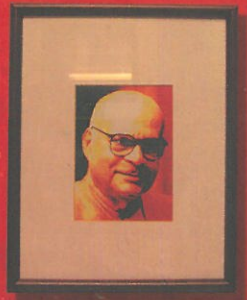
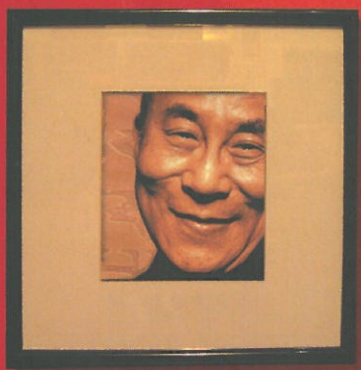
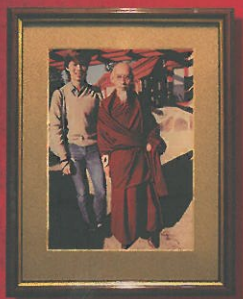
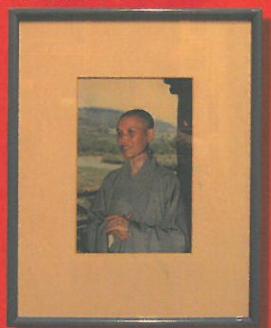
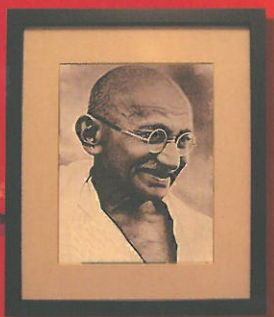


COMPASSION CONQUERS ALL

TEACHINGS ON THE EIGHT VERSES
OF MIND TRANSFORMATION



TSEM TULKU RINPOCHE

FOREWORD BY H.H. THE 101ST GADEN TRIPA &
ABBOT OF GADEN SHARTSE MONASTERY

COMPASSION CONQUERS ALL

Teachings on the Eight Verses
of Mind Transformation

Tsem Tulku Rinpoche



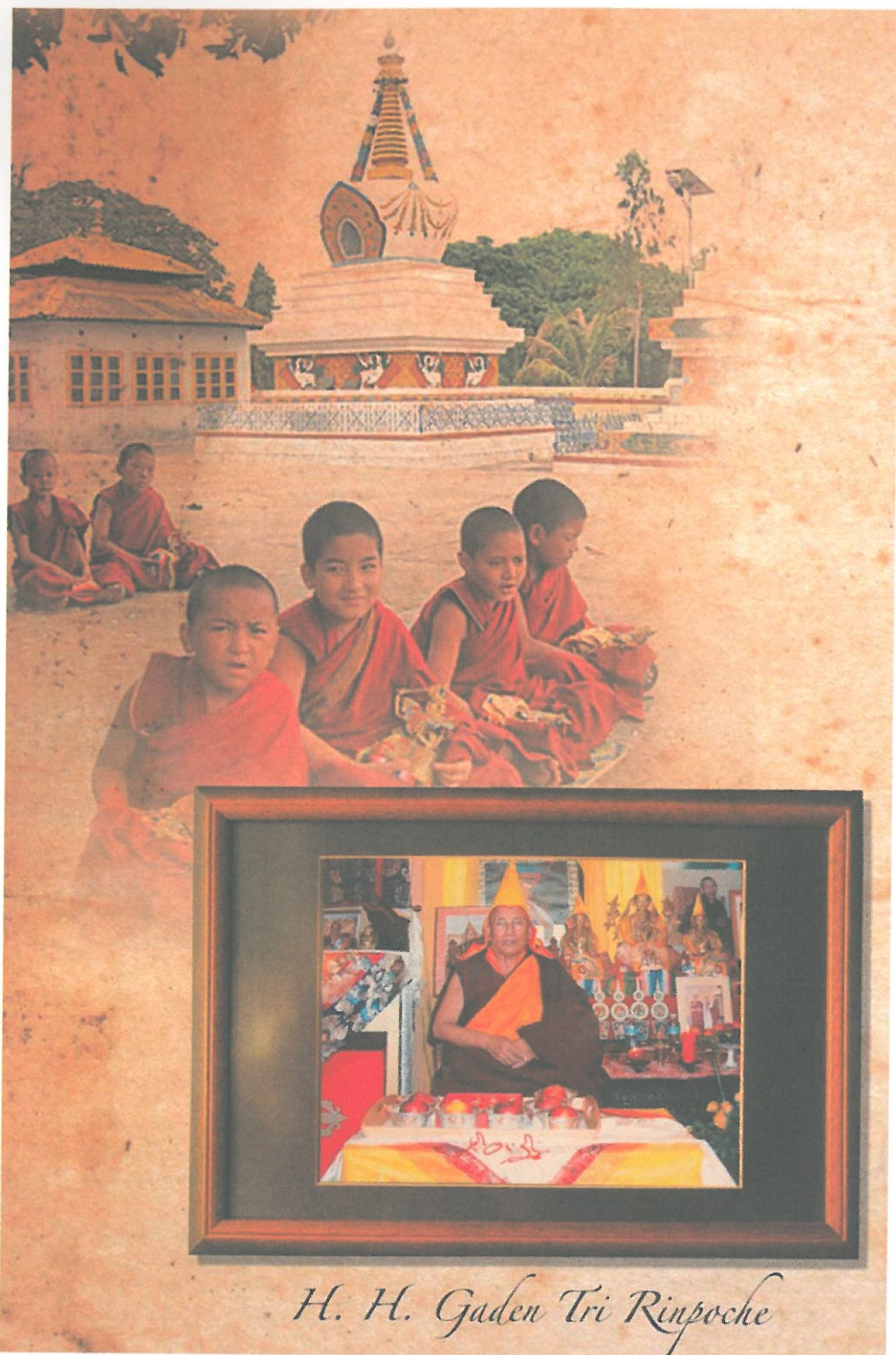
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H. H. Gaden Tri Rinpoche



ཕྱི་ལུང་རིགས་སྒྲ་བྲང་།

Tri Longrig Labrang

ॐ॥

མྱིང་མེད་དང་། བྱམས་པ། མེས་མཆོག་ལ་བདེ་མྱིང་བརྒྱན་པའི་གཙང་དོན་

བཅས་ཀྱི་ཐོག་ནས་ལང་གྱིད་པ་བྱུང་ས་པའི་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའི་རྒྱལ་སྐྱེ་རྣམས་གནད་གིན་ཏུ་ཆེ་བ་
 ཞིག་ཡིན། དཔལ་པའི་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ནང་སྤྱི་བརྒྱལ་སྤྱི་དེ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྒྲོར་རྟག་ཏུ་ཡོད་ཅིང་། དཔལ་པའི་
 རྣམས་ཀྱིས་གཞན་ལ་ལུས་དང་སེམས་ཀྱི་བདེ་བ་བརྒྱན་པའི་ཐབས་འཕྲོ་བརྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་མཛད་པའི་སྒྲོར་
 དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ་ཞིག་མཆིས། རྒྱ་ཆེ་ས་ནས་བཤད་ན། བླ་པའི་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་ཅམ་མ་ཡིན་པར། དེ་ལྟ་
 ལའི་རྒྱལ་པའི་རྣམ་པ་ཅན་རང་གཞན་རོགས་གསུམ་ཀུན་གྱི་ཉིན་རེ་ཉིན་རེའི་མི་ཆེད་ནང་གིན་ཏུ་མང་
 པོ་ཡོད་པ་རྟོགས་ཐུབ། རྣམ་པ་དང་ཐབས་མི་འདྲ་བ་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་པའི་ཐོག་ནས་གང་ཟག་ཁྱད་པར་ཅན་
 དེ་ཆོས་འཛུམ་བུ་གླིང་འདིར་མི་རིགས་དང་། རིག་གཞུང་དང་། ཁམས་དང་མོས་པ་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་པ་ཅན་
 རྣམས་ལ་གང་ལ་གང་འཕྲིན་ཀྱི་སྒྲོ་ནས་སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་དང་འབྲེལ་བ་ཡོད་གི་ཡོད། དེ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་
 རྒྱལ་སྤྱི་ལ་སྤྱི་རྣམ་པ་དེ་ཆོས་འཕྲོར་པའི་ནང་རྟག་པ་ལྟེ་བ་ཀྱིས་མནར་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ལ་སྤྱི་

TRI PA LABRANG

Gaden Shartse Monastery, P. O. Tibetan Colony-581 411,
Mundgod, N. Kanara, Karnataka State, INDIA
Tel. : 0091 8301 545207

THAR DEU LING

68, Rue Archereau
75019, PARIS, FRANCE BT.DI
Te.: 00331 42374187



ཨ་ ཁི་ལུང་རིགས་མ་བླང་།

Tri Longrig Labrang

མེས་མཆོག་གཅིག་པའི་ངང་ནས་སྤྲོད་རྗེ་དང་། བརྟེ་བ། བྱམས་པ་བཅས་བརྒྱུད་ལ་སྦྱེས་ཐབས་མཛད་ཀྱི་
ཡོད།

སྐབས་མཆོག་ཆེས་མཐོང་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་སྐུ་གཞོན་ཅུའི་དུས་གདན་སར་བཞུགས་སྐབས་སྐུ་ལ་
སྤྱི་འོས་འཛིན་བྱུང་ཡོད། དགའ་ལྷན་དུ་བཞུགས་ཡུན་རིང་ཁོང་ནས་དུས་དྲག་དུ་ཡུལ་ལ་དབྱེན་
འབྱེད་མེད་པ་ཞིག་གི་ཐོག་ནས་སྤྲོད་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཉམས་ལེན་མིག་དཔེར་འོས་པ་ཞིག་གྱུར་བར་མཛད་
ཡོད། ཉེ་ལོར་ས་གནས་ཐོད་མི་སྐབས་བཙོལ་བའི་གཞིས་ཆགས་ལ་འཛོལ་བའི་གནས་སྤངས་གོང་
འཕེལ་གཏོང་ཐབས་ནས་བརྒྱུད་གདན་ས་དགའ་ལྷན་ལ་འཛོལ་རྗེ་དང་སྤྲོད་དང་སྦྱོང་བ་སྦྱོང་བ་བཅས་ཀྱི་
མཐུན་རྐྱེན་གྱི་ཆེད་ཞལ་འདེབས་དགོ་བསྐུལ་གནང་བྱའི་བར་ད་ལྟེ་མི་པོ་བརྒྱ་ལྷག་རིང་འགྲུལ་བཙོན་
གནང་ཞིང་། དེ་ཡང་མ་ལ་ཞེད་ཡར་བཞུགས་འཇགས་ཐོག་དུས་ཀུན་དུ་སྤྲོད་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་འབའ་ཞིག་
གིས་ཀུན་ནས་བསྐྱེད་སྤྲོད་པའི་འགྲུལ་རྒྱུན་ཆད་མེད་པའི་སྒོ་ནས་རིགས་རམ་གྱི་སྤྱི་ལྷ་དེ་དག་གྱུར་
གནང་མཛད་འདུག

སྐབས་མཆོག་སྐུ་ཉི་མེད་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་དང་། སྐབས་མཆོག་མཐན་རྒྱུར་བྱམས་པ་ལེ་གེས་མཆོག་
རྣམས་གཉིས་ནས་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་ལ་མ་ལ་ཡ་གེ་ཡར་གདན་བཞུགས་ཀྱིས་དམ་པའི་ཆོས་སྤེལ་བའི་
བཀའ་སློབ་བྱུང་བ་ནས་བརྒྱུད། དགའ་ཆོག་ལྷན་གསོད་ཀྱིས། ཅུས་འདུན་ཅེ་གཅིག་པའི་སྒོ་ནས་མ་
ལ་ཡ་གེ་ཡར་དགའ་ལྷན་གར་ཅེ་གྱུ་ཆད་གི་ཡན་ལག་ཁེ་ཅར་ཏུ་མི་ཞེས་པ་གསར་འཇུགས་གནང་

TRI PA LABRANG

Gaden Shartse Monastery, P. O. Tibetan Colony-561 411,
Mundgod, N. Kanara, Karnataka State, INDIA
Tel. : 0091 8301 545207

THAR DEU LING

68, Rue Archereau
75019, PARIS, FRANCE BT.DI
Te. : 00331 42374187



ཨ་ ཁྱི་ལུང་རིགས་ཐ་བྱང་།

Tri Longrig Labrang

ཐབས་མཛད་ཡོད། རིན་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་གི་མཛད་པ་རྣམས་རྗེ་ཙོང་ཁ་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདྲོ་རྒྱལ་ས་གི་པ་ལྷན་
པ་པས་མ་གྱིས་མི་བྱུང་པ་འདི་དང་། ལྷག་པ་ལྷན་ལྷན་གྱི་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་གྱི་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
བྱུང་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
ཆེད་དུ་དམིགས་པ་ཞིག་ལས་མ་འདས་པ་ཡིན།

ཆོས་སྐྱོད་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་ནས་ཐུག་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
ནས་ཀྱང་མ་ཡིན་པར་ལོང་མ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
མཆོག་ནི་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
པའི་ལས་རྒྱར་འདྲེན་པའི་གཞུང་ཆོས་འདི་རྣམས་འཛམ་གླིང་གྱི་ཡོངས་ལ་བྱུང་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
པའིན་པ་ལ་འོས་ནས་རྗེ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
འགྲོ་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ཐོག་ནས་བྱུང་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
པའིན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
ལ་པའིན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་
མཐུན་དེ་འགྲོ་ལ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་ལྷན་པ་

TRI PA LABRANG
Gaden Shartse Monastery, P. O. Tibetan Colony-581 411.
Mundgod, N. Kanara, Karnataka State, INDIA
Tel.: 0091 8301 545207

THAR DEU LING
68, Rue Archereau
75019, PARIS, FRANCE BT.DI
Te.: 00331 42374187



Foreword by

His Holiness Gaden Tripa Lungrik Namgyal Rinpoche Supreme Head of the Gelug Lineage current Throne Holder of Lord Tsongkhapa



Tulkus are the emanation bodies of bodhisattvas who choose to return to this world life after life to help relieve the sufferings of beings, and are especially precious for the compassion, kindness and joy they inspire. Throughout history within the Buddhist canon, tulkus are always present, bringing with them continual efforts to bring greater happiness to others and to encourage them towards a life and mind of boundless peace. On a broader level, we realise that these beings are actually all around us, not just in the Buddhist tradition. They turn to us in many guises, in many ways to suit the varied dispositions, cultures and peoples of the world - but in every instance, they strive single-pointedly towards fostering more compassion, more love and more kindness in the beings that suffer within the mire of samsara, cyclic existence.

H.E. Tsem Rinpoche was recognised early in his monastic years as a tulku. Throughout his time in Gaden Monastery, he stood consistently and steadfastly as a strong example of what it means to put compassion into action. From raising funds to improve the living standards of the local refugee community, to continuously sponsoring the needs of the Gaden monastic community with food, medical support and educational materials over the past decade while residing in Malaysia, he has shown the boundless, unceasing energy that comes from acting entirely out of compassion.

Since being sent by H.E. Lati Rinpoche and H.E. Kensur Jampa Yeshe to teach and live in Malaysia, Rinpoche has tirelessly devoted his energy and heart to establishing the first affiliate of Gaden Shartse Monastery in Malaysia - Kechara House - with the aspiration of preserving the holy Gaden lineage and to further spread Lord Tsongkhapa's inconceivably precious teachings in the Southern region.

Rinpoche's work is always supported by the fervent and sole motivation to inspire seekers to find a true and valid path to inner peace and to developing the same compassionate heart in all his students.

Tsem Tulku received transmission and teachings on the Eight Verses of Mind Training by none other than His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who is Himself the living essence of enlightened compassion, and I rejoice in his endeavours to make these liberating instructions available to an international audience. Rinpoche's skills at conveying timeless wisdom in a contemporary way make him a precious spiritual friend to have, and I pray that the holy intent of all enlightened Beings will continue to manifest through him, bringing lasting happiness to countless beings.

October 2006



H.E. Ken Rinpoche





གར་ཅེ་སྤྲེང་།
SHARTSE LADRANG

Abbot Geshe Dakpa Tenzin
Gaden Shartse Monastery
Post Tibetan Colony-581 411
Mundgod, (N.K.)
Karnataka State, INDIA Phone :
0091 838

ཐོན་སྐྱེད་།

༡༣༥། སྤྱི་མཆོག་པ་ཆོག་མཛེས་པ་ཙམ་མ་ཡིན་པར་གནད་དོན་ཁྱད་པར་ཅན་ཞིག་
ཡིན། དེར་བརྟེན། འདི་ག་དགའ་ལྡན་དུ་རང་ཉིད་ནས་གཞན་དོན་དུ་རང་གི་དགོ་པའི་བཤེས་
གཉེན་དང་གྲོགས་དགེ་འདུན་གྱི་སྤྱི་གཙོ་པོས་བྱས་སྤྱོད་པོ་མེད་སྤྱོད་མཆོག་དམན་མེས་ལུས་མཆོད་
པའི་དོན་དུ་ལུས་པ་མེད་པའི་ལས་ཀྱི་བྱེད་རྒྱུའི་འགོ་བཙུགས་པ་ནས་བཟུང་། ཆོས་མ་མེད་པོ་
མཆོག་ལ་གཞན་ནས་གྲུས་མ་ཐོང་དང་དགའ་མོས་ལུས་ཡོད། ལོ་མང་རིང་གིན་དུ་ཉམས་ཞན་པའི་
གནས་སྤངས་ཀྱི་འོག་དུ་གནས་སྤངས། རང་ལག་གིས་རལ་ཅུ་ལ་གྱི་ཐོག་ནས་ཨར་ལས་ཀྱི་
སར་ལས་ཐོགས་ལུས་ཏེ་མ་ཞན་སྤངས་བྱས་པ་ལ་ཤེས་མཆོག་ལ་གཞིས་ཁང་གསར་བསྐྱེད་དང་།
གནས་ལོང་གྱི་སྤྱི་ལྷ། ལོ་མང་གི་ཞབས་འདེགས་བཅས་བསྐྱེད་སྤངས་ཡོད། ལོ་ནས་ལོ་མཐུད་དེ་
ཁོང་ནས་དགོ་འདུན་གྱི་མཆོད་པའི་དོན་དུ་འདི་གའི་བྱག་ཁང་ལ་ཐོགས་རམ་འཛོད་བསྐྱེད་ཀྱི་ཡིག་གོ་
བྲིས་པ་མོགས་མཐུན་འཕྲུང་ཐོག་རམ་གང་ཡིན་གནད་ཡོད། ཉེ་བའི་ཆར་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་ནས་
འདི་ག་གྲུ་ཆར་དུ་ཆོས་རྒྱུད་ལོ་ཤིང་མོགས་གསར་འདིངས་དང་། འདུས་ཆོགས་རིན་པོ་ཆེར་ན་བཟུང་།
དད་རྟེན་སྤྱོད་བསྐྱེད་བཅས་གྲུས་འབྲུལ་མཛད་ཡོད། དེར་ཆར་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་



ཤར་ཅེ་བླ་བྱང་།
SHARTSE LADRANG

Abbot Geshe Dakpa Tenzin
Gaden Shartse Monastery
Post Tibetan Colony-581 411
Mundgod, (N.K.)
Karnataka State, INDIA Phone :
0091 838

ནས་འཕགས་ཚོགས་གི་འདུས་མེ་རིན་པོ་ཆེར་སྒྲན་གྱི་རོགས་འབུལ་ཞུ་བའི་དགོངས་འཆར་མཛད་
བཞིན་པ་ཡིན། འདི་ག་གནད་མའི་མ་ཁན་ཐོག་དུག་བཅུ་པའི་སྒྲུབ་རྒྱུར་ངོས་འཛིན་བྱུང་བའི་
ལར་ཇི་བཞིན་དུ་གྲུ་ཆང་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་ཐང་ལ་འདི་ལྟ་བུའི་སྒོ་སེམས་ཉེ་བ་དང་གནད་མའི་ཐང་ལ་
ལུས་མེད་དགའ་ངལ་མཛད་པ་རང་ཆས་སུ་མངའ་བའང་གནད་དོན་འདི་ལས་པལ་ཆེར་གཤམ་བྱུང་
བར་སྒྲུང་། འོན་ཀྱང་ཉེ་འཁོར་དུ་འཁོད་པའི་གྲོང་གསེབ་ལག་ལའང་། ལྷ་དྲུག་ས་མེད་པའི་ཁོང་
གི་དགོངས་པ་བཞེས་ཚུལ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་ཆ་མཉམ་ཡན་ཐོགས་བྱུང་ཡོད། རྒྱན་དུ་རིས་མེད་དུ་
འབྲེལ་བ་བྱུང་བའི་སྒོ་པོ་མང་པོ་དང་། ལྷ་རྒྱལ་སྒྲོབ་པའི་ཚོགས་མང་པོ་ལའང་དེ་བཞིན་དུ་རོགས་
པན་བྱུང་དང་འབྱུང་བཞིན་པ་ཡིན། རང་དོན་ཡིད་ཀྱིས་མ་བཅིངས་པར་གཞན་གྱི་དོན་དུ་
འཚོ་ཞིང་གཞེས་པའི་ཚུལ་འདི་ལྟ་བུའི་རྒྱལ་སྐུལ་བྱུང་བའི་སེམས་དཔའི་རང་ཚུལ་རྣམས་མང་སྒྲུང་
ཞིང་། ཚུལ་འདི་ཉིད་ཚོས་རྒྱད་བཟང་པོ་འདིས་གང་མཚན་པར་བྱེད་པའི་དོན་གནད་དེ་ཡིན།

