is contented with a simple life 3) Has abandoned a busy life of hustle and bustle 4) Has some control over desire such that it does not become a problem 5) Is living in ethical discipline.
The <i>Stages of the Path to Enlightenment</i> explains how important it is to gather all such favorable conditions that are crucial for the attainment of calm abiding. It is said that, one may be attempting to achieve calm abiding for eons, but if one does not possess all such prerequisites, the favorable conditions for developing calm abiding, then one will never be able to achieve it.
If one succeeds in isolating oneself living such a lifestyle, then the benefits would be that 1) there will be little cause for sorrow both when one is alive and at the time of death. This is because, on both occasions, there is no one around to give problems like making one worry and so forth. As there is nothing else to think about and occupy one’s mind, then:
2) One’s practice of virtue will be stable and there will be many opportunities for increasing the qualities of one’s practice.
3) There will also be many opportunities to recollect one’s objects of refuge, the Three Jewels, all the time.

Abandoning erroneous conceptions [8.38 – 8.88]

Cultivating weariness for desire [8.38 – 8.84]

In the context of this section of the text, this refers to abandoning attachment/ desire for the body. Perhaps its [main intent] is referring to abandoning the attachment to one’s own body.

In it, there are explanations on how the body is by nature filthy, impure, dirty and so on. For example, it does not matter which orifice one chooses, whatever that comes out of it will be unclean. If that is the by-product of the body, then it goes without saying that the body itself is also impure, as it is only something dirty that can produce some other dirty things.

By understanding how the body itself is a cause for impure substances, one can understand how the body itself is impure.

One can also come to understand how one’s body is impure and dirty by looking at the cause/ source of one’s body. Essentially, one’s body came from one’s mother’s womb. Within it, one’s body arose as a continuation of the egg and sperm of one’s parents.

Cultivating joy in [solitude] [8.85 – 8.88]

In essence, by abandoning and not following after attachment/ desire, while living in the retreat of isolation, one attempts to achieve calm abiding through meditation.

How to cultivate calm abiding [8.89 – 8.178]

By distancing oneself from attachment/ desire while living in isolation, one is then advised to achieve calm abiding. In this context, the [way to do so is to] equalize and then exchange self and other. [These two ways] are the uncommon presentations of achieving calm abiding. Hence, this is an uncommon way to achieve calm abiding.

Perhaps, there are different ways to interpret what a *common/ shared* way [to achieve calm abiding] may mean:

Calm abiding is a shared quality that can be achieved by both Buddhists and non-buddhists. Hence, it is a shared quality.

In general, calm abiding is also a shared quality among the different Buddhist vehicles. Whatever vehicles one may be in, one needs calm abiding [to eventually reach the goal of that vehicle].

In this context here, the uncommon calm abiding refers to the meditation on Equalizing and Exchanging Self and Other. It is uncommon, perhaps because this practice is an unshared/ uncommon feature of the Mahayana.

Perhaps another explanation of such an uncommon way of meditating on calm abiding is that, even among the bodhisattvas, it is not even shared with the bodhisattvas of dull faculty. It is an uncommon practice of bodhisattvas of the sharp faculty.

Hence, as to the manner of cultivating this uncommon method of achieving calm abiding, one firstly meditates on equalizing self and other. It is only after that, that one meditates on exchanging self and other.

The way to meditate on [equalizing] self and other [8.89 – 8.112]

At the beginning of explanations on equalizing self and other, there are essentially three reasons that show why it is perfectly appropriate to equalize self and other:

1) Self and other are equal in only wanting happiness and not suffering. 2) Self and other are equal in being selfless. 3) [Since these two reasons are the case, then] wherever there is suffering, be it one’s own or someone else’ suffering, it should be and has to be eliminated.

In explaining these three points, many qualms about the relationship between self and others were raised, such as: “There is no connection between myself and others, so I do not need to care about them.”

There is also a qualm about this practice leading to more suffering for oneself. The final conclusion is that, through equalizing self and other, which means to have the wish to eliminate the suffering of others, not only would it not increase one’s own suffering, in fact, it would even lead to the elimination of one’s own suffering as well.

The text also explains that, for someone who sees the purpose and is dedicated to working for others, he does not feel any difficulties in doing so. In fact, he will experience an unparalleled joy, a happiness that cannot be found through other means.

