

## **Transcript of teachings by Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi on the Modes of Mind and Mental Factors**

**Lesson No: 28**

**Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2012**

**Root text:** *A Necklace for Those of Clear Awareness Clearly Revealing the Modes of Minds and Mental Factors* by Ye-she Gyeltsen, translated by Toh Sze Gee; January 2006 edition. Copyright: Toh Sze Gee & FPMT, Inc. September 2003.

All page references refer to the root text, unless otherwise stated.

*Questions:* (1) What is the difference between the mental factor of haughtiness and the mind of rejoicing? (2) What is the meaning of “contaminated success”?

*Answers:* (1) Haughtiness is similar to pride, which is a puffing up of the mind. It is an obstacle to developing good qualities whereas rejoicing is a mind of liking that arises when one focuses, for example, on the virtues in one’s own mental continuum.

- Rejoicing is a basis for acquiring or increasing one’s qualities and it can act as a support for developing respect.
- Pride and haughtiness do not have that function because the mind is puffed up.

Haughtiness is a derivative of attachment. While rejoicing is not necessarily a derivative of attachment, it is possible that rejoicing can lead to attachment. When one does not know how to rejoice, it can be mixed with attachment and when that happens, there is the danger that it will become haughtiness.

Rejoicing is a mind of liking that arises and focuses on one’s virtues, whereas haughtiness is a puffed up mind that focuses on one’s attributes. When we rejoice in our virtues and qualities and our mind becomes puffed up, then that is not right. Would that not become haughtiness?

When our rejoicing is involved with attachment and it leads to the puffing up of one’s mind, it would no longer act as a support for the generation and the increase of one’s good qualities, which is its purpose. It may become haughtiness instead.

(2) “Contaminated success” refers to samsaric perfections or enjoyments. It refers to those desirable objects that promote or cause the generation of the afflictions.

### **(10) Harmfulness**

Regarding harmfulness, the Compendium of Knowledge says:

QUESTION: What is harmfulness?

RESPONSE: It is involved with anger. It is non-benevolence, non-compassion and non-mercy. It has the function of harming others.

Just as it has been said above, it is a wish, bereft of benevolence, to harm sentient beings (Pages 75- 76).

Next is an explanation of the three words in the definition of harmfulness.

- since it is a wish to harm by oneself, it is **non-benevolence**,
- since it is a wish to engage others in harming, it is **non-compassion**, and
- since it is a rejoicing upon seeing or hearing others acting [to harm], it is **non-mercy** (Page 76).

### (11) Non-shame

Regarding non-shame, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is non-shame?

RESPONSE: It is a non-avoidance of misdeeds on account of oneself and is involved with attachment, hatred and ignorance. It has the function of assisting all [root] afflictions and secondary afflictions.

Just as it has been said above, it is an awareness that does not avoid misdeed on account of either oneself or the Dharma. For example, if a fully-ordained monk encounters an intoxicant and avoids a misdeed on account of himself, thinking, "Drinking this intoxicant is not something I should do," then this is shame. The opposite of this is non-shame (Page 76).

Non-shame is essentially the opposite of shame, the virtuous mental factor we had discussed earlier. Shame is an avoidance of misdeeds on account of oneself; it is a mind that restrains oneself from committing misdeeds on account of oneself. Non-shame is the opposite of that.

### (12) Non-embarrassment

Regarding non-embarrassment, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is non-embarrassment?

RESPONSE: It is a non-avoidance of misdeeds on account of others and is involved with attachment, hatred and ignorance. It has the function of assisting all [root] afflictions and secondary afflictions.

Just as it has been said above, it is an awareness that does not avoid faults on account of others. If one, when about to engage in a misdeed, avoids the misdeed on account of others, thinking, "If the Teacher and the clairvoyant gods were to become displeased and I were to be despised by others, this would be unfitting," then this is embarrassment. The opposite of this is non-embarrassment (Page 76).

### (13) Lethargy

Regarding lethargy, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is lethargy?