རང་གིས་ཉམས་སུ་ལེན་པའི་ཚུལ་འདི་ཉིད་ཚོས་ས་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་དཔེ་དེབ་གསར་པའི་བརྗོད་
བྱ་ཡིན་པས་འདི་ནས་སྒྲོབ་བཞེད་པོས་སྒྲོག་བསྐུལ་བྱེད་ཆོག་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན། དགོ་བཤེས་བྱུང་བར་
པའི་གསུང་སྒོ་སྒྲོང་ཆོག་བསྐུ་མའི་ཐོག་ལ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་ནས་གསུང་ཆོས་གནད་པ་རྣམས་དེབ་
འདིའི་བརྗོད་དོན་དུ་འཁོད་ཡོད། གསུང་འདིའི་ནང་དུ་སྒྲིང་ཇི་རང་རྒྱུད་ལ་བསྐྱེད་ཚུལ་ནས་མཐར་
བྱུག་གི་ཡེ་ཤེས་མངོན་དུ་བྱེད་གྱི་བར་གྱི་ལམ་ལ་སྒྲོབ་ཚུལ་གྱི་རིམ་པ་སྟེ། སྒྲིང་ཇིའི་སྒྲིང་ལ་བདག་



གར་ཅེ་སྤྲུང་།
SHARTSE LADRANG

Abbot Geshe Dakpa Tenzin
Gaden Shartse Monastery
Post Tibetan Colony-581 411
Mundgod, (N.K.)
Karnataka State, INDIA Phone :
0091 838

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ཕག་གི་སྒྲིན་པའི་གཞུང་གི་ཉིང་ཁུ་གྲུང་འི་གཞུང་རབ་འདི་སྒྲིན་ཞིང་འཛེབས་ལ་ཡིན་པའི་ལུས་
པའི་ཚིག་པ་ཅན་པ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་ནང་དུ་བདེ་གསུམ་ལ་ནས་ཡོད་པས། ཚིག་གི་མཛེས་ཆ་དང་གོ་དོན་གྱི་
རྒྱལ་པ་འདི་ཉིང་དུ་དམ་ཚིག་གཤམ་མའི་ཉམས་ལེན་གྱི་དོ་སྙོལ་དང་། མངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་གོ་འཕང་
གི་གསང་པའི་གཞན་པ་ཅན་རྒྱུད་ཡོད། ཚིག་རྒྱལ་ཟབ་མོ་འདི་སྒྲིན་ཆེ་ཉིང་ལ་འབྲི་ཞིང་སྒྲིང་རྒྱུ་
ཉིང་དོན་ལྡན་གྱི་ཐོག་མ་དང་བར་དང་ཐམ་སྟེ་སྒྲིང་ཐོར་ཁྱེད་པའི་མེ་མཁོ་གི་སྒྲིན་གྱི་ཡོད་ཅིང་།
རྒྱལ་འདི་ཉིང་རྒྱལ་པ་ཐོས་མཚན་པའི་སྒྱལ་པའི་སྒྲིན་མས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པར་གྱི་ནང་དུ་དཔེ་སྒྲིན་མཐོང་རྒྱུ་
ཡོད་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན།

རྒྱལ་འདི་དག་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས། དཔེ་དེ་པ་འདི་འཆང་ཞིང་སྒྲིག་པའི་གང་ཟག་གུན་གྱི་
གཞན་གྱི་བདེ་བ་ལ་རེག་ཅིང་གཞུག་པའི་གཤིས་སུ་ཡོད་པའི་ཐོག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་རིགས་མད་དེ་ཐར་
པའི་ལས་སྒྲིན་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག དཔལ་ལྡན་ཤར་ཅེ་ཐོས་པ་མཐོང་དུ་མྱེད་གྱི་ཆང་གི་མཁན་མིང་
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Foreword by

His Eminence Ken Rinpoche, Abbot of Gaden Shartse Monastery



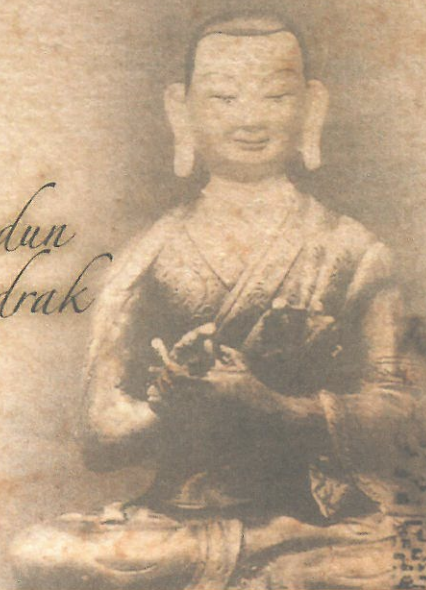
Here we have a Teacher with a remarkable ability to, having absorbed the traditional Tibetan Buddhists teachings thoroughly, present them in a way that speaks directly to the hearts of people across cultures, backgrounds, cities and religions. Tsem Rinpoche shows us in a profound, powerful yet accessible, humorous and even playful way that compassion and loving kindness are a most natural part of us. For a modern audience, this is just what is needed to enlighten the mind. His own personal dedication towards putting compassion into action through his continued works with monastic communities and individuals around the world lends much weight to the qualities he always teaches and encourages in his own students.

This book contains Tsem Rinpoche's teachings on the Eight Verses of Thought Transformation. They are the heart essence of Lord Buddha's teachings on compassion, condensed into eight beautifully moving verses that cover the path from developing compassion to ultimate wisdom. From their simplicity unfold profound methods and qualities; within their beauty lies the true meaning of spiritual practice and the secret of Enlightenment. These teachings lead us to a way of life that revolves entirely about compassion - in the beginning, the middle and the end, and this is most perfectly reflected in the deeply compassionate living examples of tulkus such as Tsem Rinpoche.

May everyone reading this book find lasting happiness, awakening their innate, everlasting compassionate nature - the very key to liberation itself.

November 2006

*Gendun
Nyedrak*



*Kentrul
Rinpoche
Thubten Lamsang*



H.E. Tsem Tulku Rinpoche

His Eminence Tsem Tulku Rinpoche



H.E. Tsem Tulku Rinpoche is a radiant young reincarnate Lama who was born and raised in Taiwan and the USA. He is of Tibetan and royal Mongolian origin. His powerful Dharma calling has manifested since his earliest childhood. Rinpoche has studied under 14 of the greatest Tibetan Buddhist Masters of our time. His root Guru is H.H. Kyabje Zong Rinpoche, and his other Gurus include H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama, Kensur Lobsang Tharchin Rinpoche (Sera Mey) and the attained Master Geshe Tsultim Gyeltsen.

Following Kyabje Zong Rinpoche's advice, Rinpoche took his monk's vows from H.H. the Dalai Lama and joined Gaden Shartse Monastery, where his preceding two incarnations, Gendun Nyedrak and Khentrul Rinpoche Thubten Lamsang, had obtained Geshe Lharam degrees and completed their studies at Gyuto tantric college. Gendun Nyedrak went on to become the lead chanter and later the abbot of Gaden Monastery, while Khentrul Rinpoche brought the Dharma to the lay people of the Phari district of Tibet. This could be seen perhaps as an indication of Tsem Rinpoche's present-day activities, teaching non-monastic communities in places where the Dharma has yet to bloom.

Rinpoche's intimate familiarity with both eastern and western culture makes him a truly inspiring pioneer of universal Dharma wisdom. His creative energy and enthusiasm to elucidate the Buddha's paths to liberation according to the needs of each individual are without limit and beyond dogma. Rinpoche's teaching style is thrilling and moving, profound and humorous, always surprising, straightforward and pragmatic. His ability to move our hearts and inspire our minds is transforming the lives of many. As requested by H.E. Lati Rinpoche of Gaden Monastery, Tsem Rinpoche has been based in Malaysia for the past 14 years to confer the Dharma in the Southern region.

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Preface



His Eminence Tsem Tulku Rinpoche is most eminent to me, and indeed holy, because of his unconditional compassion. His Dharma Heart has prevailed through many years of broken homes, abuse, loneliness, hunger and fear. Dear reader believe me, this is not a book of theory.

The word *com* (with) *passion* (deeply empathic) points to being whole-heartedly, non-judgementally *with* someone. It is not by looking down on a “poor creature” and handing them crumbs of pity that we uplift a being in pain, but by recognising their divine potential and our oneness.

Many hundred times have I seen Rinpoche giving food, holy statues and books and an endless multitude of other material and spiritual gifts to humans and animals everywhere he goes, always with both hands, with a sun-like smile and kind words. It is love and dignity he gives, with utter disregard of status, creed or potential rewards. His friends and teachers tell me that Rinpoche was the same even when he didn't have a dime or a home, or later as a young monk, skinny and poor as a church mouse...

After receiving these teachings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama as a young boy, Rinpoche recited *Om Mani Padme Hung* – the mantra of the Buddha of Compassion – millions of times with fervent longing. To this day the *Mani* comes automatically to him

when there is any kind of trouble, and the Mind Transformation methods, *Lojong* in Tibetan, are the heart of all his teachings.

Applying these insights transforms our entire outlook and therefore our life.

Compassion Conquers All has been compiled from Tsem Tulku Rinpoche's electrifying Dharma sessions. Its aim is not academic, but to liberate from constricting concepts and thereby to re-kindle, as we read and contemplate, the fire of our compassionate nature.

We hope to bring you a taste of these transformative events and a hint of the fragrance between the lines. Any inaccuracies are my responsibility; yet I am confident that Rinpoche's sacred intent will shine right through the words and into your heart.

May we all embrace and attain the enlightened attitude invoked here so vividly.

Thank you and blessed travels.

— the editor



H.H. Gaden Tripa Lungrik Namgyal Rinpoche, Kyabje Zong Rinpoche and Tsem Tulku Rinpoche in a puja at Gaden Shartse Monastery, South India, many years ago.

The Eight Verses of Mind Transformation and the Gaden tradition

Geshe Langri Tangpa belonged to the Kadam school of Tibetan Buddhism, founded by Dromtongpa, Lama Atisha's main disciple. Je Tsongkhapa's style of prescribing the Dharma and of course his Lamrim teachings is largely based on this lineage, so much so that the early Gelugpas were often called the "New Kadampas."

Je Tsongkhapa was very clear in his writing that Bodhicitta, the altruistic mind of Enlightenment, the subject of this book, is the basis of the profound Dharma.

It may be auspicious to mention in this context that the authors of this book's forewords, H.H. Gaden Tripa and H.E. Ken Rinpoche, the author, H.E. Tsem Tulku Rinpoche as well as H.H. Trijang Rinpoche, who is the reincarnation of Geshe Langri Tangpa – all belong to the Shartse College of Gaden Monastery that was founded by Je Tsongkhapa himself.

If you would like to learn more about this sacred place of study and meditation, may we refer you to our documentary DVD "Journey to Gaden", produced by Kechara Media and Publications. Should a wish awaken in you to actively support the continuation of Je Tsongkhapa's inconceivably rare and precious teachings, may we also invite you to support the various projects dedicated to the growth of Gaden Monastery (please see websites : www.tsemtulku.com and www.kecharahouse.com).

HAPPY SUFFERING

a prayer for travelers in this world

by H.E.Tsem Tulku Rinpoche



Wherever I go or don't go –
everything I do can become Dharma,
because I do it
with a Dharma motivation.

Dharma motivation
arises from compassion.

Compassion arises from seeing
so many beings suffer
so much –
not knowing why,
not knowing what to do.

To liberate
the precious beings in the hells
created by hatred, suffering unbearable pain,
I go on this journey.

To liberate
the precious hungry ghosts,
suffering the bottomless hunger and thirst of miserliness,
I go on this journey.

To liberate
the precious animals
suffering helplessly and speechlessly,
I go on this journey.

To liberate
the precious human beings
suffering from endless unfulfilled desire,
bleeding on the battlefields of birth and death,
soon reaping the bitter harvest of greed and anger,
I go on this journey.

To liberate the demi-gods
raging with the suffering of jealousy
and the long-life gods
blinded with the suffering of pride
I go on this journey.

For all those who cannot join me
I go on this journey.

For all those who have never
even heard the word Dharma
I go on this journey, because I care,
and cannot bear to see their pain
any longer.

To connect them with
the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha,
I rejoice in any difficulties and problems, and
absorb them for the benefit of all.

Not what I want will I do, but what they need.

I pray to my most holy Guru
who is One with my Yidam and Protector,
who took this journey before, alone
and with so much more hardship than me:

“Please send me hunger and thirst,
pain and exhaustion,
sickness and poverty,
abuse and loneliness,

and

may I purify the hurts and harms
and difficulties of all mother beings and myself
by absorbing and enduring them happily.”

In this way suffering becomes joy,
and every part of the journey

— happiness.

INTRODUCTION

even a simple prayer



DHARMA

Dharma teaches us the ultimate method, the ultimate way of release from samsara. When you receive the Dharma teachings – when you receive the method and you *practise* it, you will be able to free yourself from sufferings.

Just like a small seed planted in the ground can grow into a very large and wonderful tree providing fruit for many, many beings for a long time: like that, even a simple prayer invoking the blessings of the Three Jewels can bring tremendous results.

May all the great teachers and Masters
of all the religious traditions in the world
– Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism –
all the great Masters and their disciples have long life,
excellent health and happiness.
May their houses of prayer and their good teachings
grow and be able to benefit others.

We also dedicate that
His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet
and all the great Masters of the four lineages
and their students have long life, health and excellence.
May their precious enlightened prayers
come to fruition.

THE TEACHING

The teaching that I have the honour to give all of you – and I rejoice that you are able to receive – is called the *Eight Verses of Mind Transformation*, the *Eight Verses of Thought Transformation*, the *Eight Verses of Mind Change*

– whatever you like to call it because there is no standard English translation. But it is eight verses or eight methods that we should follow as guidelines in our life to transform our mind, to become a person that is highly beneficial, that is highly good for society and for the world.

Before we actually discuss the *Eight Verses of Mind Transformation*, I would like to talk a little bit about motivation, in dependence on the eight worldly concerns. That is very, very important – the eight worldly concerns and how they would affect our motivation and how the motivation will affect the action and its result.

RECEPTIVITY

It is the tradition of all Dharma talks, before the Dharma talk starts, that the teacher and the ones being taught should have a superior motivation. The one that is teaching should have received the transmission of the teachings; the lineage, have studied thoroughly what has been taught and practised it. I do not fit that qualification but I will act like I do, so you play along with the act. We should have the transmission and we should be practising it actually, and the motivation for teaching is to give you knowledge and the methods to become a fully enlightened Being. That is from the side of the teacher.

From the side of the student, one should be free from the three faults as explained in the *Lamrim*, symbolised by the three cups: the first cup having holes, the second cup having dirt and defilements inside, the third cup being turned upside down.

Dharma is very holy, it is very, very important. It is not entertainment, it is not something to be done when we are happy, it is not to be done when we have time, it is not to be done only when we are in a good

mood. Dharma is something to be practised 24 hours a day, constantly, vigilantly. Then you will get results.

So we should be free of the first fault, which is a cup having holes; which is not retaining, contemplating, thinking about, practising the Dharma over a period of time. Definitely if we practise the Dharma over a period of time, there will be results. Absolutely there will be results, and there is living proof of many people who have results.

We should be free of the second fault, which is the cup that is contaminated. That means that the Dharma should be received with a completely positive and good motivation. And the motivation is: on the lowest scope, to be free from the three lower realms, on the medium scope, to be free from the lower realms *and* to have compassion for others, and on the highest scope you wish to receive Dharma solely for the sake of others, that you may become a fully enlightened Buddha to benefit others. Although all of the three scopes make you qualified to receive the Dharma, we will naturally develop the highest scope; that will be the most beneficial. Any other motivation – “I will attend a Dharma class to receive methods to gain wealth, merits, so I can change my luck and become rich, meet a girlfriend” – would be like a cup with defilements. When you pour something good into it, it is still unusable.

The third one is the cup that is upside down. To sit in a Dharma talk without an open mind – with your ears closed, falling asleep, bored or not wanting to accept and just sitting there like it’s a social event; and then whatever’s said is said, whatever’s not said is not said – is like a cup upside down. Whatever you pour into the cup, naturally it cannot retain it.

So we should be free of the three faults as symbolised by the three cups.

This is very, very important.

AUTHENTICITY

We cannot just listen to made-up Dharma talks. It will be of no benefit. The authenticity of the teaching must be revealed, and the person giving it to you must have the lineage himself or herself. Without that, you will not receive any transmission or blessings.

The original teachings on the *Eight Verses of Mind Transformation* of course originated from Buddha Shakyamuni himself. Buddha Shakyamuni initially developed Bodhicitta and acquired the merits of both profound insights and great deeds for three countless eons, finally achieving Great Awakening.

LINEAGE BLESSINGS

After Buddha Shakyamuni became enlightened, he gave the teachings on compassion to his disciples, which were then passed down to the great Indian Buddhist Panditas Arya Asanga and Nagarjuna, and from them to highly enlightened Beings such as the great Shantideva. Shantideva was the one that actually emphasised, reiterated and expanded on the talks of compassion by the Buddha, and he put it into words that were easier for us to understand. The teachings on thought transformation arose from his text called *Bodhicaryavatara*, which is development of Bodhicitta, great compassion. Shantideva was the one that made the practice of Bodhicitta very, very famous.

After that, it came to the great Lama Serlingpa who was the root Guru of Atisha. Atisha came from India and later went to Tibet and spread the Dharma all over Tibet to countless disciples, yet the Mind Training teachings he passed down only to his main disciple, a layman who was one of the previous incarnations of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama – the great Je Dromtonpa.

Dromtonpa in turn practised and achieved this teaching and passed it down chiefly to the monks Geshe Potawa, Geshe Sharawa and Geshe Langri Tangpa.

GESHE LANGRI TANGPA

Geshe Langri Tangpa received the teachings from Dromtonpa directly. He thought it was very profound and felt it would be a tremendous loss if they were not preserved. These teachings were profound, yet simple and until then not practised publicly, but only passed down to a few very qualified disciples.

Before the great Geshe Langri Tangpa passed away, he wrote it down for the first time. Before Geshe Langri Tangpa, it was always given orally, never written down; there was no text. Geshe Langri Tangpa, out of great compassion, decided that the teaching must not be lost, and wrote it down.

Years later, after he had passed away, one great Master called Geshe Chekawa found one verse – a piece of scripture – one verse of a teaching that said, *“May I accept the defeat and offer the victory to others.”*

Geshe Chekawa was very, very intrigued by this statement; very moved and very touched, because this statement represents the essence and

the complete embodiment of all Buddha's teachings. This sentence contains all of Buddha's intent and all of Buddha's teachings in one line: *"May I accept the defeat and offer the victory to others."*

So he was very, very moved by this. Determined to meet the author of the text, Geshe Chekawa went all over, looking for him. When he came to one of the students of Geshe Langri Tangpa, he found out that the Master had passed away. In a small town near Lhasa, he met another Master called Geshe Sharawa who was practising the Mind Training teachings. He received more and more teachings from him, and Geshe Chekawa started to teach it openly to others, openly in public teachings, like now.