He who has trained his mind in the attitude of being totally dedicated to working for others, such an attitude will cause his own arrogance/ pride to diminish. He also does not seek nor hope for any returns, praise, rewards nor even future happiness.

The text then explains that, the practice of exchanging self and other is entirely achievable if one were to put one’s heart into it. It is only a matter of familiarity/ habituation. It is said that, if one is habituated to the thought of having successfully exchanged self and other, then it will become easy.

An example is shown how this is possible: One’s body is not the self as it came from the sperm and egg of one’s parents, hence, one’s body actually belongs to others. But through habitually clinging onto that which is not the self as the self, one has come to associate one’s body as the self, thinking: “This is me!”

Likewise, although others are not self, but by familiarizing with all the reasons stated earlier, one can come to regard others as the self. Since that is the case, one would also be able to cherish them [as one does one’s self].

The way to exchange self and other [8.113 – 8.187]

After having equalized self and other, then the way to exchange self and other would be to firstly train oneself to cherish others and abandon self cherishing.

The text explains that the **benefits** one gains from cherishing others over oneself can be that, for example, one's arrogance/pride will diminish, one will not be seeking any: rewards of being praised, reputation and even the results of merit.

When one is accustomed to cherishing others, one will [also naturally] not going to harm them. Instead of heaping all the praise and crediting oneself for it, oneself, who has exchanged self and others, will direct all such praises and credits to others. One will also be able to see oneself as the possession of others, hence employing oneself to work for others.

One will also achieve enlightenment.

The **faults** of self cherishing: it is the origin of all of one's worries and fears. Due to self cherishing, one definitely regards oneself as more important and higher than others. Hence, one will then despise others. One also uses others to one's advantage and make them do things for one. One then creates the karma to be born as a low caste/ servant/ slave for others.

If one's self cherishing is very strong, even if one has a lot wealth and power, one will still not be a happy person.

In essence, whether one's life now and in the future will be filled with happiness or problems, will all depend on one's mere thought/ how one thinks. From one real thought to cherish others, all the happiness comes. By following a mere thought of cherishing oneself, all the problems come as well:

*8.129 Whatever joy there is in this world
All comes from desiring others to be happy,
And whatever suffering there is in this world
All comes from desiring myself to be happy.*

This verse is a summary for the state of how one's life will turn out, depending on which thought one follows.

In [verse 8.134,] self-grasping is likened to the great ghost. This is because, from this erroneous mistaken thought comes every single problem, worry, fear, pain, suffering, unhappiness, even spirit possessions. Hence, it is the great ghost.

Since it is the root of all the problems, then it must be destroyed. One must then practice and act correctly and not erroneously. For example, instead of being attached to and hoarding possessions one owns, one should instead practice generosity by dedicating and giving them to others.

Through reflecting along such points as explained, one then practices exchanging oneself and others, here, in **thought**.

In the practice of exchanging self and other as explained in this chapter, there is an explanation of how one does so by [assuming the roles of] three different persons.

Besides exchanging self and other in thought, there is also the practice of exchanging self and other in **action**. For example, one can dedicate and give away one's possessions to others.

While one is benefiting others in action, one must adopt a lower position than the beneficiary. When one finds oneself at fault, even if it is a small insignificant one, one should acknowledge that and apologize or confess immediately.

Since developing a single-pointed state of mind is crucial in achieving calm abiding, one must then rely on mindfulness to overcome any excitement or laxity that may occur in the process of such a practice.

In the process of equalizing and then exchanging self and other, it is possible that one's mind may become distracted [back to one's old habit] of cherishing oneself and not being interested at all in benefiting others, completely straying away from the goal of one's meditation. To bring one's mind back to the object of one's practice, one has to rely on mindfulness.

Since there is a need to remind oneself of the benefits of working for others and the faults of self cherishing and so forth, then there are the explanations towards the end of this chapter on the benefits of working for others and the reminder of the faults of, for example, being attached to the body.

The text explains that, to achieve calm abiding, one essentially needs to work hard [at it]. At the end of the chapter, *Gyaltsab Je* comments that, to achieve calm abiding, one needs to joyously persevere by single-pointedly focusing one's mind on one's chosen virtuous object of observation.