RESPONSE: It is an unserviceability of mind and is involved with ignorance. It has the function of assisting all [root] afflictions and secondary afflictions.

Just as it has been said above, it is a heaviness and an unserviceability of the body and mind and is a factor of ignorance. Moreover, the *Precious Garland* (stanza 5.32ab) says:

Lethargy is a state of inactivity  
Due to heaviness of body and mind.

The *Explanation of the 'Treasury of Knowledge'* says:

What is lethargy? It is a heaviness of the body and a heaviness of the mind. It is an unserviceability of the body and unserviceability of the mind.

The *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* also explains it in this way. Its function is specified as "assisting all [root] afflictions and secondary afflictions," because all afflictions will increase in dependence upon lethargy. In this vein, the *Exhortation to the Exceptional Resolve (Adhyasayasamcodanasutra)* says:

Phlegm, wind, and bile  
Occur to a great extent in the bodies  
Of those who take joy in sleep and lethargy;  
Their constituents are in disorder.

For those who take joy in lethargy and sleep,  
Their stomachs are unclean due to a bad diet,  
Their bodies are heavy and their complexions unhealthy,  
Even their speech is slurred.

And,

Those who take joy in lethargy and sleep  
Are confused and their aspirations for the Dharma degenerate.  
The childish completely degenerate from all excellent qualities,  
Their wholesomeness degenerates, and they proceed to darkness (Pages 77 – 78).

## (14) Excitement

Regarding excitement, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is excitement?

RESPONSE: It is an unpeacefulness of mind that subsequently engages an attractive cause. It has the function of hindering calm-abiding.

Just as it has been said above, it is an awareness that, upon observing the attributes of the desire realm previously experienced, mentally scatters outwards to them and engages them with craving. Regarding this, the *Precious Garland* (stanza 5.32cd) says:

Excitement is an  
Unpeacefulness of the body and mind (Page 78).

These points are taught in the *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path*:

Its object of observation is a pleasant and attractive object. Its [subjective] aspect is an unpeacefulness of the mind that is scattered outward and it is involved with attachment. Thus it engages its object with the aspect of craving. It has the function of hindering the mind from abiding on the object of observation.

QUALM: Are all outward scatterings of the mind excitement? (Pages 78 – 79).

The author does not believe this to be so. He says:

Excitement is involved with attachment, but the mind is frequently distracted to objects by way of afflictions other than attachment; the mind even scatters to non-afflicted virtuous objects of observation. Hence, not all scatterings of the mind are excitement (Page 79).

Excitement is a derivative of attachment and it obstructs and hinders the mind from remaining focussed on an object. As it says here, it functions to hinder the development of calm-abiding. Excitement is a mind that is distracted and is an outward scattering of the mind, i.e., the attention of the mind is focussed outwards towards an object.

Mental scattering, on the other hand, can be virtuous, non-virtuous, or neutral. One's mind may be scattered outwards but the object is not

necessarily always a non-virtuous object. One's mind can also focus on a virtuous object.

- Since excitement is classified as a secondary affliction, therefore it is either non-virtuous or neutral.
- In the case of mental scattering, the mind is scattered but it can be a virtuous, non-virtuous, or neutral mind.

So what is the difference between excitement and scattering? There can be virtuous mental scattering but you will not be able to find virtuous excitement. Excitement is a scattering of the mind due to attachment, whereas mental scattering does not occur due to attachment necessarily. That being the case, probably we can say that excitement is necessarily mental scattering, whereas mental scattering is not necessarily excitement. Perhaps we can say this. What do you think?

### **(15) Non-faith**

Regarding non-faith, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is non-faith?

RESPONSE: It is a non-conviction, non-clarity<sup>29</sup>, and non-wishing of the mind with respect to virtuous phenomena, and is involved with ignorance. It has the function of acting as a support for laziness.

Just as it has been said above, it is the discordant class of faith and is involved with ignorance (Page 79).