From Geshe Chekawa, down a long line of teachers, these teachings were passed on until they reached the great King of Dharma – Je Tsongkhapa. From Lama Tsongkhapa to his disciples such as Kedrub Rinpoche and Gyaltsap Rinpoche, this was passed down a long line of Lamas, to His Holiness Pabongkha Rinpoche, to his Holinesses Trijang and Ling Rinpoche, and down to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

I received these teachings, the transmission, blessing and commentary in Washington, New Jersey in 1979. I was approximately thirteen years old at that time, but I remember it very clearly: His Holiness was sitting on a throne, in the mountains, there was a white butterfly circling him the whole time, and there were rainbows in the sky for a week – I saw it myself – covering over His Holiness giving this talk.

And that was the first time that I had the honour and great fortune to see His golden face, and this was the first teaching I ever received from His Holiness.

I was very moved and I was in tears for many, many hours while His Holiness was teaching this. I was in tears because I knew what it contained was the truth. It moved me, it touched me and I wanted to practise it, *practise* it. I don't know if I am actually practising it well or not but I made a strong determination and prayers in front of His Holiness at that time that I will be able to practise this. So today I pass the teaching down to all of you.

Although I am not qualified, definitely His Holiness is qualified, so I invoke His blessings and I invoke His grace that all of you may be able to learn, understand and practise these holy teachings.

RENUNCIATION

giving up selfish concerns



MOTIVATION

THE EIGHT WORLDLY CONCERNS

When we do any kind of Dharma activities – lighting incense, making prostrations, making offerings, giving donations to the temple, giving dhana to monks, sweeping the temple, driving or buying supplies for the temple, being committee members for the temple, meditation, chanting, anything – it should be free from the eight worldly concerns, or the eight worldly Dharmas. Dharma means conduct. So Buddhadharma is correct conduct, conduct that leads to awakening.

The eight worldly concerns are:

to be happy when we are praised,
to be unhappy when we are insulted,
to be happy if we receive gifts,
to be unhappy if we don't,
to be happy upon achieving reputation,
to be unhappy when we are unsuccessful,
to be happy when we are comfortable,
to be unhappy when we are not.

We should not be practising the Dharma for these reasons at all.

It will be better to memorise those eight worldly concerns than a hundred tantric practices, and I am not trying to blow your mind away. But yes, if you know the mantras and practices and all the initiations of one hundred tantric deities but you are practising with the eight worldly concerns, you will not achieve even one tantric result of one tantric deity.

So we should memorise the eight worldly concerns and check over and over and over again if we are free from them. And if we are not, we must work on it immediately, we must get over it, we must practise and we must immediately get to the point because time is short and time is running out. So any Dharma actions should be free of those eight worldly concerns.

If our Dharma is preoccupied with them, there are many, many disadvantages. When we do actions with the eight worldly concerns, the act will lead to rebirth in the lower realms, and future lives will be also be spent with uncontrolled attachments, like now.

All results of uncontrolled delusions, attachments and negative states of mind *now* are a sign that they have not been controlled in the past. So if they were not controlled in the past, definitely the result is that we have not gotten it under control at this time. If it is not gotten under control *at this time*, it can only get worse, not better. So future lives will also be spent with uncontrolled attachments. One cannot ever enter the Mahayana path. One cannot reach liberation.

So, if you do any Dharma actions with the eight worldly concerns – whatever practices that you do, you will not gain liberation. One will constantly experience hindrances in one's meditational practices: hindrances of laziness, sleepiness, procrastination, doubt, instability. That is the inner level. On the outer are financial problems, time constrictions, responsibilities, and so on.

So when we practise Dharma in a way that the motive is not free of the eight worldly concerns, then the results of course will not be positive and while we are practising, we will experience many inner and outer obstacles, and there will be no fruitioning of our practice except planting seeds for our future lives.

The practice then becomes only a service to the eight worldly concerns. What happens when you practise the Dharma with any of the eight worldly concerns is that it actually *feeds* the eight worldly concerns. How is that? You might practise the Dharma so that you will be praised, yet the point of practising the Dharma is not to be praised, and not to be recognised. The point of practising the Dharma is to reach liberation. So if you help a Dharma centre or you meditate wonderfully when people are around, yet when no one is around you pick your teeth, then definitely you are not practising the Dharma with a correct motive.

So when our friends are around we raise our eyebrows, the whites of our eyes are there, we have great meditation experiences, we see lights, our hair goes up, our tears come down, but the minute our friends disappear we go out for a coffee break... then I think we are practising Dharma for praise.

So if you are practising Dharma for praise, the very practice of Dharma leads to wanting more praise, increasing the big ego, therefore leading you to the three lower realms. You may think, "Hey, how can practising the Dharma lead us to the three lower realms?" Practising the Dharma doesn't lead you to the three lower realms, your negative intent before the action leads you to the three lower realms.

You could sweep out an old folks home with a good motivation – "May this act benefit others" – that act will lead you to Buddhahood.

You can sit in front of Je Tsongkhapa and meditate for five hours; and meditate on the US dollar and meditate so your economy moves up and that you can get some wealth vases, some wealth mantras, some wealth pujas (and you will definitely pass on everything to make it on Sunday for the wealth prayers...). Then, if you meditate for five hours in front of Je Tsongkhapa, you are meditating for material gain.

Meditation doesn't mean fulfilment of your worldly wishes. Meditation and practice is for Enlightenment. Therefore when we do practice for the reason of getting praise, how can we label that Dharma practice? That is definitely not Dharma practice. In fact, that very motive makes the act result in the fruitioning of more negative karma. So when we start practising Dharma, instead of our wish to get praise decreasing, it increases. The more we go to Dharma talks, the more we know, the more empowerments, the more teachings; the more knowledgeable, the more scholarly we become; the more advanced we do it, the more we can chant, the more we can teach... the bigger our ego, the bigger our pride, the bigger our arrogance. Everything becomes bigger. And the whole point of learning Dharma is to decrease those points and to, in fact, annihilate or destroy those points.

So when you practise Dharma with the wrong motive from the beginning, it is not the Dharma, the Dharma teacher or the Dharma environment that is at fault. It could be your ignorance at fault, or it could be that you know it and you have not applied the antidotes hard enough. It is definitely not the Dharma.

I always use the example that if you do not know how to drive a car, and the car has a slight accident, it is not the fault of the car but the driver. So if you do not get results from your Dharma practice, it is definitely not the Dharma. It is definitely not the Dharma teacher, it is definitely not the Dharma itself, it is not the centre, it is not the Dharma students. It is you yourself.

Because if Dharma had no results, our altars should be empty. There should be no enlightened Beings. We would be prostrating to empty things! And there would be no living enlightened Masters today: like His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness the great Karmapa, His Holiness Sakya Trizin, His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse

Rinpoche, His Holiness the great Gaden Tri Rinpoche. There would not be any enlightened Masters around, like my Master His Eminence the great Kensur Rinpoche – they would not be around.

But there *are* living beings around that are enlightened and highly realised and extremely beneficial for others. The great Chinese Mahayana Master, the nun Reverend Cheng Yen in China – definitely she is a Master of practice. She's doing a lot more than I can ever do. She must be advanced in her practice to be able to do that. There *are* living examples around us of people who are practising, and practising correctly.

Therefore, how come we are not getting those results? We must point the finger back at ourselves. Not at the Buddhas, the Dharma, the temple – “Oh I couldn't listen because it was so hot and I was sweating, it is not my fault” – or the Dharma teacher, or the Dharma texts, or the Sangha.

We must go back to the source. If the Dharma or the Dharma teacher or the Buddhas were at fault, as I said, all altars should be empty. But since there are living representations of the result of correct Dharma practice, the Dharma must be correct and we ourselves must be at fault. But we should not be despondent or depressed. If we are at fault, the fault is impermanent, dependent on conditions. Therefore we can change the conditions and bring an end to the wrong practice and start on the right practice. Definitely we can.

So when we do Dharma practice to get praised, or to avoid insults, that is a very low aim, and the minute we don't get praise we stop doing Dharma practice. The fault is not Dharma – it's the motive.

If we do Dharma practice to get gifts and to avoid not getting gifts, to get ang pows (red-coloured envelopes containing money, traditionally used in Chinese custom as gifts or presented to the Lamas or the Sangha as a sign of respect) and all that – the minute we don't get it, we get upset. Again it is not the Dharma, it is our motive.

If we do Dharma for good reputation – “Oh, he's so good, he's so holy, he's such a good person, he's a family person, he also goes to the temple, and he's so wonderful” – the minute we stop getting praise, we suffer, we feel despondent, we don't want to meditate, we don't want to practise, we don't want to go join the temple, we don't want to listen to the Dharma, we don't want to meditate. We become despondent. Why do we become despondent? Not because we have not gotten the results, but the actual reason is the very motive that we started with – out of ignorance – was wrong. So the Dharma is not at fault.

Then, we might wish to get Dharma to receive some material gains – success. So we go to the temple to listen, hoping it will change our luck. We go in front of the altar, kowtow to change our luck, we make offerings to change our luck, we listen to the Dharma and recite lots of mantras, we go to empowerments to receive great blessings to change our luck so that we can hit the lucky number, our economic situation moves up, we can get rich.

I get a lot of questions from people: “I've been chanting and praying, how come my business is not moving up?” Because the very reason you are chanting and praying should not be for your business to move up. You should be chanting and praying irregardless of whether your business moves up or not. Otherwise the minute your business doesn't move up economically, *you* go down. Of course it is a normal human reaction that you feel sad and unhappy, but that is when you should actually increase your Dharma practice, increase your Dharma energy.

You should take advantage of the situation.

So if we practise the Dharma to move our economic situation up – that our company moves up, we can have a new company, we can do a merger, we can make more money, our stocks go up, whatever – then if that doesn't happen, we become despondent. We have used the Dharma for a very short-term benefit and we don't derive the ultimate benefit from Dharma, which is complete freedom from suffering, not just our business moving on.

So when we practise Dharma, when we see Lamas, get divinations, get blessings, do rituals, sponsor pujas, for the sake of simply receiving wealth, increasing our wealth as an end in itself, then the Dharma has been brought down to a very low level, and the full purpose of Dharma is not fulfilled. So we should not practise Dharma with the intent that it will move our economic situation up, or to avoid the economic situation from going down. If we do that, our rebirth will be in the spirit realm.

So whether you practise Dharma or not: if you are always miserly and selfish, always concerned about money – you would do anything for money – the rebirth will be in the spirit realm anyway. But if you practise the Dharma, you have a chance to purify that karma, so it will be better to be a Dharma practitioner who is greedy and miserly and worldly about money than a non-Dharma one. Because whether you are a Dharma practitioner or not, you still have the same faults. So it would be better to have the faults *and* Dharma, and there is a chance that you may not take rebirth as a spirit, and if you do, the time is less; the duration of that rebirth is less.

So whether you practise the Dharma or you don't practise the Dharma, your problems are exactly the same. *Exactly* the same. If you look

deeply, whether you practise the Dharma or not, your situation, your problems arise from karma, not Dharma, not your relationship with Dharma. So therefore, whether you practise the Dharma or not, you have the same problems. But with the Dharma, if practised correctly, it becomes a temporary remedy to help you get over your problems and it also gives you ultimate methods to get over your problems.

How much effort you put into the practice is how much result you will get. So we should practise the Dharma not with any of these eight worldly concerns. This is very, very important.

Then we should not practise the Dharma simply when we are comfortable – when everything is going right, when everything is going smooth, when money is okay, family is okay, there is harmony, and the minute one of these goes out of balance, we stop the practice. If we are going to stop the practice because of that, we might as well not even begin, because definitely those things will happen. Why? We are in samsara, we have been in samsara for hundreds and hundreds and thousands of lifetimes and definitely we have created the karmic causes and dispositions for disharmony, for financial problems, for difficulties to arise.

But it is out of fear, and knowing that those difficulties will arise, that we must look for a method. What more superior method than to destroy the roots of those karmas before they fruition, by Dharma practice? If we practise the Dharma sincerely, we will definitely get the results.

The first step is motivation. And our motivation should be based upon the guidelines of the eight worldly concerns. It should be free of those eight worldly concerns from the very start. But don't be even more despondent, thinking "Well, what about all the things that I've

done? What about the dhanas? What about the pujas? What about the prayers, the meditations, the offerings on my altars?" Definitely there is benefit, but it would be even greater and more efficacious if it was done free of the eight worldly concerns.

Antidotes to free ourselves from the eight worldly concerns are basic guidelines for us to follow, to reshape and recondition our conditioning. They are guidelines, not restrictions. Some of us think, "Oh, Dharma is so complicated, there are so many restrictions, there are so many minute details." Yes, there are, because *we* are complicated, *we* are full of minute details, so if the Dharma is an antidote to this, then definitely the antidote will match the problem.

I always give this example: when we go to school there are examinations, requirements, points that we need; we need to get there on time, do our homework etc. etc. It's years and years and years of constriction and requirements, and that is quite difficult. But when we finish school, the actual regimentation, requirements and the regulations we followed lead to freedom. What freedom? When you get your degree, you do whatever job you want, *you* pick what you want to do.

It's the same in Dharma. It is like school. When you follow the Dharma correctly – you follow its regulations and rules – this restraint leads to total freedom in the future. So we shouldn't think of Dharma as a prison wall; we should think of it as very kind guidelines given by an enlightened Being to help us follow our good path. And definitely it will bring immediate results. Definitely. It will bring immediate results, but the motive must be correct.

If one follows the eight worldly concerns, one is not better than an animal. Because an animal wishes to be praised, receive food, receive good reputation, the males fight with each other to get the best females.

They wish to be very comfortable, they wish not to be unhappy. It's the same. What's the difference between us and the animals, except that we do things in a more sophisticated manner?

So we must think that if we practise Dharma or we live our lives with the eight worldly concerns, we are the same as animals although we are not. And since we are higher and better off than animals, we should have a motivation that is much better.

NOTHING NEW IN SAMSARA

The objects one sees are the projection of one's deluded mind.

So everything that we perceive – this is good, this is bad, this is nice, this is not – is the result of our own negative karma. If the object we are perceiving is inherently existent in itself, is real in itself, then everybody that sees that object must see it the way we see it. Yet everyone that sees an object will see it differently because the result of their karma is different.

Change the object into one you are not attached to...

There is nothing new in samsara. Think. You hang around here – there is nothing new. All the food that you want to eat, you have eaten; all the clothes you like to wear, you have worn; you have driven all the cars, you have been everywhere, you have done everything. You have slept, you have eaten, you have taken all types of medications, you have gone to all types of entertainments; you have tried all kinds of things. There is nothing new in samsara. You have done this for lifetimes and lifetimes and when you die, you will be doing it for more and more and more lifetimes.

There is nothing new in samsara. There is nothing exciting to hang around for, there is nothing exciting to be attached to. Everything is the same ... so wouldn't it behove us to actually practise the Dharma, free of the eight worldly concerns, to become a Buddha to benefit others? Wouldn't that be a breath of fresh air?

If we do things on the basis of the eight worldly concerns, we will not have true happiness. In fact, we will have more suffering, whether we practise the Dharma or not. Sufferings come about by wrong actions; wrong actions come about by wrong motive. So whether you have the wrong motive and do wrong actions through the Dharma or not does not matter. *It does not matter.*

NO CHOICE : NOTHING LASTS

You must realise that everything is impermanent by nature.

No choice: nothing lasts. What is the definition of impermanence? Any phenomenon—any item, object, thought, place, person, situation, whatever — that is dependent on other causes or phenomena for its existence, is impermanent.

So therefore, for people who are attached to praise, and their happiness arises from praise — their happiness is deluded because praise is dependent on a lot of things. It is dependent on our actions, it is dependent on the stability of our actions, and then actually getting the praise and having the people around to praise you. And when you don't get it, you become unhappy. So praise is impermanent. It is not lasting. If we depend on happiness from praise, we will definitely experience unhappiness again and again and again and again.

It is the same if our happiness is dependent on wealth or achieving wealth, and only wanting wealth. Wealth and the process of achieving it takes up a lot of time, takes up our youth, takes away our time from our family, takes away time from everything, and there are lots of sacrifices such as health and mental peace. We can even go off the deep end to achieve wealth – do negative actions, things that break the law.

And then when we actually achieve the wealth, it is unstable, we can lose it anytime, the shares can go down, etc. etc. Achieving it requires so many causes, and the causes themselves are impermanent. Therefore, if we base our happiness on wealth and achieving it, and the process of achieving it, we will definitely suffer very badly.

PERVASIVE IGNORANCE

We will suffer constantly while we are trying to achieve it, and when we achieve it we will suffer as there is no guarantee that we will be able to keep it. And the minute we lose it, or there is a sign of losing it, we run to temples, we run to Lamas, we run to divinations, we run to bomohs, we run to magicians, we run to fortune tellers, we run to anybody who can save our wealth. And in the process we suffer and then when we actually lose it, we suffer even more – for some, extremely.

From beginning to the middle to the end, it is total suffering. Total suffering – mental, physical, environmental, outer, inner, constantly.

And our ignorance is pervasive and very strong to say or think that if we achieve that, we have happiness. If we look around us at people who are actually wealthy, how many of them are deeply at peace or have happiness in their minds? And if they have it: when they lose it, how

do they feel? That is the process of life. One day, you will definitely lose it. If not in life, definitely at death. When you are born, you are born naked – you cannot take anything from your previous lives.

WRONG PERCEPTION

When we think about it carefully, when we think about it constructively and from a right angle, all phenomena are empty of inherent existence. Empty of inherent existence does not mean empty of existence; it means empty of the way we perceive it exists. Therefore, when we check something, when we look at something, when we have attachment towards something, it itself does not exist the way we perceive it. For example, wealth does not provide happiness but we have a wrong perception that it does: we follow that, we run after that. And it is not that if we don't achieve wealth we become unhappy, it is the wrong perception that it brings happiness and believing it. And when it does not bring happiness, we suffer...

It is not the wealth that makes us suffer, or losing it that makes us suffer. It is a wrong perception – the ignorant perception of what we think it can do for us. So it is the motive and the process that make us suffer. It is our wrong perception or idealisation that makes us suffer. Not the wealth, not losing it, nor not achieving it.

WRONG PROJECTION

We can apply these two examples with everything around us, in everything that has happened in our lives that has so-called disappointed us. It is our wrong projection, and wrong attachment to it. It is not the object itself.

All objects are free of inherent existence. Inherent existence means that the object exists on its own without causes. If wealth could exist on its own without any causes, definitely it could bring us happiness because it would be permanent. So if something can exist *on its own*, without dependency on causes, it will be permanent. If it is permanent, it will bring happiness. Since wealth comes under the classification of impermanent phenomena, our grasping at it as being permanent when it is not, makes us suffer.

It is like when we meet someone new – we have a projection that this person is kind, compassionate, honest, will be loyal and when we find out later they are not, it is not that which makes us suffer. It is our wrong projection of that person, and what we think they should be like, and that they didn't fit our projection. It is because of our wrong projection of that person, or that phenomenon, that we have suffered – not because of that person or that phenomenon.

So we go on ignorantly blaming other people, other situations, other things. And from that wrong projection and wrong perception, we shout, we scream, we hurt, we use harsh words, we kill, we steal, we lie, we commit sexual misconduct, we use schismatic speech, we put others down. It is from that wrong perception we do all those negative types of actions. Those negative types of actions definitely will bear fruit. Since the root is negative, of course the sprout – what the result will be – is negative.

WHAT MAKES US SUFFER

What makes us suffer is not realising that things do not inherently exist on their own. Every phenomenon is impermanent. It is our stubbornness not to accept that fact, and to put more into it than it is; it is our stubbornness to have the wrong projection towards an object of the five senses and it not fitting our projections, the way we think it should be, that makes us suffer.

And the worst part of it is that we do not have enough wisdom, clarity of mind, meditational powers and penetrative wisdom to actually see an object for what it really is. Therefore, we are stuck with two problems. Number one: wrong perception due to delusional mind, due to wrong mind, followed by wrong projection. Number two: a grasping at the wrong projected perception. So grasping at the wrong projection and wrong projection itself make us suffer.

GRASPING

What is grasping? I will give you an example, the same one: When we meet someone and we feel that they should be a certain way and we build all our hopes – that is grasping – on the way we think they should be. And when that person does not fulfil what we think they should be with our lack of wisdom, then: “*They* are bad, *they* are evil, *they* are negative, *they* are not good; *I* must fight them, *I* must get revenge, *I* must get them back.”

So it is actually not them, if we use our wisdom. *It is not them*. It is our wrong perception, our lack of wisdom to perceive. And the lack of wisdom to perceive and wrong perception itself are *also*

impermanent, which means they can be removed, because these two factors are based on other conditions to survive.

Therefore there *is* an end to suffering.