[Identifying the obstacles to engage in the virtue of exchanging self and other:]

The chapter on joyous perseverance came before this chapter on concentration. Joyous perseverance is essentially the opposite of laziness. As shown in the Lam Rim, there are a few possibilities why one does not joyously persevere in virtue.

There are people who see the need to practice and realize they have all the conditions to practice. Yet they failed to do so. This is because, one either thinks that there is still time and thus procrastinates in doing so, or one follows after attachment.

Hence, one fails in practicing exchanging self and other.

[The antidotes to such obstacles:]

If procrastination is one's problem, knowing one can practice but chooses to do so only in the future, then the solution is:
1) To reflect on death and impermanence, particularly how the time of death is uncertain.
2) To reflect on where one would most likely be heading to, if one were to die suddenly in that, one would most likely be going to the lower realms.
[If one can reflect well on these two points, then] this will stop the thought of procrastination.
When there is the thought to engage in virtue and practice, one should act on it immediately. It is said that, when one practices the Dharma, one should be like a mad/ crazy person.
This is because, crazy people would do whatever that comes to mind [without thinking too much]. Hence, if there is a thought to practice Dharma, then one should act on it without waiting [or thinking too much].
Khenrinpoche: I am not saying that, when you practice Dharma, you become a crazy person. You have to get the point [of the example]. For example, when there is a thought to do prostrations, you should do it immediately, that is the idea. [After having such a thought, you should not think:] "Oh I'll do that tomorrow."
The [behavior] of a crazy person is what I [am trying to get at]. If whatever the crazy person wishes to eat, he would eat that immediately and would not think [too much]. So the idea is like that.
This chapter has many explanations and emphasis on abandoning attachment, its faults and how it is very bad. This is something one has to think about as it is very important.
The other thing one also has to think much about are the faults of self cherishing and the benefits of cherishing others. Is one really convinced about it? One has to think about it and not merely [know of this and that fault or this and that benefits].
Through such reflections, one should eventually derive at a strong aspiration to wish to overcome self cherishing and then dedicate oneself to others. To do so, one really has to be convinced about the faults of self cherishing and the benefits of cherishing others.
Hence, one must firstly develop a real, deep-seated wish and stable 1) power of aspiration to overcome self cherishing. This can only come when one has a real and deep feeling from [the depth of one's] heart about the faults of self cherishing and the benefits of cherishing others.
With this as the basis and foundation, one then meditates on exchanging self and other and dedicates oneself to this practice.
Even if one does reach this point and engages in this practice, [no results will occur] if one merely meditates occasionally, doing so when one likes to but not when one does not feel like doing so. Hence, having consistency in one's practice is very important. One must [continuously practice] without any break. Hence, one needs the 2) power of steadfastness .
One also needs the sense of not having enough of the practice of exchanging self and other. This is the 3) power of joy . One takes so much delight and happiness in it in that, one has the feeling of insatiability. One would never think that one has done enough of it: "Oh, I have had enough of this exchanging self and other for now..."
In the course of such a stable, consistent and dedicated practice, there will be times where one will of course become physically and/ or mentally exhausted. At such times, it is important to take a short rest. After which, one should apply oneself again into the practice. This is essentially the 4) power of relinquishment .

[Khenrinpoche's advice on the way to study and practice:]

Therefore, one can teach this chapter in one hour. It can also be explained in ten minutes. As I have said before, you should study this in more details. This is not a one-off introductory class. It is not as if we come together once a month.
What we do here has to be something different from what people usually do in those one-off talks.
That is why it is important to read the text, examine the words in details and think about them.
Therefore, it is important to study [the Dharma] in detail. Once you have covered the topics [in detail] and then when you attempt to summarize, then it will be more beneficial.
It is the same with reciting sadhanas, doing prayers or whatever practices. You should in fact start with the longest and most extensive version. It is only when you are completely familiar with it such that you [know every single step of the meditation that], you can then depend on the extremely short sadhanas/ text.
Hence, be it studying or practicing, this is how it should be done. But most people [do not do that]. From the beginning, one already has no knowledge, yet one chooses the shortest prayers, sadhanas, texts. Khenrinpoche: Then you also get nothing.