When we looked earlier at the mental factor of faith, we saw that there were three types of faith: clarifying or clear faith, the faith of conviction, and wishing or aspiring faith. Here non-faith is the opposite of these three.

- For example, when you have a mind that is the opposite of clear faith, that is a mind that does not have a liking for nor does it see the qualities of, say, the Three Jewels.
- Then there is a mind that is not convinced about or does not believe in reincarnation, the workings of karma, or the Three Jewels.
- There is also a mind that does not wish or aspire for liberation.

Non-faith “is involved with ignorance. It has the function of acting as a support for laziness.” Because faith functions as a support for joyous perseverance, when you do not have faith, i.e., you have non-faith instead, then you are not going to generate any joyous perseverance. When we don't have joyous perseverance, this means we are lazy. The antidote to non-faith is faith. So we have to try our best to develop faith.

### **(16) Laziness**

Regarding laziness, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is laziness?

RESPONSE: It is a non-enthusiasm of the mind engendered by the comfort of lying down, reclining

on one's side, and slouching about, and is involved with ignorance. It has the function of hindering application to the class of virtue.

Just as it has been said above, it is a non-enthusiasm of the mind for virtue due to a habit of lying down and so forth. Laziness causes the entire class of virtue to degenerate. The *Close Placement of Mindfulness (Saddharmasmrtyupasthana)* says:

The one basis for afflictions  
Is laziness. Who has it?  
Wherever laziness is present,  
All Dharma is absent (Pages 79 – 80).

Laziness is the opposite of joyous perseverance. Joyous perseverance is the antidote to laziness. Laziness is a mind that is unenthusiastic about virtue. Joyous perseverance is a mind that is enthusiastic about virtue.

In order for joyous perseverance to arise in our mind, first we must be convinced of the benefit of engaging in virtue. Regardless of the virtuous activity, you should always reflect on the benefits of engaging in that virtuous activity and think about the ripening effects of that virtue. In particular, you should think about the benefits of achieving liberation and enlightenment. When we see the benefits, we become enthusiastic and would want to engage in that virtue. That is how joyous perseverance arises.

The key to generating joyous perseverance is developing faith. When there is no faith, there can be no joyous perseverance. That is what is mentioned in the lam-rim. A major outline of the lam-rim is developing the faith of conviction in karma, which is the root of all happiness. Therefore developing this conviction in the workings of karma is extremely important for generating joyous perseverance. With this faith of conviction in the workings of karma, we will be able to cause our virtue to increase.

It is like this in our everyday life as well. Although we do not call the effort we put into our daily life, joyous perseverance, essentially the process is the same. Before we are willing to work hard towards achieving something, we first have to be convinced of how beneficial it will be for us. Only then will we aspire to achieve that goal. With that aspiration comes effort. We put in the effort to achieve that goal.

So joyous perseverance is important and we need faith to be able to generate it. Without joyous perseverance we cannot turn away laziness.

### **(17) Non-conscientiousness**

Regarding non-conscientiousness, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is non-conscientiousness?

RESPONSE: Abiding with attachment, hatred, ignorance as well as laziness, it is a non-cultivation of virtuous qualities and non-guarding of the mind against contaminated phenomena. It has the function of acting as a support for the increase of non-virtue and the decrease of virtue.

Just as it has been said above, it is an awareness that, not guarding the mind against the hosts of afflictions and misdeeds, gives in to relaxation (Page 80).

Non-conscientiousness is the opposite of conscientiousness. It is mentioned in the teachings that we have to rely on conscientiousness all the time in order to guard our mind. Without conscientiousness, we will allow the afflictions to arise.

### **(18) Forgetfulness**

Regarding forgetfulness, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is forgetfulness?

RESPONSE: It is a mindfulness that is concomitant with afflictions. It has the function of acting as a support for distraction.