Logically, since those very perceptions are impermanent, that is a clear implication that there can be eradication or annihilation or destruction of those actual causes that bring us unhappiness. Think about it. All our sufferings arise from wrong perception of and wrong projections onto everything around us.

From morning to night we have wrong projection. That wrong projection can come from conditioning; it can come from stubbornness, laziness and ego, which is a selfish attitude. Ego is what makes us basically have wrong projection. And then having that wrong projection and acting out of that wrong projection brings unhappiness. Please think about it. This point is extremely crucial. We should pray to Manjushri and Je Tsongkhapa for this realisation, not for anything else. Surprise!

Check everything in your life, every day, twenty-four hours, from the time we were born up until now – the acts we have done are based on our projections. Some of them wrong, some of them correct... now think carefully.

The minute we stop this, or train in stopping this, the sufferings start to become less. The problem may remain the same but you suffer less, and that is the point. And when you suffer less, you have clarity of mind and therefore the ability to solve it. That is the whole point.

So when you practise Dharma and you have a wrong projected expectation that your problems will be solved immediately, *now*, that is very demanding of the Buddhas. (And it's not that the Buddhas are not going to acquiesce, or agree to your demands...)

All problems and difficulties arise from that. And the more we add on to projections, the more we reinforce it and condition it. We condition it and we condition it, again and again and again, and our sufferings increase, increase, increase. Even if we get wealth, even if we get 500,000 cars, money, houses, fame, our sufferings become even more intense to the point of suicide, to the point of going berserk and crazy. That is why people who have many things suffer greatly, and people who don't have anything suffer greatly. Either way you suffer, because the cause of the suffering is within you. Think about it! So how can you go to the Buddhas, go to Jesus Christ, go to God and pray constantly that your sufferings cease when you do not lift one finger to actually remove the cause of suffering?

When you realise that point, and start acting in ways that start cutting out conditioning, wrong view and wrong projection, you will see your sufferings become less, even if you have many problems to endure. And that is how great Masters, great Dharma practitioners are always happy, always willing, always enthusiastic, always ever-ready to help others; even though they may have hundreds of people criticising them, hating them. They endure many difficulties, many problems – financial, physical, health, environmental, social – they may go through many different types of sufferings and problems, yet they will go on, teach, practise, help and never lose their enthusiastic perseverance, because they have realised that point. That is the reason – because they have realised that point.

Until you realise that point, you are in samsara – your own samsara. Samsara is not a picture of a wheel in which you get reborn: we all have our own samsara. And that is the crucial realisation to cut it. Samsara is another word for suffering. Think about it!

So to support that growth, to support that meditation, to support that realisation, to support that understanding, we must continuously collect merits. If we wish to change our luck, *that* is the luck we should change. That is why we make offerings to the Three Jewels, serve our Gurus, study the Dharma, why we meditate, we chant, we recite mantras, do retreats, go on pilgrimages, offer incense, serve the Sangha, do charity works and so on. That is the reason to collect merits: to be able to support the growth of those realisations. When you can support the growth of those realisations, your sufferings lessen and eventually stop. That is why the purification of negative karma and the collection of merit are so crucial and important in our practice.

We may think that making offerings on an altar, cleaning, doing our prayers, is so menial and so small and it is not real Dharma practice. Wrong view! Anything done in relation to the enlightened Beings creates an extremely powerful propensity. How much we put into it is how much we will get back. Buddha Shakyamuni has said when asked by one of his disciples, “When the Buddha is alive and present, making offerings to the Three Jewels in the form of Buddha Shakyamuni helps us collect a great amount of merit and we are able to destroy vast amounts of negative karma. When the Buddha is not physically here anymore, what shall we do?”

The Buddha replied, “When I am not around, making offerings to an image in the likeness of myself and believing it is me will be equal to making offerings to me in person and directly.”

So when we uphold the images of Buddhas and put beautiful ornaments and gold, and make beautiful offerings and make a place for them, make an effort for them, it is the same as having the actual living Buddhas themselves in our presence. And any actions that you do within their presence is the same as the amount of merit you would collect if you actually did it to them in person. That is a direct quote from Buddha Shakyamuni himself.

So we should be ever-persevering in making offerings, maintaining our altar, making prostrations, making mandalas, Vajrasattva purification, doing our meditational deity practice, studying up on the Dharma, meditating and – most important – applying it in our daily lives. In fact, we should be ever-persevering because that will become the root cause for cutting out suffering. We should contemplate this.

We should not be like the cup with holes: we hear it, we say yes, it is correct, pray, go home, and we go back to the same thing day after day, month after month, year after year, with no improvements and some danger of degeneration. We should be like a cup without the holes, and retain it, think about it, contemplate on it, study it and especially collect merits to support it. If we don't, we can be in Dharma for ten years, fifteen years, twenty years, we will never change, we will never transform. In fact, the ego becomes bigger, you think, "I am a *senior* Dharma practitioner. You should listen to me. I've met twenty Rinpoches. I've done fifty rainy season retreats."

Wonderful! But you are still going to hell... you are still suffering. Wonderful, but let me see the results. The result should be obvious – a changing and transformation of your character. So let's not leave the Dharma talk despondent. We should leave the Dharma talk happy that we have some kind of realisation, and apply it and try to make a change

in our lives and transform, now, this moment, today, from today on. And maintain it by study, practice and the relationship with our Gurus, if we have one. We should maintain it.

FROM EFFORT TO EFFORTLESSNESS

And by that constant nurturing, like a small child, it will grow into adulthood, able to protect and watch itself, able to take care of itself. Like that, definitely these realisations will come to the point where they are irreversible, where without effort they remain steady and constant: effortless giving, effortless patience, effortless enthusiasm, effortless compassion, effortless Bodhicitta... it will become effortless.

DHARMA IS A MIRROR

On that basis, every phenomenon is empty of true existence. Free of inherent existence – not existing on its own right. It is existing on causes. Since it is existing on causes, once we cut the causes, it cannot exist anymore. In the case of delusions, negative mind, we can stop it.

It would be very good if we can memorise the eight worldly concerns. Memorise it, commit it to memory and make sure that we can recite it every day. People like to recite a lot of mantras, people like to recite a lot of long sadhanas and intricate, complicated deities with a lot of hands, a lot of arms, a lot of legs, a lot of consorts; and how many legs, how many arms, how many consorts, what's their colour, what they're carrying in their hands, you can't even remember... but we like to have those pictures and have those statues and go to those initiations and flash it to our friends and tell them how holy, intricate and complicated they are, and how high we are with these high initiations. But in the end

when we check, the very fact that we like to flash it to our friends shows that the motive is incorrect.

I am not here to criticise you, and I am not here to tell you that all of you do have these worldly motivations, and that you are all so naughty. In order for you to not have those types of motives, you must understand them, the faults behind them, what they are, recognise them and that can only come from hearing about them. It is very, very important. We should not think that the Dharma is insulting us; we should think that Dharma is a mirror for us to reflect our actions within. So whatever we do, we reflect it in the mirror of Dharma to see if we are doing it correctly or not.

The Dharma should be treated like a mirror; the Dharma teacher should be the mirror-holder; and the Sangha should be the ones polishing the mirror. And we are the ones looking into the mirror... something like that. So it's very important that we should see the Dharma as a mirror for us to reflect our actions. And when we do any type of action, we should immediately check it with the Dharma to see if it is correct or not. If it is not, we should not feel insulted, we should not feel despondent, we should not feel that "I can't do it." In fact we should be very happy that there is something we can check it with to improve.

We have a guideline out of samsara. By renouncing samsara, worldliness, self-centeredness, we become real people, we become human beings – beings with compassion.

COMPASSION

it is in our hands



EIGHT VERSES OF MIND TRANSFORMATION

Check ourselves out! How many years have we been doing Dharma? How many Gurus have we chased? How many Rinpoches, how many divinations, how many things have we done? Why are we not transforming? Because the very motive might have been wrong, and along with that, we've had wrong projection and a lack of merits. Very clear. Very concise. Very logical.

In the beginning, correct motivation is very important; in the middle, correct motivation is very important; and in the end, correct motivation is very important. When the motivation is correct, there will be wonderful, positive, lasting results. There is definitely an end. On that logical basis I have just established with your intimate, intelligent, educated minds the fact that suffering can come to an end.

Do you want it to come to an end? It is in your hands.

We should have the motive to practise the Dharma, to go to the temple, see our Gurus enthusiastically, with perseverance, with great patience, with great love, with great understanding of the great value that will arise from there, by being free from the eight worldly concerns, the eight wrong motives – which is a guideline for developing our motivation. And the wrong motivation is also impermanent; it is dependent on causes. The cause is ignorance. Once you have been given wisdom and knowledge, ignorance is cut. When ignorance is cut, the very foundation for wrong motive is cut. So, what's left? Positive motive.

Therefore, we should not have the motivation to do any action – especially Dharma action – to get praise, to avoid insult, to receive gifts, to be unhappy if we don't, to avoid bad reputation, to try to get good reputation, to try to receive comfort and try to avoid discomfort.

It should be free of this.

The motive should be Enlightenment, freedom of suffering for everyone.

I will get into developing that compassion, step by step by step, and it is crucial, it is very important. We all want compassion, we like getting compassion, we like having compassion, we like being around compassion. So doesn't it behove us to *be* compassionate?

Now we will talk about how to develop it.

Please let Geshe Langri Tangpa's holy words sink in slowly –

*With the thought of attaining Enlightenment
for the welfare of all beings,
who are more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel,
I will constantly practise holding them dear.*

*Whenever I am with others, I will practise
seeing myself as the lowest of all,
and from the very depths of my heart
I will respectfully hold others as supreme.*

*In all actions I will examine my mind
and the moment a disturbing attitude arises,
endangering myself or others,
I will firmly confront and avert it.*

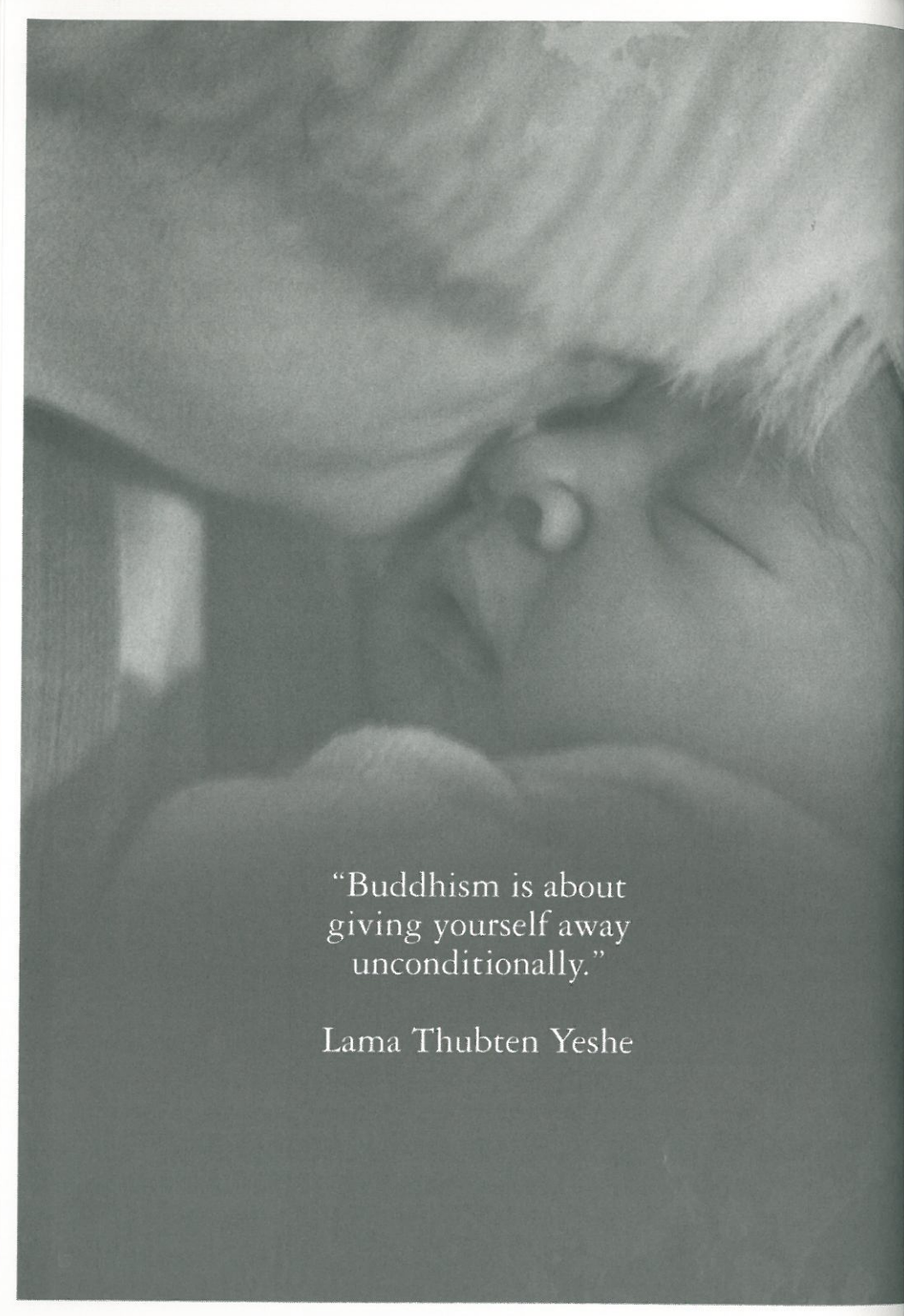
*Whenever I meet a person of bad nature,
overwhelmed by negative energy and intense suffering,
I will hold such a rare one dear
as if I've found a precious treasure.*

*When others out of jealousy
mistreat me with abuse, slander and so on,
I will practise accepting defeat
and offering the victory to them.*

*When someone I have benefited and in whom
I have placed great trust hurts me very badly,
I will practise seeing that person
as my supreme teacher.*

*In short, I will offer directly and indirectly
every benefit and happiness to all beings, my mothers.
I will practise in secret taking upon myself
all their harmful actions and sufferings.*

*Without these practices being defiled
By the stains of the eight worldly concerns,
by perceiving all phenomena as illusory
I will practise without grasping to release all beings
from the bondage of the disturbing unsubdued mind and karma.*



“Buddhism is about
giving yourself away
unconditionally.”

Lama Thubten Yeshe

Verse One

ALL BEINGS ARE PRECIOUS

With the thought of attaining Enlightenment
for the welfare of all beings,
who are more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel,
I will constantly practise holding them dear.

Without sentient beings, we cannot practise compassion. Without compassion, we cannot attain Bodhicitta. Without Bodhicitta, we cannot become an enlightened Being.

Sentient beings are even more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel – all sentient beings, everyone around you, enemies, friends, neutral people are very important to you because it is in dependence on them you get Enlightenment. How is that? How do you practise patience if you have no enemies to develop patience with? Full stop.

And what Buddhas are there without patience? What Buddhas exist with no patience? We need to have patience, and the only way we can develop it is by someone helping us, and that someone is an enemy.

So an enemy is just as precious as someone that benefits us, because without them, *how do we practice patience?* One of the definitions of a Buddha is that he has patience – if we become a Buddha with no

patience, we hate enemies and we are a “Buddha”, I don’t think we will end up on the altar! So think!

We need to practise generosity. Who do we give things to? The trees? Waterfalls? Mountains? “I offer this gold to you, mountain...” No, it is to sentient beings. They are very kind to allow us to help them, that we are able to practise the paramita of *dhana* – giving. If we want to go one step higher, to our Dharma brothers and sisters – giving, helping the Dharma institutions, the Sangha, and if possible, if we have one, to our root Guru. It is their kindness that allows us to practise the paramita of giving.

Every Buddha has tremendous spiritual and unlimited, inexhaustible wealth, and where did that come from? *Giving*. Giving to sentient beings. So in order to develop wealth, in order to develop the karma to even be rich in your next life, it is dependent on others. So when we are so dependent on others, how can we not respect others? They give us an opportunity to give. Likewise, to practise enthusiasm, perseverance, and so on.

We want to become a Buddha, so we must love every single sentient being that exists in the six realms. If, let’s say, there are five billion sentient beings in this world – we love four billion, nine, nine, nine, nine, nine, nine hundred and ninety-nine and we don’t love one for any reasons, guess what? You cannot become a Buddha. How can a Buddha love everyone except *her*? Except *him*? “I love everyone, I love every single sentient being except that one!” ... Think about it!

Your actual Enlightenment is dependent on every single sentient being and your attitude and motive towards them. So they are very kind to exist to let you develop this. If we show bad face, black face, bad talk, gossip, negativity, shout and scream and hurt and abuse others,

then we don't realise how precious they are. They are just as precious as the Buddhas; they are equal, it says in the *Bodhicharyavatara* by Shantideva.

If they are equally important, do you think you can pray, kowtow, make offerings to the Buddha and the Three Jewels, your Guru and the Sangha, and turn around and abuse other sentient beings and get enlightened? You are in some weird cult, because that is not what the Buddha taught. We have all been guilty (including myself) of following this weird cult. In front of the Buddha, we kowtow, we prostrate, we have tears; when we turn around, someone bothers us – “Hey!” We have done that over and over and over.

The Buddhas are important because we need teachings, we need their blessings, we need their inspiration, we need their guidance. We need the Three Jewels. We need them fifty percent. And in order to fulfil what they have taught us, where is the object to act out what they have taught us? Sentient beings. That's right – *all* sentient beings. Neutral ones, hated ones and loved ones. And the very fact that you have hated ones and neutral ones in your vocabulary shows that you are not practising Dharma. Think. It is all so interconnected and so logical.

So how can we just prostrate to the Buddhas, prostrate to the Sangha, prostrate to our Guru, to our altars and not show equal reverent respect to everyone else? Of course you don't have to run around with lotus candles and light one to everyone you meet and say, “I respect you and pray to you.” Of course you don't have to go that fanatical. The point, the issue here is to have a sincere respect for other sentient beings. That includes your wife that gets on your nerves, that nags; that includes your husband that gets on your nerves, that comes home from work at eleven o'clock; that includes your kids that don't stop

shouting and screaming non-stop; that includes loving the Guru that shouts at you.

You've got to love everyone, everything. We should start with our Gurus, we should start with our wives, we should start with our husbands. Have we been mistreating our wives? Have we been talking wrongly to our maids? Have we been mistreating our husbands and talking wrongly to our husbands? To our friends? To our relatives? Have we? If we have, I don't think we are making progress here. And if we are not making progress, we are going to suffer.

Of course there are certain people that really get on our nerves – we don't have to jump and beg and hug and kiss them and say, "I love you!" We don't have to, at every corner, grab them and kiss them and say "I love you!" and hold their hands twenty-four hours and say, "Look, Guru! I am practising compassion!" You don't have to do that. The point is, let them be the way they are, but don't hate them. You may avoid them for now, with the reason that you are not yet fully developed, or you want to protect yourself for now. Until you become developed, you don't have any hate, but that cannot go on forever – "I hate them, I want to protect myself, I stay away."

So we have to love all sentient beings to become enlightened. If we don't, how do we become enlightened? Impossible! It's fifty percent on sentient beings. We should start today, now, this moment, to start loving our wives, start loving our husbands, start loving our children, our relatives, our parents, our aunts and uncles, Sangha members, our Gurus, people that are neutral to us, people who we just met and especially our enemies. We should start!

Stop kowtowing to the Buddhas, because that is just fifty percent of the game. If you kowtow to them, it means you will follow what they

are saying. You respect what they are, what they represent, what they teach you, and therefore you kowtow. So if you kowtow and you turn around and do the opposite, you should get a Grammy award for your brilliant acting. And we all should get a Grammy award because we are the greatest actors on Earth. All of us! Think about it. It sounds funny but it is true... that's why it's funny!

We have to respect everyone, we have to respect everything. And we must start with the people that are easiest to us – from our Gurus to the Sangha, to our Dharma brothers and sisters, to other religious practitioners, to neutral people, to enemies. Without that deep respect, fifty percent of your practice is not there. A table cannot stand with two legs. Think about it. We need to start practising this.

Please, practise that first verse. That verse has such deep meaning. Let's become real Dharma practitioners. We have received the first verse - let's put it into action, let's support it and make it stable and make it constant by making offerings to the Three Jewels, prostrations, meditations on meditational deities, mantras, and so on.

I implore you, my old friends and my new friends, to please put this teaching into practice. This moment.

MEDITATION

What would it be like to perceive every living being as infinitely precious?

How would my body feel?

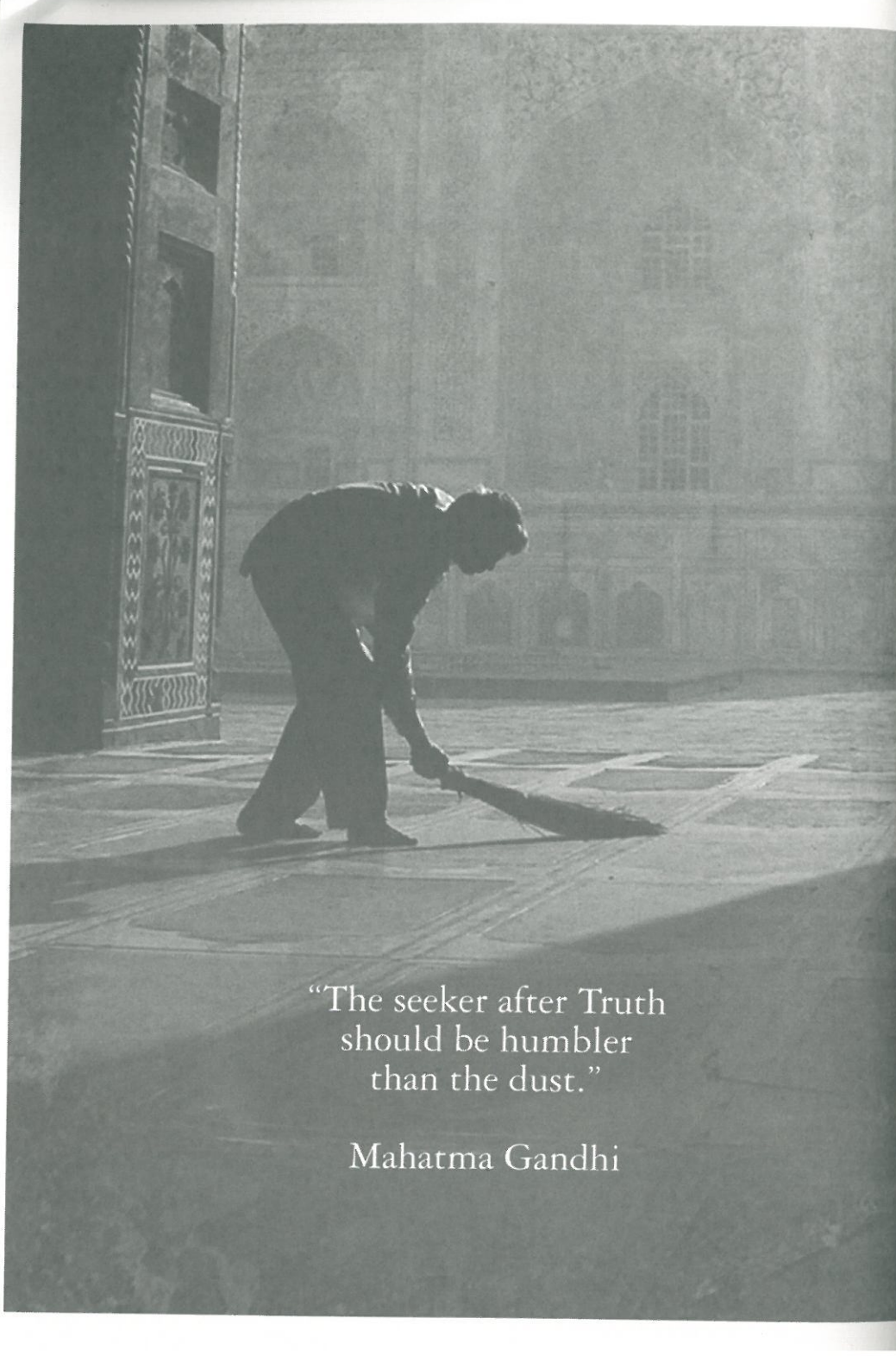
How would my emotions feel?

How would my heart and mind feel?

How would I interact with them?

Allow yourself to breathe in these liberating energies and relax within them.

Let them become one with you.



"The seeker after Truth
should be humbler
than the dust."

Mahatma Gandhi

Verse Two

SEE ALL BEINGS AS BUDDHA

Whenever I am with others, I will practise
seeing myself as the lowest of all,
and from the very depths of my heart
I will respectfully hold others as supreme.

If we practise these eight verses alone, we can gain Enlightenment.
No joke. Without initiations, without altars, without deities, without
nothing – if we practise this, from our heart, our sufferings will stop.

If we have problems, we should apologise; if we have difficulties, we
should make up. And we should see the root of the problem and stop
it from our side.

Whether the other person stops it or not, never mind. That is not your
problem. When you die, you die alone. When you go, you go alone.
When you make karma, you make karma alone.

Now you may say the purpose of Dharma is to become happy. Happiness
here is not defined as happiness for the self alone though. It is happiness
for all sentient beings. So if we do Dharma for happiness for the self
alone, then it disqualifies us as a Mahayana Dharma practitioner.

Mahayana or non-Mahayana, we cannot become a Buddha without the qualification of wishing sentient beings metta and love, and wishing them to be free from sufferings. One of the definitions of a Buddha is that he or she has that quality. Therefore, without that quality, whatever labels you like to put – Mahayana or non-Mahayana, labels are just labels – we cannot achieve Buddhahood.

Dear friends, why run away, avoid, deny and not give in to concern and acting for others, acceptance, patience and calm abiding because that's who we really are. If that's not so, why does Buddha teach us to find that within ourselves? If Enlightenment is not within, where might it be?

When we go deeper and not only hold others dear but see them as supreme, it is their inherent Enlightenment that we focus on. When the prison-bars of pride are broken, the flower of humility can blossom. Our view becomes pure.

Due to bad karma we get wrong views. Due to wrong views, even our spiritual teachers or Buddhas that may appear to us will be perceived as impure. Guru devotion is the training to be able to humble ourselves, to put our ego, put our pride, put our knowledge, put everything down in front of our Guru whom we visualise as the Buddha, and in learning to do that we are able to apply it to everyone else. It starts from there.

Humility is the name of the game.

MEDITATION

What would it be like to perceive every living being as very exalted, worthy of my deepest reverence?

How would my body feel?

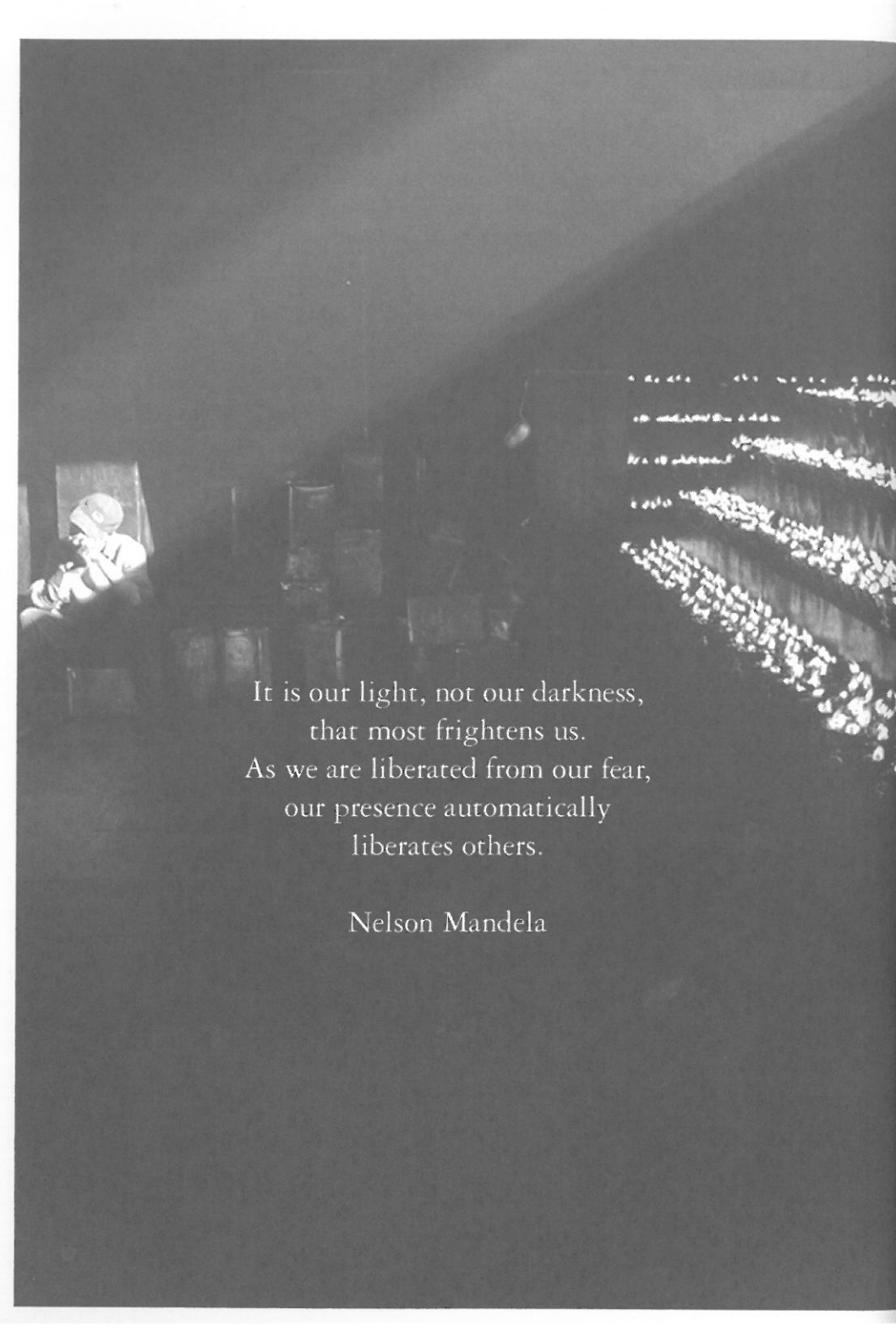
How would my emotions feel?

How would my heart and mind feel?

How would I interact with them?

Allow yourself to breathe in these liberating energies and relax within them.

Let them become one with you.



It is our light, not our darkness,
that most frightens us.
As we are liberated from our fear,
our presence automatically
liberates others.

Nelson Mandela

Verse Three

SAMSARA IS A STATE OF MIND

In all actions I will examine my mind
and the moment a disturbing attitude arises,
endangering myself or others,
I will firmly confront and avert it.

"Checking the mind" – to be aware of the ever-changing contents of the mind without being carried away by them is the foundation and essence of Dharma practice and something we can and should be doing at all times, whatever we do, wherever we are. If we take our thoughts, ideas and emotions for real and allow them to cloud our perception with wanting and not-wanting, they seduce us into many actions driven by lust and anger which always end in pain and disaster. And not only for us, but for all those connected to us in any way, which, ultimately, is everybody and everything.

We should confront disturbing attitudes by realising they are like clouds that appear and disappear without solid substance, and avert confusion and damage by focusing on the pure un-changing awareness that is like the sky. Since most of us are not yet able to dissolve afflictive emotions directly in this way we must apply their antidotes.

If everything that exists is impermanent phenomena, there must be

an end. So my afflictive emotions, which arise from the self-cherishing mind, are impermanent phenomena. Why? In order for my self-cherishing mind and ego to exist, it must have causes and conditions. So if the causes and conditions are removed, the ego or the self-cherishing mind can be removed.

Now, what we need to do is to find out what are the causes and conditions for that ego to exist and to apply the antidote. It's very simple. We have all been told it can be removed. We have all been told that our mind is clarity and luminous nature and clear light; we have been told over and over by great Lamas like His Holiness, but when we leave the teachings we are wondering, "Okay I am clear light – how come I am not clear? How come I am still getting angry and pissed off?"

What are some of the causes? Not understanding the truth, not understanding the Dharma, not having wisdom, not having a collection of merits. Reconditioning yourself in it. Not trying to root it out or pull it out. Not dealing with it or facing it directly. So our negative states of mind are dependent on a lot of causes. When we start removing the causes, that negative state of mind must disappear. Therefore, there is an end to afflictive emotions, to negative states of mind which bring about negative actions of body, speech and mind that bring about negative results.

These negative results that we experience individually are samsara. Samsara is not a place we go to. It is an experience that we have, an experience we all have. Why? If samsara is a place we go to, everybody in this place must suffer. His Holiness is in this so-called samsara and he doesn't suffer, but we are here and we suffer. Therefore samsara cannot be a place, it must be a state of mind that is brought about by our personal individual fruitioning of karma. Very simple.

Think carefully: if I cannot benefit others, at least I should not be a trouble-maker. Don't gossip, don't incite problems, don't incite skepticism, don't talk about people behind their back – don't ever talk about other people, don't make comments about other people. If they really are what you are commenting about, people will know eventually whether you "helped them along" or not. Whether you gossip about people or not, people will know what that person is. People are not stupid, people can see. So it's better never to gossip and talk about them behind their backs.

So if we cannot benefit others, at least we won't make trouble. Don't be a trouble-maker. And if a trouble-maker comes around, don't make trouble for them. I think that is very, very important. That is the essence of the teachings, and everything that we teach leads to that.

Develop penetrating insight into that point. How to develop penetrating insight: by contemplating on a point again and again and again and if it benefits, to think about these benefits again and again and again. To contemplate it, to put it into your mind and recondition it slowly. Definitely – I promise – your afflictive emotions endangering others and yourself will become less. No doubt. There are many examples of people like that.

MEDITATION

What would it be like to be fully aware of but detached from the contents of my mind, and when unhappy impulses arise to dis-identify with them (be free of them), instead of compulsively acting them out (be enslaved to them)?

How would my body feel?

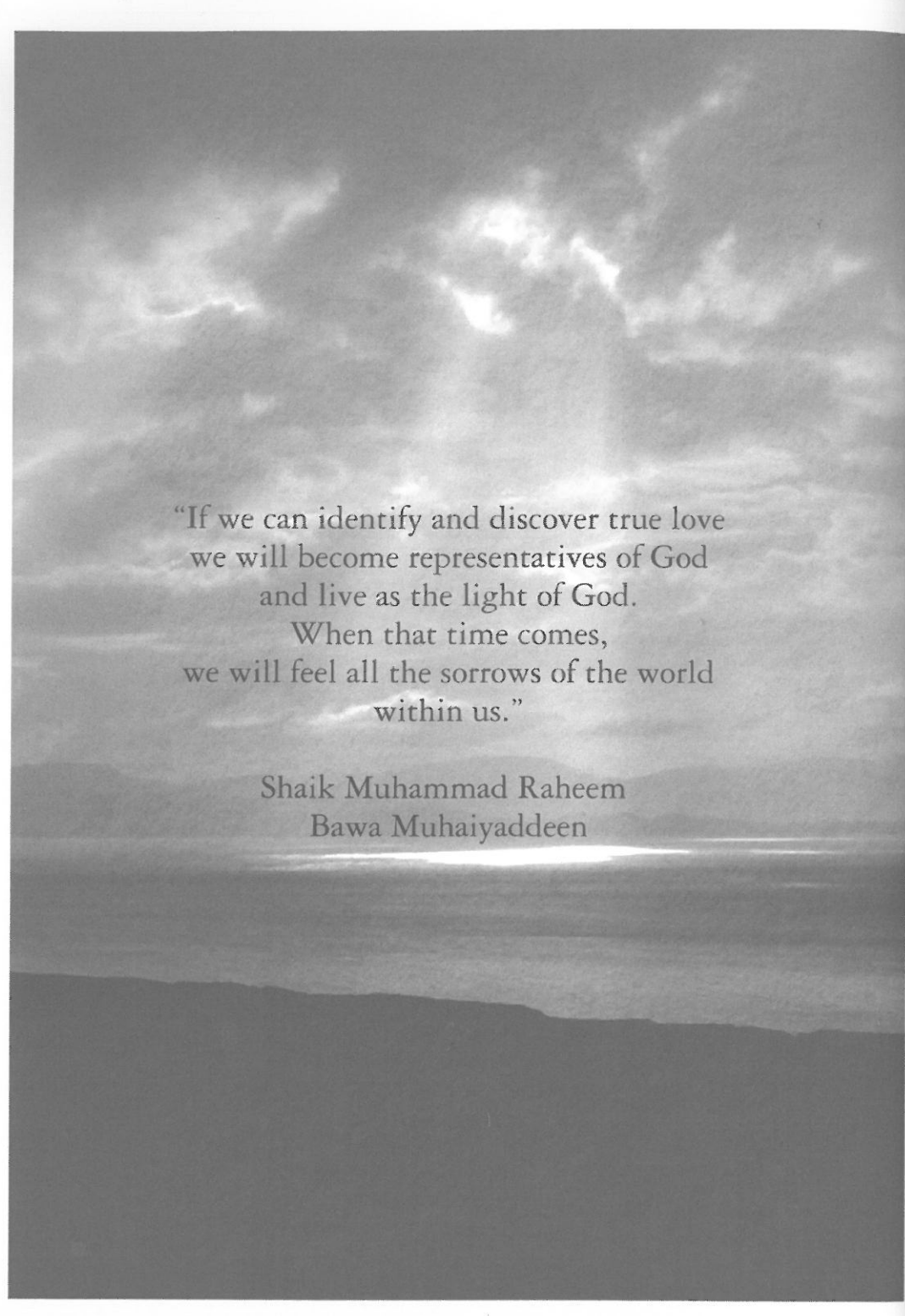
How would my emotions feel?

How would my heart and mind feel?

How would I interact with them?

Allow yourself to breathe in these liberating energies and relax within them.

Let them become one with you.



“If we can identify and discover true love
we will become representatives of God
and live as the light of God.

When that time comes,
we will feel all the sorrows of the world
within us.”

Shaik Muhammad Raheem
Bawa Muhaiyaddeen

Verse Four

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

Whenever I meet a person of bad nature,
overwhelmed by negative energy
and intense suffering,
I will hold such a rare one dear
as if I've found a precious treasure.

“Beings of negative dispositions, with sufferings, may I hold these rare ones dear as if I have found a precious treasure.” What!? People that make me suffer, people who are with afflictive emotions, who are ugly and negative and mean – to hold them dear and precious... what?! Where is that crazy monk going now? Now he is going to brainwash me into loving my enemies.

No, I am not going to brainwash you. I am going to give you reasoning behind it. That statement shocked everyone, no? And some of us have a lot of enemies... so we need this. We need to definitely hear and practise it. When we practise it, the enemies – from our point of view – disappear. We become happy.

Think, “When I see beings of negative disposition and suffering, may I hold these rare ones dear as if I have found a precious treasure.” Incredible!
When I come across beings that are oppressed by violent sufferings

and overwhelmed by their delusions, and bad-tempered and bad-natured, may I hold them dear as if I found a precious treasure. Why? Because they are more precious than a wish-granting jewel. Why is that? A wish-granting jewel can confer on you some material gains, but a negative person or a person that hurts you can confer on you *Enlightenment!* How is that? Because they give you the greatest opportunity to practise patience, compassion and love. They are the greatest test to see if you have compassion and love, and if years of meditation and practice have brought any results.

Because if you see them and still feel like you'd rather not see them, why are you chanting on? What are you praying on and who are you kowtowing to? Who are you praying to? You must be praying to a weird demon on your altar... you must be praying and prostrating to your ego.

So this is the metre in which to check: if something around you disturbs you. If someone is doing something that disturbs you, it's not them. The fact that it disturbs you shows you that *you* are disturbed. We look at it from a positive and broader perspective and angle. When people do things around you that disturb you tremendously and you can't help but to make it known and react back, it shows that you are disturbed and your self-cherishing mind is so strong and so powerful and so pervasive in your body that you must let the other person know it bothers you. (So don't do it...)

You might say, "I have a good motivation" – forget it. The very fact that it disturbs you tells you that you are disturbed! Disturbed by what? By your afflictive emotions that are so strong and your selfish mind that is so strong. And your self-grasping mind – that mind that says, "I am important, *me, myself, my* happiness, *my* wishes, *my* concerns, *my* comfort is more important than you." So I will tell you, "Your dress is ugly. You shouldn't wear that. The way you talk disturbs me. You shouldn't be doing

things like that,” and so on. In fact, ninety-nine percent of the criticisms – nice or not nice, gentle or not gentle – that we direct at others, all come from the self-cherishing mind.

The great Atisha who was such an enlightened Being had one monk in Nalanda that hated him. He was an older monk that only saw bad points in Atisha. When Atisha gave teachings he would never attend. He would influence others and say, “Don’t go to the teachings.” He only saw false in Atisha and criticised him over and over and over, and tried to make his life difficult in the monastery.