Just as it has been said above, it is a knower that is an unclear mind and forgetful with respect to virtue on account of mindfulness of an object of observation of afflictions. Similarly, *A Discussion of the Five Aggregates* also explains forgetfulness to be an afflicted mindfulness, whereby an unclear, forgetful, virtuous mind should be called "forgetfulness." However, since the objects of observation of afflictions – pleasant and unpleasant characteristics and so forth – do not arise as objects of awareness [of such a virtuous mind], perhaps it should not be posited as forgetfulness. Forgetfulness acts as a support for distraction, because, in dependence on afflicted mindfulness, the mind will be distracted to an object of observation of the afflictions (Page 81).

Forgetfulness is listed as a secondary affliction. Therefore we have to posit it to be a mind that is unclear about virtue and a mind that forgets the virtuous object of observation. In this context here forgetfulness is a mind that is focussed on a non-virtuous object of observation. Through that, it becomes unclear with regard to a virtuous object of observation and subsequently forgets it.

The function of forgetfulness is that it acts as a support for distraction. In dependence on afflicted mindfulness, i.e., the mindfulness that is focussed on a non-virtuous object of observation, the mind is distracted by and focuses on that object. This afflicted mindfulness acts as a condition for the mind to forget the virtuous object of observation.

### **(19) Non-introspection**

Regarding non-introspection, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is non-introspection?

RESPONSE: A wisdom that is concomitant with afflictions and engages unknowingly in activities of body, speech, and mind. It has the function of acting as a support for infractions (Page 81).

Infractions are also translated as downfalls. In some commentaries, non-introspection is also said to act as a support for negativities, so non-introspection supports both negativities and downfalls.

Just as it has been said above, it is an afflicted wisdom that engages unknowingly in activities of the three doors; it is the discordant class of introspection. That this non-introspection acts as a support for infractions accords with what is said in *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* (stanza 5.26):

Even though learned,  
Faithful and diligent in effort,  
Many become tainted by downfalls  
Due to the fault of lacking introspection (Page 81).

Therefore in the teachings, we are advised to be vigilant all the time. We have to cultivate introspection continuously. Without introspection, we will not be able to guard our body, speech, and mind against negativities, and we will not be able to protect ourselves from committing downfalls, infraction of our vows, and so forth.

## (20) Distraction

Regarding distraction, the *Compendium of Knowledge* says:

QUESTION: What is distraction?

RESPONSE: It is a scattering of the mind and is involved with attachment, hatred, and ignorance. It has the function of hindering separation from attachment.

Just as it has been said above, it causes the mind to be distracted from its object of observation through the force of afflictions. *A Discussion of the Five Aggregates* explains it as a scattering of the mind to the five attributes of the desire realm.

QUALM: Is there no difference between this [distraction] and the excitement that was explained above?

RESPONSE: **Excitement** is a scattering to attractive objects previously familiarized with and is involved with attachment, whereas **distraction** can be distracted to any object and be involved with all three poisons. Thus they are different (Pages 81 – 82).

When one is asked whether there is a difference between excitement and distraction, one will have to say that they are different:

- Excitement is involved with attachment and due to that, the mind scatters outwards towards an attractive object.
- Distraction is not necessarily focussed on an attractive object. One can be distracted due to attachment, anger, or ignorance, so it is not necessarily involved with attachment.

Distraction here is classified as a secondary affliction. In this case, distraction can be a derivative of ignorance, attachment, or anger.

When distraction is divided, there are six:

- (1) distraction by way of its very entity
- (2) external distraction
- (3) internal distraction
- (4) distraction by way of signs
- (5) distraction by way of unfavorable states
- (6) distraction by way of attention

- (1) Distraction by way of its very **entity** is explained to be the five sense consciousnesses. The reason is that, at the time of being set in equipoise on meditative stabilization, if any of the five sense consciousnesses are generated, then [the mind] arises from meditative stabilization. Thus, they are called "outward distraction of the mind away from meditative stabilization" (Page 82).

You can understand from this that concentration is not cultivated by the sense consciousness but it is achieved by the mental consciousness. When the five sense consciousnesses are generated, you will be distraction. You cannot concentrate when you are distracted.