If it was me, I would have dropped an H-bomb on that monk immediately but because Atisha practised these teachings, you know what he did? When the great goddess Tara told Atisha to go to Tibet to teach the Dharma, Atisha invited this monk to go to Tibet with him and he sponsored his whole trip over. And you know why? No, not because Atisha was a fruit cake. Because he wanted to practise patience and love. And this was the best person, because he didn’t have anyone that didn’t love him; he only had people that praised him. There was only one person that hated him, that constantly criticised him and constantly wanted to debase him.

So Atisha said, “Hey, what a golden opportunity! Come along with me to Tibet.” He was there for thirteen years with this monk who criticised Atisha to his dying day. And Atisha did wonderful prayers and a ceremony and funeral for this monk to get a good rebirth.

Atisha’s practice is as famous as Buddha Shakyamuni’s in Tibet. In fact we have teachings, we have lineages and teachings today because of Atisha. Even the Tara practice is because of Atisha. Offerings – Atisha taught us how to make offerings to collect merit. Wealth vases – all of us run to different centres to get wealth vases; the first person to teach

us how to make wealth vases and to contain the energy to get wealth was Atisha. He was the one that wrote the original *Lamrim*. He was the one that disseminated the monk vows which spread all over Mongolia and Tibet. Because he was a pure monk, he made many new monks.

This great Lama served and compassionately took care of the old crony of a monk that had nothing but the ugliest things to say about him. Imagine that. And then when we turn the picture to us, we are not willing to do that or we think Atisha was crazy for doing that. But when we look deeper, Atisha saw a golden opportunity to practise patience and love and compassion because there was no one that hated him. He found one person and said, "Oh, it's my opportunity. I want to make sure that I destroy the last traces of my negative emotions so I can become a Buddha to benefit others." That was his motive.

"When I meet others who are oppressed by violent and intense sufferings and overwhelmed by their negative emotion, may I treasure them as if I found a precious jewel, a precious treasure." *That's* why: because they *are* a precious treasure. They offer you the opportunity to develop the points that you need to become a Buddha.

Therefore when you go to a Dharma centre, when you go to a store and you meet funny salespeople, funny waiters, you have funny relatives, you have funny friends, you have funny Dharma brothers and sisters, jump on them, hug them, love them, kiss them and give them gifts and prostrate to them if you want to be a Buddha! You may think it is ridiculous, but I am not telling you to actually physically do that but from your mind! What an opportunity to practise the Dharma! Jump on them! Hold their hands and don't let them go. If they think you are crazy, who cares! You'll be a Buddha! That is what Je Tsongkhapa did. That is what Atisha did. Think about it.

So the next time you meet someone ugly and mean and rude and that only abuses you, you should have a little nasty smirk and say "Hmmm... how lucky I am! What a golden opportunity!" Seriously, you should immediately pray in your heart and say, "I will practise these teachings and I will treat that person well." Of course we cannot treat our enemies and people that hurt us well overnight but let's not keep using that excuse for not practising. How many years has it been? This is so important.

I ask you to please read over the stanzas everyday as a daily practice. Incorporate it into your meditations and re-contemplate on it. These practices are core. If you practise this practice alone and nothing else, you can gain Enlightenment. This is the most profound, this is the essence, this is the heart of Buddha's teachings. Out of deep respect, because these are so important and so meaningful for everyone, I implore you and ask all of you to please read over them everyday and with time, definitely, you will internalise them and when a certain situation arises, the corresponding verse will come into your minds. Guaranteed. And then you will be able to practise, and advance and advance and advance.

MEDITATION

What would it be like to feel gratefulness instead of fear or anger in very difficult relationships, because here I can learn to become independent of others' attitudes towards me? To accept them as they are, and to love them as they are?

How would my body feel?

How would my emotions feel?

How would my heart and mind feel?

How would I interact with them?

*Allow yourself to breathe in these liberating energies and relax within them.
Let them become one with you.*



This body is not me; I am not caught in this body.

I am life without boundaries.

I have never been born; I will never die.

Look at me, look at the stars and the moon –

all of them are me, manifestations of me.

Thich Nhat Hanh

Verse Five

IN ACCEPTING DEFEAT, YOU WIN

When others out of jealousy
mistreat me with abuse, slander and so on,
I will practise accepting defeat
and offering the victory to them.

This verse is the very foundation of Bodhisattva practice. The reason we take Bodhisattva vows is to have guidelines and to promise to follow those guidelines to become a Bodhisattva – to become enlightened. So if we practise this verse and understand its significance and meaning, then the foundation is provided.

If we are able to offer the gains and victory to others, even in daily life, we will benefit tremendously, purifying so much karma and generating so much merit. Whatever the outcome in worldly terms, gain or loss, all will be like a great victory to us. Compassion conquers all.

Don't be attached to external results; every saint has started small. Some of them were much worse than us. For example, Milarepa was a magician that brought murder, black magic and hailstorms on his enemies. But he became enlightened. We hang out at Hard Rock Café and we are not enlightened... He definitely did worse than we did, but he is enlightened. Please remember this.

This is the hardest practice. We will always have people jealous of us. We will never be free of it. You need to accept that fact – why? Because many beings are stuck in samsara. They are stuck in their delusions. They are ignorant of their delusions. They are ignorant of what jealousy can do to them, the harm it can afflict on them and others. And as a result of thousands and thousands and thousands of lifetimes of conditioning, they act out of jealousy. So what makes you think you have the power for them not to get jealous of you and abuse you and slander you? Some of them even have the audacity and the great “courage” to slander Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and their Gurus. So what makes you an exception? What makes me an exception?

You are definitely going to be the object of other people’s jealousy if you are doing well. Not necessarily because you are at fault, but because their delusions are out of control and they have no wisdom to control their delusions. So they act out of delusions and the delusions that they act out bring negative states of existence for them again and again and again.

And in fact by reacting back to these people negatively, you increase your delusions and you increase theirs. So when someone acts badly to you and you treat them badly back, you are just as bad as them. Your delusions are just as strong as theirs. Your ego and self-cherishing mind is just as strong as theirs. You are not better. Yes, they may have done something to you and it is wrong and they are wrong right there. But when you react back, you are equally wrong. So when someone treats you badly or says something bad to you, hurts your feelings or is rude to you and you are rude back and you are abrupt back, you are just as bad as them. You are just as guilty. Two wrongs do not make a right. You should be just as ashamed as them! And you, in fact, collect

the same amount of negative karma that they do. If they treat you badly and you treat them back badly, what is the difference? Who cares about the cause anymore?

The action creates negative results. And the very fact that you treat them back badly and you abuse them and you get back at them; the very fact that you do that shows how uncontrolled you are and how much you are without compassion. You do not consider how they might be suffering; you do not consider their situations. In fact you are not sensitive to them and their sufferings. And you not being sensitive to them shows how strong your self-cherishing mind is – you are more important than them so you do not need to be sensitive to them...

So, in fact, when someone treats you badly, abuses you or is rude to you or not nice to you, this is the moment for you to check if you are doing Dharma practice. And if you are not, that is the moment to start. If you complain, if you make noise, if you make a big issue of it, if you run around like a chicken with no head, screaming and shouting, you look just as bad.

If someone mistreats you and is rude to you, or does not talk nicely to you, or is not being kind to you, you as a person trying to practise the Dharma have found a perfect opportunity. What do you think? When everything is good and everyone is polite and is nice, that's when you recite mantras and you sit there with your eyes rolling and incense, going "Ommm...?" No!

When do you practise Dharma? When you are *not* chanting, when you are *not* praying, when you are *not* in retreat, when you are *not* near your Guru – that is when you practise the Dharma. When someone shouts at you, when someone scolds you, when someone is rude to you, when

someone has abused you or is hurting you; when someone doesn't agree or opposes you – that's when you practise the Dharma.

“May I accept the defeat and offer the victory to others.” Why? In that acceptance of defeat, *you win*. Because it shows your negative mind is becoming less. So when someone reacts negatively to you and you react negatively back, you are just as guilty, you look just as ridiculous, and you should be just as embarrassed.

In fact, you should react back in a way that says, “What is bothering you? What happened?” Explore. Check. Have compassion and see if maybe they have had a bad day, or if they haven't had a bad day but are oppressed by violent sins and sufferings; overwhelmed by sufferings and delusions. Isn't that an object for you to treasure, to cherish and to practise with? Because without that, how do you practise patience?

If we do not offer the victory to people who treat us with abuse and slander and so on, we are going to be fighting one battle after another, after another, after another. And we will never, ever win the battle because there are going to be many, many, many people who would treat you in that way – they have treated you in that way, they are treating you in that way and they will continue to treat you in that way. And whether you practise the Dharma or not, they will still treat you in that way. So what is the best remedy? Fight back or practise the Dharma?

What is the benefit here? What's the gain? If you practise the Dharma, you will be able to deal with these types of people and as a result, you will start improving, you will start changing, you will start becoming a better person. And therefore, you win the ultimate war, not the small little battles. And after a while, when you practise

enough, that even when people are rude and mean to you, you can still treat them with compassion, you know you are improving on your practice. You know you are going in the right direction and you should be proud without ego, you should be happy, you should rejoice and dedicate the merits that you can increase that positive emotion even more.

So “*When others out of jealousy mistreat me with abuse, slander and so on, may I accept the defeat and offer the victory to them.*” When we listen to it, it is beautiful, we praise it, we touch it to our head, we make offerings and kowtow to it. We kowtow to the people who practise that. We respect the people who talk about that. We respect it, we kowtow to it, we make offerings to it, we make an effort to go listen and learn about it. Why? Because deep down inside we are good human beings and we would like to practise that and we know it is the truth. Deep down inside we know it is correct, it is the truth and therefore, we admire it and praise it and we would like to practise it.

The next step is to *actually* practise it. The next time when you meet someone who is delusional, angersome, hateful, who doesn't want to co-operate, who is difficult, think about the story I told you about Atisha and the monk that scolded him constantly. We should always think about Atisha and that mean old monk. Every time we want to react back, we should think of Atisha. If we can't remember, we should wear a pendant of Atisha and when that emotion arises – flash it! We should get statues of Atisha, make pictures of Atisha and put it in our cars, on our dresser tables, in the living room, in the family room, at work. Especially in traffic, we should have pictures of Atisha to remind us how he treated that monk that abused him so much and how much we should practise. Atisha treated that monk so well – he became enlightened.

Another thing is, any abuse, any unhappiness and any suffering that you get from others: without a cause, there is no effect. So ultimately, you yourself, myself, ourselves, all of us have created the cause to get that, to be in an environment to get that. We have done things in our previous lives and in this life to get that, to receive that. So it's better to receive it with patience and humility, *offer the victory to others, suffer the defeat*, purify that karma, train our minds and advance. Wouldn't that be more beautiful?

These beautiful words – aren't they music to the ears? Every single being on that altar that we bow to embodies that message. We make offerings to them because they embody that quality. So since we so much respect the qualities that these holy Beings embody, doesn't it behove us to try to achieve it?

And how to achieve it? One step at a time: one jealous, abusive, negative, hurtful person at a time. In fact, if you really want to practise the Dharma, you should set up a little stall that says, "Abuse me, slander me, show me disrespect, hurt me; do something to me, please. I want to become a Buddha. Please! I want to be a Bodhisattva. Please, please, please, PLEASE!"

And when someone does, sit there, with a big smile, happy, excited. "Can you come back tomorrow and do it again? Can we make an appointment?" Most of us, when we see it coming, get in a bullet train and scam and beat it and get away...

In fact, every person that abuses us – this is not a psychological mind game – is the result of our negative karma on one hand, and an opportunity to practise on the other. And when they do that to us and we can't offer them victory, it is a metre, like a petrol metre to see how much we have practised or not practised.

So in fact, these beings should be held as rare ones and precious treasures. They are precious treasures because these beings can confer the six paramitas – giving, patience, ethics, enthusiasm, meditative concentration and wisdom – onto us. They allow us that opportunity. They allow us the opportunity to practise and in fact without them we cannot become enlightened as I explained to you all, my friends. It is dependent on all sentient beings that you can gain attainments.

So as I have told you, if there are five billion people on this planet, and you love 4.99999 million and there is one being that really gets on your nerves and you hate him, guess what? You can't get enlightened! You can't become a Buddha. You can't get higher results. You can't get even an ounce of Bodhicitta. Forget ultimate Bodhicitta, not even relative Bodhicitta. Because your Enlightenment depends on them. You need an object to have compassion towards. You need an object to be compassionate, to offer the victory to, to become a Bodhisattva. Your level of Bodhisattvahood depends on them, depends on every single sentient being that exists on this planet and in all worlds.

So how can we not respect the very objects that are pushing us toward Enlightenment? You may think, how ridiculous! Let's take an easier example. You might think, "If there are five hundred people and I love four hundred and ninety-nine, how come one can stop me from Enlightenment?" Because the very fact that you don't like one shows you that you do not have the quality of Enlightenment. Because if you are enlightened, the enlightened state has no hatred or malice, or arrogance or pride. Or hurt...

So if you are uncomfortable with even one, it is not that one that is holding you back; it is your self-centred emotion, your subtle defilements not yet purified. These beings are a precious treasure because they offer you a great opportunity. *"When others out of jealousy*

treat me with abuse, slander and so on” – and that can be applied to all the negative emotions you receive from others – “I will practise accepting defeat and offering the victory to them.”

MEDITATION

What would it be like to have absolutely no need to be right?

To perceive pain and injustice others seem to inflict upon us as purification of harmful separatistic concepts we ourselves have acted from?

How would my body feel?

How would my emotions feel?

How would my heart and mind feel?

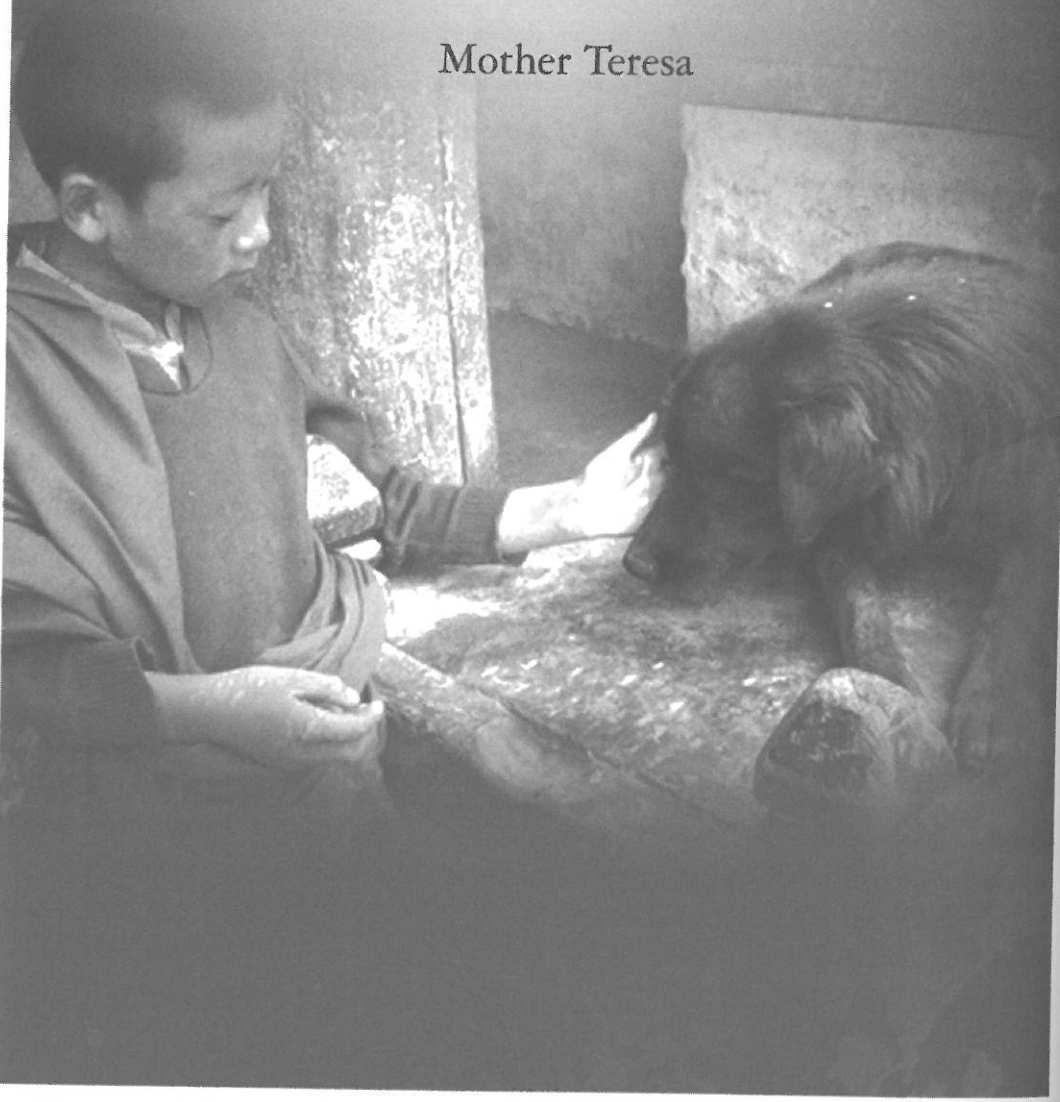
How would I interact with them?

Allow yourself to breathe in these liberating energies and relax within them.

Let them become one with you.

"Like Jesus we belong to the world,
living not for ourselves
but for others."

Mother Teresa



Verse Six

YOUR ENEMY IS THE PROVIDER OF ALL YOUR VIRTUE

When someone I have benefited and in whom
I have placed great trust hurts me very badly,
I will practise seeing that person
as my supreme teacher.

Shantideva tells us that our enemies are the providers of our true virtue. When a person that you have benefited and you have placed great hope in hurts you, it is not that person that has hurt you. It is your wrong intent and wrong motive and wrong projection toward that person that has hurt you.

You have projected onto that person. You have placed a label that, "I have helped them, therefore they have to help me." You have a secret expectation. So it is your projection of how that person should treat you and them not fulfilling that projection that has hurt you, but not that person.

If you don't put wrong projections on other people, you will not suffer. If you accept others as they are, for who they are and what they are without succumbing to projections, you will not be disappointed. The disappointments in life regarding other people are the projections we

put on others – of how we think they should be, how they should act, how they should practise, how they should talk, how they should eat, how they should react and talk to you. And when they don't fulfil that expectation, they are bad. We have to get them back... They are not good...

No! You have received that harm because of your own negative karma, you have created the results, because if that person is truly bad, everybody must see that person or that object as bad. Certainly there are some people who love that person and there are some that hate that person, which means that the love and hate is not intrinsically that person, but your projection of that person.

A simple example: if there is a yellow flower, everybody will see it as yellow unless they are colour blind. So when you see that flower and you see it as yellow, or when you see the beautiful golden pandit hat of Je Rinpoche as yellow, if that object is inherently itself yellow then everybody will see it as yellow. I think everybody will say Je Rinpoche's hat is yellow. But when we see a person and we say they are bad or they are not good or they are good, it is not that they are bad or they are good, it is our projection of that person. And our projection and our view of that person may not always be accurate because we are not filled with compassion, we are not filled with wisdom; we don't have such positive karma to see the true reality of other people or to see their karma.

So when we get disappointed with people, or people supposedly hurt us, it is not that person. And if you react back, it shows your deep ignorance and very strong wrong and negative conditioning, and your negative reaction to your own negative projection. So even if that person is negative – let's pre-suppose and hypothetically say that that person is negative, and they have wronged us – it still does not give us

the permission to wrong them back. So either way we are wrong, either way we collect negative karma. But basically, most sufferings come about from our wrong projection, our expectation of how a situation should be.

We think, “Oh! I have a girlfriend, she’s wonderful, she’s beautiful, she’s fabulous, she’s loyal, she’s honest, she’s hardworking, she’s smart, she’s clean, she’s neat, she’s efficient. She’s beautiful and she’s fabulous, and that’s why I love her.” You get married... she’s a slop, she never cleans up, she takes a bath once a week, she has a bad temper. She won’t wash your socks, you have to do it yourself. And right after you got married she gained 30 kg – surprise! You are disappointed. You are disillusioned. You suddenly find you don’t love her anymore...

The reason why marriages have difficulties and sometimes, unfortunately, fall apart, or relationships between boy and girl do not work out on a worldly term, is because of all the projections we have put on that person and that relationship, and it did not fulfil our projections. We think our wife should be like that, she should be like this, she should act like that, she should act like this. He should be like that, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Okay, she’s *not* like this, she’s *not* like that, so cut it out. Accept her as she *is*. It’s the very projection you put on that person and when they don’t fulfil the projection, you suffer, you cry, you become depressed, lonely. Who is at fault?

Unfortunately, we work and act out of our projections. We feel that person should be nice to us, and if they are not, we abuse them, we fight back, we round up people against them. We have a hate campaign against that person, yet we never win. It shows clearly our negative state of mind, our lack of understanding, our lack of compassion, our

lack of patience and practice, and our lack of realisation of the kindness of enemies, of people that abuse us.

So in fact you should see that person as a great teacher. What type of teacher? Someone who teaches you that you should not act like that. They are giving you a chance to see your state of mind in that condition, in that situation. So we need to stop projecting what we feel and what we want or what we think that person should be, and instead accept them for what they are, who they are and how they are, and if we can accept that and be *with* them, a lot of our problems are solved. If we cannot, and expect this and wish this and want that and that and that, we suffer. We are suffering, and we will continue to suffer.

No one is perfect, no one is wonderful. The conditions for someone to be perfect are impermanent. The conditions for someone to be imperfect are impermanent too – don't be attached to either. Don't be attached to someone who is not nice, and harp on it and think about it and think about the abuse that they have given you, because it is impermanent. They can change; you can change. Hopefully you change before they do. People who are wonderful could become not wonderful, so don't be attached to them; be detached. Detached, knowing that it is impermanent and both situations will stop, will end.

Your projections on those situations will create suffering, and your reaction in response to your projections will increase it even more.

So guess what? Let's start accepting people for what they are and how they are, and have compassion, and if they need help, help them. Sometimes we can help them by just not reacting back and not fighting back. Sometimes we can help them more by not fighting

or reacting back, and just letting it go – even if we have to do it a hundred times – because it helps us. Because if we can do it a hundred times, it shows you we are advancing, we are getting better.

MEDITATION

What would it be like to perceive the deepest hurt as the highest teacher?

To realise that while there is a place in me that can be hurt I am not free of personal motives, and to be grateful to those who in this way invite me to re-discover unconditional freedom and love?

How would my body feel?

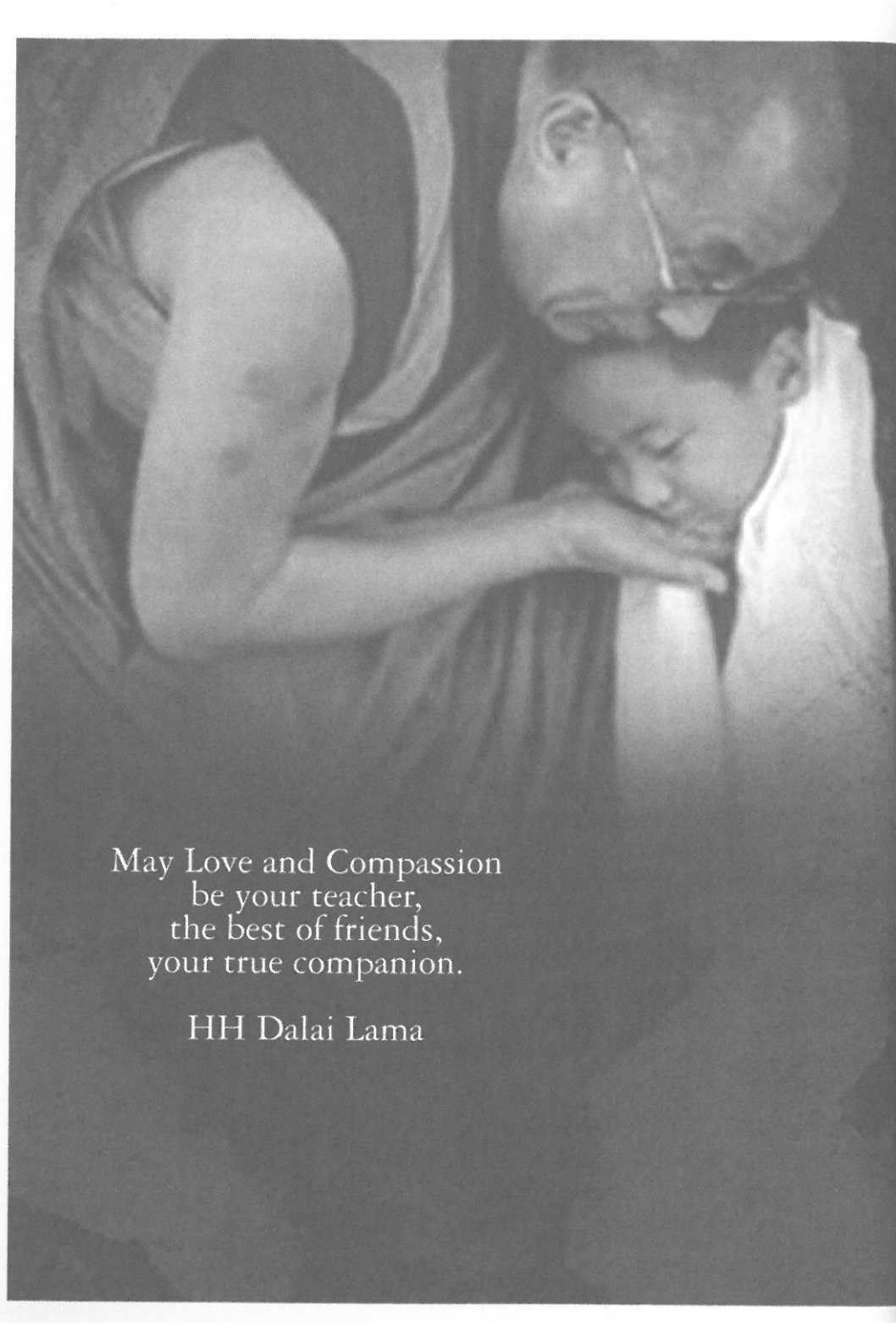
How would my emotions feel?

How would my heart and mind feel?

How would I interact with them?

Allow yourself to breathe in these liberating energies and relax within them.

Let them become one with you.



May Love and Compassion
be your teacher,
the best of friends,
your true companion.

HH Dalai Lama

Verse Seven

GIVING AND TAKING

In short, I will offer directly and indirectly
every benefit and happiness to all beings,
my mothers.

I will practise in secret taking upon myself
all their harmful actions and sufferings.

What is that saying? When your mother, when your beautiful, wonderful, kind and very compassionate mothers conceived you – and in general terms, it is out of great love – the moment they found out that you were in their bodies they loved you, from that moment on. The very thought of you being in their body created happiness. From the minute you kicked, the minute you created discomfort for them, although they were uncomfortable they were happy. They protected you when you were in the womb. They bore the burden of a heavy being in their body for months upon months. They cared for you by not taking extremely cold foods or hot foods. They cared for you in sitting down gently and rising gently; in so many ways so that you, as a little unborn child in their bodies, will not feel physical discomfort.

When it is time for you to be born and before that, how much suffering you create for your mother in the sense of nausea, morning sickness, pains, discomfort... And then when you finally issued forth from your

beautiful, kind, wonderful mothers, how much pain did you cause them? How much unnatural stretching of their bodies did you cause them? How much blood did they lose, how much sweat, how much screaming, how many hours of intense pain? And even with that pain, they still were happy. Some children cause death to their mothers. And yet when the mother is dying, she wants to make sure that her child is alright and well, even with the last dying breath. And the minute the child, that being that has caused so much pain and discomfort for months upon months upon months upon months is issued forth, instead of slapping and kicking and beating and abusing that little evil thing that causes so much trouble and pain, she grabs the child and hugs that child in her fatigue to her breast and loves the child. How kind is the mother.

And then your mother, from the moment you issued forth, voluntarily surrenders her freedom – she has no freedom to sleep, she has no freedom to eat, she has no freedom to beautify herself, she has no freedom to go out. She is at every whim and noise and fuss of that little child. That little child has become the centre of her world and all her energies are focused on that child.

From being awake for twenty-four hours a day, she gets lines under her eyes because of that child. She loses her figure because of that child. She suffers incredible pain and she can even become unhealthy because of that child. She completely loses her freedom. She loses everything that she enjoyed as a young, fresh girl. She will work, she will fight, she will sacrifice her time, her energy, her effort for that child. She will even give up her life for that child if necessary, without a blink of an eye. And when that child is sick, she is worried to no end; when the child is happy she is happier than the child itself. When the child grows up, when the child is successful, when the child is doing good, the mother sincerely, wholeheartedly rejoices for the child. And when

the child falls down or when the child is not successful, the mother suffers incredibly and in some cases goes insane because of her love and great deep compassion for that child.

How kind is the mother. The very flesh on us that we use to do Dharma practice, the very flesh that we have comes from our mother. The very bones and flesh that we have come from our mother. In that respect, women are much greater than men. Incredible! Their bodies are more frail, smaller, more delicate yet they can produce a greater result. (And in Tantra we should respect women and see women as our equal if not better. That is why we have Buddhas like Tara and Vajrayogini and Palden Lhamo. It shows you there is no state of difference between male and female.)

And the kindness of a mother in normal cases is such that you cannot repay it back. And yet, perhaps, because of lack of time and energy due to all her preoccupations with you, your mother does not have Dharma or is not able to practise the Dharma and is ignorant and suffers; she will have to die and take rebirth, maybe even take rebirth in hell. This kind mother that has done so much for you might have to take rebirth in hell or one of the lower realms.

Yes, she may have done things that hurt you. Maybe she has said things that hurt you, maybe she doesn't understand you, maybe you don't have a wonderful relationship with her, but that doesn't deny the fact that everything you have comes from her. So how kind is the mother?

Whatever we do, we can never repay the kindness of a mother – ever! We can give her fifty million dollars but we can still not repay the kindness of that mother to us. All the intensity of her love and her patience and her energy towards us, we can never repay it.

So if she says unkind things to us because of her own delusions from previous lives, we should forgive her. We should, in fact, see it as pleasure and beautiful. We should serve her. We should take care of her. We should watch her in her old age. We should be at her beck and call, and we should treat her as we treat our own Guru, and every moment that we have with our mother is a very precious moment and we should not let it slip by. And if due to our bad karma our mother passed away, we should never forget their kindness and practise the Dharma for them and dedicate it to them – such a kind being that has been so wonderful to you and suffered so much pain and difficulty for you. Can we be so unfilial not to repay their kindness and not to treat them like a queen?

Like that, in your previous lives you had a mother, and the life before that you had a mother. And in some situations, with respect to the mothers in this life, some mothers from previous lives maybe have even sacrificed their lives and given more than your mother of this life. We just cannot remember this time. So in every single life, thousands upon thousands and millions and millions of lifetimes we had a mother that treated us like the mother of this life.

Therefore, in Mahayana Buddhism, we say “all mother sentient beings” or “all mothers”. It doesn’t mean that these four monks sitting here are my mothers. It doesn’t mean that everybody is my mother. It means that at one time or another, every single sentient being has been your mother and has treated you in such a way, and don’t you think you should repay that kindness? Whether it was done in this life or a previous life, it was done to *you*. You got the benefit, that’s why you are here today. Don’t you think you should repay their kindness?

Therefore, in Mahayana Buddhism, the first step to developing Bodhicitta is the recognition that all sentient beings have been your mothers, on that logical basis.

And therefore, if all mother beings – some of them are in hell, some of them are in the spirit world realms, some of them are animals, some of them are in desperate human situations, some are all around you, some in the god realms – are taking rebirth and suffering again and again in samsara, how can you, an unfilial child, let your mothers suffer? Recognising that is the first step towards achieving Bodhicitta.

“In short, may I do whatever I can to directly and indirectly help my mothers. May I offer all the benefit to them and take their sufferings; openly and secretly, may I endure suffering for my mothers who have been so kind to me. May I secretly take upon all mother sentient beings’ sufferings and pain.” We should pray for that quality. We should want that quality, yearn for it, make offerings for it, meditate on it, meditate for it, recite mantras, do retreat for it. Go to our Gurus for it, receive teachings for it. We should make donations and do whatever beautiful charity works that everybody has been doing for that purpose and that purpose alone: to repay the kindness of mother sentient beings. How to repay them? Not simply to give food, clothing, shelter and medicine but to give them the complete method to be free from samsara. And the only way you can do that is by becoming an enlightened Being for their sake.

“For the sake of all mother sentient beings I will listen to the Dharma, so that I will learn the methods and I can practise and I can become an enlightened Being to repay their kindness. For the sake of all mother sentient beings, I will make offerings; for the sake of all mother sentient beings, I will support the beautiful Dharma centres and from the merit that I receive, may I become a Buddha to benefit my mothers. I will practise patience for my mothers. I will meditate and do mantras for my mothers.”

When your motivation is that you will do Dharma practice, help Dharma centres, assist others and so on, so that you can repay the kindness of others, you will not be disappointed easily when you meet harsh people, you will not be disappointed easily if you do not get results quickly, you will not be disappointed easily if something goes wrong, but you will be able to endure it. We can definitely endure a lot of pain and problems for our mothers today, remembering their kindness. So what is the difference between our mother of this life and previous lives?

And there's a very strong chance that the beings around you will be your mothers again. Because like H_2O cells – water cells, evaporation, cumulus clouds, precipitations, hail, snow, rain, the collection of a water body and again evaporation – it is the same H_2O cells in a cycle. There is not one new H_2O cell in the world. Like that, there is not one new sentient being in this world. It is the same ones that you will be meeting again and again and again. So doesn't it behove us to remember their kindness of the past and of the present, and the kindness that they will display in the future?

So every action we do, the motive should be *for all mother sentient beings*. And when you do that, you are practising the Dharma and you are on the way to Buddhahood. Every single Buddha acts out of that compassion, out of that thought, spontaneously, effortlessly, constantly, because they have been conditioned and trained. For that, they have removed the causes that prevent that.

So we should wake up in the morning and think, "How can I benefit mother sentient beings?" Before we go to sleep, we should think, "How have I benefited others?" And every single day we should put that into our heart stronger and stronger: "I will do everything for the sake of other sentient beings. I will be able to endure for others." You will see

your mental strength grow, you will see your perseverance grow, you will see your enthusiasm grow. You will see yourself become stable and steady, and that's what we want.

So the motive for anything we do in Dharma should not be the eight worldly concerns, (Yes! It's that crazy monk talking about the eight worldly concerns again...) and we should work and do actions not for the centre, not for our Gurus, not for friends, not for reputation, not for karma, not for ourselves. We should do it for the sake of sentient beings.

"I will help the Dharma centres for the sake of all sentient beings. I will listen to the Dharma for the sake of all sentient beings. I will practise Dharma for the sake of all sentient beings. I will meditate, do mantras, do retreats, go to holy places, I will work and then draw pain and I will put up and show patience to people that hurt me and damaged me and situations that bothered me for the sake of all mother sentient beings." Why? In short, because you wish to become a Buddha to repay their kindness – to give them the ultimate way to come out of suffering. The only way is to develop those qualities, and the only way to develop those qualities is to come across the situations that help you develop those qualities.

So are not sentient beings so precious? The Buddha said, you should respect sentient beings fifty percent and respect the Buddhas fifty percent. The respect you accord to sentient beings and to the Buddhas is equal because without the Buddhas you cannot become enlightened, and without sentient beings you cannot become enlightened. So if you have a Buddha teaching you compassion all the time and you don't have anywhere to practise it, you cannot become enlightened.

Fifty-fifty, it says clearly. You are fifty percent dependent upon the Buddhas for Enlightenment, for their teachings, for their inspirations, for their blessings and so on, as the merit field, and you are fifty percent dependent on other sentient beings, especially the ones that you revile, that you do not like.

So if for the sake of all mother sentient beings we do our sadhana or any Dharma action, we will not become disappointed easily, we will not become upset easily, we will not give up easily. We will in fact practise harder and harder and more and more, and therefore, in time, we are able to endure more, and mentally we become stronger and better and more beneficial. That will be the result of this practice.

When you practise Dharma and then experience negative things, it is a very, very good sign. It means your karma is being purified quickly. You have to purify the karma sooner or later – it's better to purify now and get it over with and get it finished. If you have to purify later, the karma will increase.

For example, if you have the karma to wear a coat and you wear it in Alaska or where it is very cold, it is very beneficial. If you wear a coat at 1pm in the afternoon, walking around in Malaysia, the karma is still to get a coat – wearing it is the same, karma is the same, coat is the same but environmentally it is different. So if you have a lot of negative karma and you suffer that karma here, because the environment is easier the sufferings will be less, although the karma is the same. Whereas if you keep the karma and you hold it for later and it manifests in another environment it will be more severe.

If you have the karma to get sick, try to purify it before it happens, to lessen and mitigate the results. If you have the karma to get sick here in Malaysia where everything is modern and there are good hospitals and

there are twenty-four hour clinics, it's very easy. Whereas if you get sick somewhere in the Sahara desert, what are you going to do? The karma to get sick is there, the manifestation of the karma is there – you have to get sick. You suffer the same thing, but the place or the conditions or the environment in which the karma manifests is very important.

Therefore, while you are practising the Dharma, don't have wrong view that you should not get sick, you should get well, you should not have poverty, you should not suffer, have problems and mental difficulties. You should not think like that because the very fact that you are practising Dharma and these things are manifesting is a very, very good sign. It's better to suffer sickness, ill health, depression and unhappiness here where you have relatives, friends and Dharma brothers and sisters to talk to you, and you have your Guru to consult.

When you practise the Dharma deeply and well and many negative things happen, they were going to happen anyway but it's good they happened early. It has finished off and, in fact, when you practise the Dharma and negative things happen, ninety-nine percent of the time you can be sure that its effects are much lessened, compared to if it happened with you *not* practising the Dharma.

If you do a lot of mantras on Je Tsongkhapa and pray to Je Tsongkhapa to purify your karma, maybe you were supposed to have a car accident, so when you pray very hard and if you do meditation correctly and you do the prayers well to Je Tsongkhapa, maybe you still have the car accident but you come out unharmed or slightly scratched. If you meditate even more and further, maybe you don't even have the car accident but you *dream* that you have a car accident and in that dream you suffer tremendously; you suffer all the emotions, anguish, pain,

fear of death, fear of loss of your loved ones, relatives and separation. You suffer tremendously in the dream.

What's the difference, suffering in real life or in a dream? The suffering is the same, the difference is that the karma is purified without physical effect.

Therefore, when you practise the Dharma, when you do pujas, when you do prayers and meditations, when you make offerings, when you serve your Gurus, when you serve the Sangha, it is meant to purify the negative karma and collect positive karma. So when we are doing Dharma practices and sufferings and problems come along, a great practitioner – one that understands the Dharma with wisdom – is happy. When real Dharma practitioners have sickness, are uncomfortable, tired, exhausted, thirsty, hungry, maybe they are in pain, yet they will be able to endure any type of hardship happily and easily. Although they endure these problems, they do not suffer. That's the difference: *they do not suffer*.

We endure pain with suffering because we are attached to ego. When we are attached to ego, we don't want to have suffering; we are selfish. We don't care if other people have it – *we* don't want it. Whereas if you endure pain without attachment, you can endure it; you don't suffer. In fact, the very pain that you have increases your happiness. How? You are accepting the pain, the problems and the difficulties for the sake of others.

So if someone were to say, "If you sacrifice your life, a thousand people will be saved", most of us say "Yes I'm scared, but I can." If we were to suffer for only one person, we'll think about it. Like that, when we suffer for the Dharma, we suffer for others. We can endure hunger, thirst, sickness and ill-health, unhappiness, criticism, back-biting, we

can endure people who go against us, who do not want co-operation, endure financial or physical problems. When we can endure those kinds of things for the sake of the Dharma, for the sake of others, the very karma that made us have those sufferings becomes purified in the process. And by being happy about it and accepting it, you do not create further karma for that to happen in the future.

When we do Dharma practices and we have difficulties and problems, we should try to develop the mind that can take the problems, that can feel the problems, take them and accept them. So in fact, when we practise the Dharma, we are able to purify the problem simultaneously while we are dealing with it.

The incredible thing about suffering with or without Dharma is that with Dharma, you purify your karma while you are suffering. Whereas without Dharma, while you are suffering the negative results of karma, you create further ones by reacting back negatively.