- (2) **External** distraction is, when one is engaged in virtues of the three – listening, contemplation and meditation – the outward scattering of the mind to the attributes of the desire realm without abiding in them [i.e., the virtues]; since it causes scattering to an erroneous object of observation without abiding on the virtuous object of observation, it is called such.
- (3) **Internal** distraction is laxity, excitement, and craving for the taste of meditative absorption at the time of being set in equipoise on meditative stabilization. What is the reason for calling these "internal

distraction"? They are so-called because they are the main obstacles for cultivating meditative stabilization internally.

- (4) Distraction by way of **signs** is to put effort in virtuous training with the thought, "How wonderful it would be if another person were to develop conviction in me, thinking, 'He has attained a concentration'" (Page 82).

This is essentially being involved with the eight worldly dharmas.

- (5) Distraction by way of **unfavorable states** is a puffing up of the mind conceiving I and mine when the feeling that one is engaging in virtue arises in dependence on the unfavorable states of the view of the transitory collection and pride (Page 82).

Distraction by way of unfavourable states is a puffing up of the mind. It is essentially pride.

- (6) Distraction by way of **attention** is, for instance,
- giving up the meditative absorption of the fourth concentration for the meditative absorption of the third concentration or below, or
  - thinking, "Giving up engaging in the great vehicle, I shall abide in the lesser vehicle."

These types of distractions explained are taught to be general enumerations of distraction but it is not definite that they are actual secondary afflictions; the first is unspecified and the last one is included within virtue (Pages 82 – 83).

In this context, distraction is classified as a secondary affliction and therefore it is afflicted. Having said that, among the types of distractions mentioned here, not all are non-virtuous and afflicted:

- The first is unspecified, i.e., it is not specified as virtuous or non-virtuous.
- The last one, distraction by way of attention, "is included within virtue."
- The distraction that is an actual secondary affliction is the external distraction and the internal distraction. The text goes on to say, "those of keen intellect need to analyze this in detail."

#### [Discussion of the category of secondary afflictions]

In this way, these twenty - from belligerence up to distraction - are called "secondary afflictions" [Tibetan: *nye nyon*, literally, near-afflictions] because they are near to or involved with the root afflictions. Furthermore, you should understand them individually – belligerence and resentment being near to anger, and being involved with it [anger] and so forth. Most of them are clear from the *Knowledge* passages that have been previously cited (Page 83).

The reasons why these are called the secondary afflictions is because these minds are close to and are derivatives of the root afflictions.

- Belligerence, resentment, jealousy, and spite are derivatives of anger.
- Miserliness, deceit, dissimulation, haughtiness, and excitement are derivatives of attachment.
- Concealment, lethargy, non-faith, and laziness are derivatives of ignorance.
- There are many others that are derivatives of or are involved with all three mental poisons, such as non-introspection, non-conscientiousness, and so forth.

We will finish this module on Thursday. We will cover the four changeable mental factors and then that is it. Next week is a break and you come



back for the exams on Sunday, 14 October at 3pm.

*Question:* On page 83, under distraction by way of attention, the second point is, “thinking, ‘Giving up engaging in the great vehicle, I shall abide in the lesser vehicle.’” Even though abiding in the lesser vehicle is virtuous, how would giving up the pledge of the mind of enlightenment be virtuous? Is that not a downfall?

*Answer:* The mind that gives up bodhicitta is not virtuous. But the mind that enters the Hinayana path is virtuous.

*Student:* Do both these aspects come under “distraction by way of attention” or does it only cover abiding in the lesser vehicle?

*Answer:* I guess the main point here is entering the Hinayana path. You enter the Hinayana path upon giving up the Mahayana path. The emphasis seems to be on entering the Hinayana path.

*Question:* Lethargy is said to be an unserviceability of the body as well as the mind. Since it is a mental factor, how is it an unserviceability of the body?

*Answer:* Lethargy refers to the mind that makes your body and mind feel heavy just as pliancy is a mind that makes the body and mind extremely serviceable for engaging in virtue.

*Question:* Can Khen Rinpoche please explain the objects of observation of these 20 secondary afflictions that have not been clearly indicated in the text or mentioned before in class?

*Answer:*

- |         |                         |  |
|---------|-------------------------|--|
| (1)     | Belligerence:           | the object of observation would be the same as those for anger, i.e., sentient beings, sufferings and sources of sufferings. I mentioned before that anger is the basis for belligerence that is an inflamed and stronger form of anger. |
| (2)     | Resentment:             | same objects as anger  |
| (3)     | Concealment:            | one’s faults and the faults of others  |
| (4)     | Spite:                  | same objects as anger  |
| (5)     | Jealousy:               | the good qualities of others   |
| (6)     | Miserliness:            | one’s possessions and wealth   |
| (7 & 8) | Deceit & dissimulation: | any good qualities because by focusing on them, you act as if you possess them although you do not. Now the question is can the deceit be in relation to someone other   |

than oneself? For example, you may like someone and, acting out of deceit, although that person does not have any good qualities, you pretend that the person has good qualities.

Whether it is dissimulation or deceit, they refer to either hiding one's own faults or pretending to have qualities that one does not have. Based on their definitions, they seem to relate more to oneself.

- Deceit is pretending to have qualities that one does not have.
- Dissimulation is hiding one's faults and pretending not to have those faults.

- |           |                                |  |
|-----------|--------------------------------|--|
| (9)       | Haughtiness:                   | one's good health, prosperity, and so forth  |
| (10)      | Harmfulness:                   | sentient beings  |
| (11 & 12) | Non-shame & non-embarrassment: | misdeeds   |
| (13)      | Lethargy:                      | perhaps you can posit many different kinds of objects. I am not sure you can point to one object of observation. |
| (14)      | Excitement:                    | pleasant and attractive objects  |
| (15)      | Non-faith:                     | same objects as faith  |
| (16)      | Laziness:                      | virtues  |
| (17)      | Non-conscientiousness:         | virtues  |
| (18)      | Forgetfulness:                 | basis for developing afflictions   |
| (19)      | Non-introspection:             | activities of one's body, speech, and mind   |
| (20)      | Distraction:                   | any object   |

*Questions* (1) Can you please clarify why the objects of observation for concealment, apart from one's own faults, includes the faults of others.

(2) With regard to distraction, on page 83, for distraction by way of signs and distraction by way of unfavourable states, it was not explained as to what these two types of distraction were.

Answers: (2) That is why the text says we have to analyse this in detail!

(1) The text that we are using refers only to one's own faults and

misdeeds, but in some commentaries, the misdeeds of others are also posited as the object of observation. So when we conceal the misdeeds of others, is it a fault? Does it become concealment? This is what we have to think about: is it all right to conceal the misdeeds of others?

*Student:* When we do not conceal the faults of others, does that mean that we are exposing their faults? Under the four qualities that makes one a trainee-in-virtue (Page 49 of root text), it is said that even when one's own faults are exposed, one does not expose the faults of others.

*Khen Rinpoche:* The question is this: is it all right to conceal the mistakes of others?

*Student:* We can say yes because we are taught to only look at the qualities of others and not at their faults.

*Khen Rinpoche:* The four trainings you mentioned are in the context of overcoming anger. When you are derided, you do not respond with derision out of anger. If your faults are exposed, you should not expose the faults of others out of anger.

The definition refers to when you try to hide your faults when another person, such as a virtuous friend, benignly points them out to you. This shows the motivation—that there is a need to point out or expose the faults, without which you cannot confess or purify them. But it has to be done with a benevolent intention, the wish to benefit.

When we retaliate or we point out the faults of others out of anger, that is wrong. But I wonder if it is a fault or mistake to point out or expose the faults of others with an intention to help and benefit. Perhaps there isn't any fault in pointing out the faults of someone if that is done with the intention to benefit.

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