For example, if someone criticises you by saying “Oh, you are not a good Dharma practitioner” or “You don’t know how to chant nicely,” it hurts, it has pain, but definitely that pain and hurt has a cause, you have created the cause, you have said that or done that to someone else in the past. Maybe it was not the same exact words but the intent was the same. When you receive it back and understand it is from your own karma, you accept it with responsibility and you don’t fight back. You keep quiet and contemplate. Then while you’re suffering, you also purify the karma to have received that, and you do not create further karma to get more.

If you don’t have Dharma and someone criticises you and says something about you, don’t you fight back? Don’t you defend yourself by saying, “No, I’m not like that, my motive is not like that, my thinking is not

like that?" People explaining themselves a lot is a sign of very heavy ego, a very subtle, strong ego. It's self-grasping because they want people to know that they are right, that they are correct, that they are good and that they are better than you.

Explain when we are asked – explain gently and explain with good words and explain without gossip and back-biting. It's very important, because when someone talks negatively about us and we go around explaining to everybody, our real intent is to let them know that we are right and they are wrong. In that process, we collect even more negative karma to be even more misunderstood (and the very purpose for us to explain is to be understood – isn't that just a terrible irony?).

So, in fact, as Dharma practitioners, we should be able to be happy to endure sufferings for others. We should develop a mind that we can suffer for others, bear difficulties to benefit others, bear problems for the benefit of others. If they criticise you, if they say negative things about you, even if they try to threaten you, if they hurt you, if they try to defame you, let them, don't fight back, don't harm back because two wrongs do not make a right.

As a Dharma practitioner who believes in the Three Jewels, one should definitely "accept the defeat and offer the victory to others". And in the beginning, when we do that initially, some people might try to take advantage of us, but in the end everybody will understand our motive and intention, and we will be loved and be liked and protected by others.

There were many people who tried to take advantage even of Lord Buddha, like his evil cousin Devadatta. Buddha never reacted back. Whether we react back negatively or not is whether we understand and practise the Dharma or not. We don't need to practise deep, long

Dharma. We don't have to make silly excuses that we are new, but knowing this phrase "offer the victory to others and accept the defeat" is very powerful and in that, we develop mental strength, mental capacity and mental forbearance to be able to take upon ourselves the sufferings of others. When we are able to do that, we are entering the Bodhisattva path, the path of becoming a Bodhisattva, a Buddha.

And it all starts from this moment, this time. We think, "May I accept the defeat and offer the victory to others" and the first person we can start with is our Guru, the one that gives us teachings, the one that is compassionate to us, the one that cares about us, the one that gives us the holy method to become a Buddha to be free from suffering. His or her knowledge, his compassion, her wisdom, her knowledge is much greater than your worldly knowledge, your worldly achievements and your worldly plans, much greater. We should have due respect for their knowledge, compassion and their love. Although we may scorn and say negative things and go against our teachers, our teachers will always be there for us, will always have compassion for us and will always be ready to accept us. Doesn't that show us something?

We should learn to endure pain, suffering, unhappiness, difficulties, problems, disasters, with the realisation that they are the results from our karma and that we are doing it for others. We should be able to endure that difficulty for others. We should develop that mind whether we are religious or we are not religious. Whoever you are, that thought will benefit you in your life. That thought is good for you as a human being so don't think this is a Buddhist thought. This is a thought that is the truth.

Truth is One.

Buddhism expresses the truth in one way. Islam or Hinduism may express the truth in another way, but all is the truth. So with respect to all religious traditions that speak the truth – bear suffering for others, bear difficulties for others. Be able to put up with pain for others, until you reach the point where you actually meditate and suffer for others, take the suffering upon you and suffer for them secretly, without them knowing. Then you become a Bodhisattva.

So we must develop that type of mind, we must develop that type of strength, we must develop that type of capacity. Suffer for others, take pain for others, be able to bear the negative comments from others, be able to bear malicious talk from others, be able to bear bad thought or bad talking from others. Have compassion for those people who do these things to you. They are victims just like you. I am sure you have done that at one point in your lives, with respect to all of you.

When we did it, we did it out of ignorance. Now that we have the Dharma, we don't do it anymore. Like that, many people don't have the Dharma, or have bad karma not to practise the Dharma well. Therefore, by the force of their bad karma they have no choice but to do these kind of negative actions. So how can we add more wood to the fire and burn up the fire more by fighting back? They are already suffering. They are already collecting so much bad karma by doing this, why add to it and have them do more? Why contribute to their suffering? Why contribute to their problems and to their anger? It won't stop your anger, it won't solve your problem, it won't solve your unhappiness.

Forgive them and let go. In surrendering and letting go – forgiving – you gain mental strength. You will be able to deal with even bigger and vaster difficulties. That is a Bodhisattva's ideal way of thinking. We should encourage other people towards good thinking, positive thinking.

So when you have difficult people who are overwhelmed by suffering and depression and negative karma – they talk a lot, they create skepticism, they have big mouths, they gossip, they slander, they're rude – treasure them. Don't push them away. Have compassion for them, keep them near you and help them. Help them in any way you can – help them emotionally, help them materially because if you don't help them, what Dharma are you practising? Are you more desperate than them?

I am trying to do that in my life. I have some people that disturb me very much, back-biting against me. I try my best to show compassion to them, to humble myself to them and to let them win, I really try that. Sometimes I am successful, sometimes I'm not because I'm not a Buddha but I am getting more and more successful. Maybe that comes from maturity, learning, understanding, praying and collecting more merits or simply surrendering to my Guru, saying he is correct and I'm not; sometimes it's as simple as that.

So I have people too that disturb me, yes, and I don't hate them. I try not to think bad thoughts about them and when they come and see me, I try to be very kind to them and I don't try to be artificial in my plans. I really try to develop this feeling towards them and then when I've conquered, by compassion, this one person that has harmed me, I can go on to the next one and the next one. And then it becomes easier and easier and easier, until I reach the point where they don't disturb me anymore.

"I will take their sufferings upon myself". There are no mantras, there are no miracles, there are no meditations – it's good old simple hard work but it's worth it. If you do it, it's the same situation. If you don't do it, it's the same situation so it's better to experience it, grow from it, improve from it and become better from it than just to experience it, react negatively and never grow from it. I think that is very, very important.

Please hold people who disturb you and create problems and difficulties with compassion; keep them near you. "Near you" doesn't mean you have to keep them on your shoulders and carry them everywhere. "Near you" means in your heart. Help them. Never be tired of helping them. The Buddha is never tired of helping us, our Gurus are never tired of putting up with us, so we should be just as courageous to put up with them and help them materially, financially, emotionally, with food, by making them comfortable. Remember Atisha and that monk?

Please don't let these teachings remain here, and when we leave and when the time is over, we go back to our old selves. With all due respect (I don't mean to say you are so bad), please let's not go back to our old selves and our old ways and our old habits and thinking. Please think about this, let it enter your heart, accept it and practise it. Not when you are in a good mood, not when you have a good business deal, not when you have money in the bank, not when you have harmony, not when you've had your supper, not when you are healthy. Now, immediately! And you'll experience the change.

In this verse we find the culmination of compassion, where it merges and becomes inseparable from wisdom. Shantideva stated that without wisdom there can be no true compassion. Bodhisattvas spontaneously help anyone because for them there is no "other", no separation, no duality. Every pain of every being is felt as their own, yet welcomed with open arms and without personal suffering. It is the most beautiful and inconceivable mystery and at the same time nothing could be more natural. It is the never-ending miracle of love, and Bodhisattvas *are* this miracle and nothing else.*

MEDITATION

What would it be like to be so free — so everything, so nothing — as to be able to give all my happiness and everything good constantly to everyone, while absorbing all their pain and difficulties with the greatest joy?

To perceive every being as so close to me that to wish them the highest good becomes spontaneous, and their suffering becomes so unbearable to me that I pray for it to come to me instead?

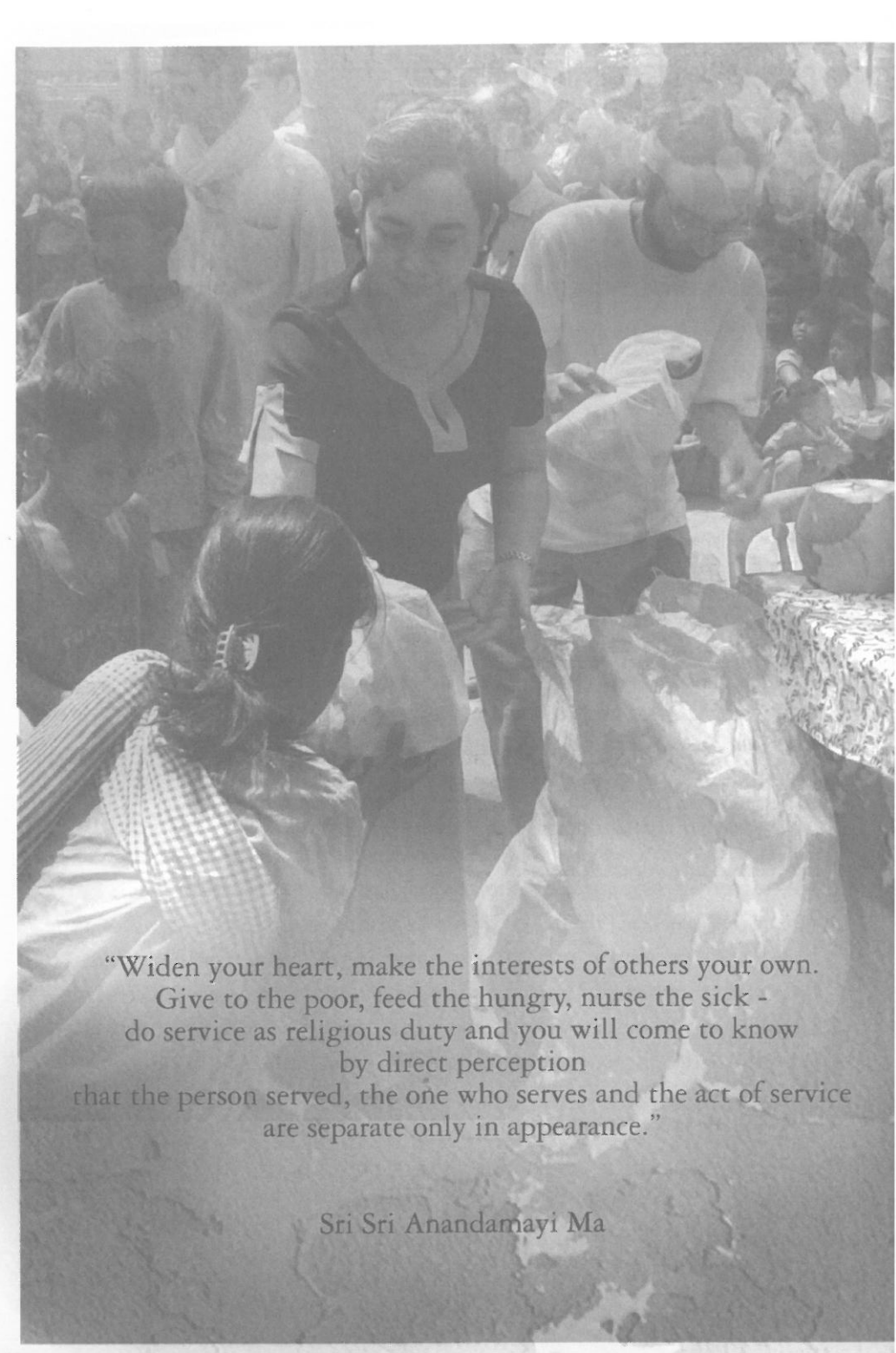
How would my body feel?

How would my emotions feel?

How would my heart and mind feel?

How would I interact with them?

Allow yourself to breathe in these liberating energies and relax within them. Let them become one with you.



“Widen your heart, make the interests of others your own.

Give to the poor, feed the hungry, nurse the sick -
do service as religious duty and you will come to know
by direct perception
that the person served, the one who serves and the act of service
are separate only in appearance.”

Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma

Verse Eight

FREEDOM

Without these practices being defiled
by the stains of the eight worldly concerns,
by perceiving all phenomena as illusory,
I will practise without grasping to release all beings
from the bondage of the disturbing unsubdued mind and karma.

The practical secret here is to stop distinguishing between pleasant and unpleasant. By perceiving all phenomena as illusory, by realising their dreamlike, fleeting nature, we come to see that everything (and no-thing) is really the same. Nothing is good or bad in itself. It is the labels we attach to it; our projections that seem to make it wonderful or horrible.

Being aware of the ultimately empty, illusory, transitory nature of all phenomena empowers us to be free from attachment and aversion. We should apply this view to our entire life, including our spiritual practice. The Masters urge us to be free of subject, object and act. The one who meditates (subject), the enlightened Being meditated on (object) and the act of meditation are not separate, but a totality. At the same time, each is empty from their own side.

This should become our on-going meditation.

“Empty of inherent existence” doesn’t mean that nothing matters and we become indifferent to the pain and needs of others! It is no coincidence that seven of eight verses help us to relinquish self-grasping and self-cherishing tendencies by cultivating great compassion – relative Bodhicitta – which leads to their complete dismantling through profound insight into the nature of reality, as described in this eighth and last verse which points out wisdom, or absolute Bodhicitta. If we practise correctly – free from the extremes of eternalism and nihilism – the opposite of indifference happens: when grasping ceases and wisdom dawns, we become total availability. Non-dual love and compassion reveal themselves as natural expressions of the pristine clarity of this unconditioned awareness. Being finally free of agendas, therefore directly seeing into the heart of each moment, life becomes an ongoing, elegantly flowing creative play and prayer in service of the Great Awakening of all beings without exception.

Nagarjuna stated that “samsara and nirvana lack even an atom of true existence, while cause and effect and dependent arising are unfailing.” To reconcile this apparent paradox, to profoundly realise that “these two are complementary, not contradictory”, is what is called the Middle Way. Relative and absolute truth, interconnectedness and emptiness, compassion and wisdom are inseparably intertwined, support each other, depend on each other. Truth is One, as Je Tsongkhapa has made visible with brilliant wonderful clarity.

This concludes the eight transformations. These teachings are sacred. These teachings are holy. As coming from an unrealised monk that sincerely believes in these teachings that I have received from the correct source and the correct Guru, I invoke the blessings of His Holiness, Avalokiteshvara, Chenrezig Tenzin Gyatso, The Dalai Lama, that this teaching may go into your hearts and go straight into the centre of your minds and that you will practise it from this moment onward.

If you practise this and nothing else – and you can check this with His Holiness – you can get enlightened. And you don't need any commitments, except those mentioned in the Eight Verses. If you practise this, all of the eighty-four thousand teachings of Buddha Sakyamuni that He taught for over forty-one years of His holy life, are included in these eight verses.

Please don't chase after mantras, holy places, exotic Gurus with wonderful hats. Don't chase after wonder-Gurus that come from exotic places, that are emanations of deities you can't even recognise, with so many arms, faces and colours they drive you crazy... Don't chase after exotic temples and exotic initiations and empowerments. Don't chase after exotic rituals and pujas because none of that can remove your sufferings and none of that can give you happiness. Only the *Eight Verses of Mind Transformation* and their practice will give you this. Every single practice and meditation, every single method that the Buddha has given you is an extension and elaboration of the *Eight Verses of Mind Transformation*. So if Mind Transformation, Mind Training is not practised in some way, shape or form, you will definitely not gain results.

We can even condense it all into eight small lines:

All beings are infinitely precious.
 Practise the humility of a pure view.
 Always check the mind.
 Be grateful for difficult situations.
 Let others win.
 True love is unconditional.
 Give all joy, take all pain.
 Appearances are like a dream – wake up!

This is the complete path of the Buddha right here.

These eight short lines are a condensed form of the Eight Verses and these eight verses are the condensed *Bodhicharyavatara* (the extended form is the Buddha's complete teachings on compassion).

So these seven little simple lines are the complete teachings of Lord Buddha on compassion and the last line is our wisdom. All the teachings are there. I beg you, I implore you and I ask you, if you really wish to practise the Dharma, read these everyday.

I know you have millions of sadhanas and millions of deities and meditational retreats that you have to do. But can I ask you one simple question, with deep respect and no malice intended: have those exotic deities given you any results? Have those exotic mantras and secret initiations brought you any results? Have you become kinder? If you haven't, you should go back to the basics because these basics are what make those deities. Please stop running after all types of exotic Lamas, me included. Stop running after ego-pleasing Dharma practice. Please follow your Guru's advice and practise the Dharma.

The place you practise the *Eight Verses of Mind Transformation* is the best pilgrimage. The best offering you can make to your Guru is to accomplish these eight thoughts and the best temple is where this is taught and practised. The best centre is the place where this is taught and practised. The best people are the ones that accomplish this.

All Buddhas were born of these teachings. They are being created now from these teachings and will be born from them in the future. Hold these teachings sacredly. Frame them, re-type them, decorate them, put flowers around them. Make offerings to these teachings because they are the Buddha's essence in words. Practise them, memorise them, commit them to heart. Recite them everyday and when certain situations come, I guarantee you one of them will pop into your head

and you will be able to control yourself. If you practise nothing else, if you don't want anything else at all, this is enough. If you practise this, you will gain Enlightenment.

I am happy to share these wonderful teachings with you that I received from His Holiness. I don't dare say teach you but I say *share* these teachings with you. We are all Dharma brothers and sisters. We are all on the same level, and we are all in samsara together so we can share what we have with each other, and that's the most important thing...

even a simple prayer...

With the thought of attaining Enlightenment
for the welfare of all beings
who are more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel,
I will constantly practise holding them dear.

Whenever I am with others, I will practise
seeing myself as the lowest of all
and from the very depths of my heart
I will respectfully hold others as supreme.

In all actions I will examine my mind
and the moment a disturbing attitude arises,
endangering myself or others,
I will firmly confront and avert it.

Whenever I meet a person of bad nature,
overwhelmed by negative energy and intense suffering,
I will hold such a rare one dear
as if I've found a precious treasure.

When others out of jealousy
mistreat me with abuse, slander and so on,
I will practise accepting defeat
and offering the victory to them.

When someone I have benefited and in whom
I have placed great trust hurts me very badly,
I will practise seeing that person
as my supreme teacher.

In short, I will offer directly and indirectly
every benefit and happiness to all beings, my mothers.

I will practise in secret taking upon myself
all their harmful actions and sufferings.

Without these practices being defiled
by the stains of the eight worldly concerns,
by perceiving all phenomena as illusory,

I will practise without grasping to release all beings
from the bondage of the disturbing unsubdued mind and karma.

WISDOM

meditation on impermanence



MAY I REMEMBER MY GURU'S INSTRUCTIONS

“When the doctor gives up on me,
 when rituals and pujas no longer work,
 when friends have given up hope for my life,
 when anything I do is futile,
 may I be blessed to remember
 my Guru's instructions.”

These words of the great Panchen Lama sum up the total motive and reason to practise the Dharma.

What is he talking about? In the beginning, in the middle and finally in the end, nothing matters except for our Guru's instructions. And what is our Guru's instruction? To practise the Dharma. What exactly is practising the Dharma? To practise the Dharma is transforming our mind from negative states of affliction and emotion to positive states as much as we can.

Death is very near. Death is very soon. Life, time, energy is going by so fast and passing by so fast it's almost unaccountable. But is the time passing by with Dharma or without Dharma? And when I say that, we must look even deeper. When I say with or without Dharma, it means with transformation or without transformation?

If we are stuck on mantras, rituals, prayers, if we are stuck on meditations, teachings, retreats, if we are stuck on visiting holy places yet the mind never ever changes, we have to examine why. We have to check, *why?* We have to check why and we have to check it immediately, we must not delay, and we must not be comfortable in that we are not changing and transforming. This is very, very important.

We should practise the Dharma in order to become a fully enlightened Being, to be of utmost benefit to others and ourselves. You will continuously create positive actions if you are free of the eight worldly concerns and remember death at all times. If you don't remember death, you will constantly create more negative karma and become more unsuitable for liberation. At the time of death, you will feel intense regret at having wasted your precious opportunity.

Death is certain. No power in the universe can stop your death. Every person that has been born has died. Even the Buddha himself had to die. Within eighty years time, every single person hearing or reading this will be dead, so what will matter at that time that is completely uncertain? Blindly, ignorantly, delusionally and out of great conditioning we make plans, but actually there are no plans to make. Because the plans are not in our hands.

Secret mountains and caves, forests, huge sky-scrapers and vaults and bullet-proof glass cannot protect us from death. There is nowhere to hide.

From the time we are born, from the moment we spring from our kind mothers, we are racing towards death. It's like a bullet train that never stops.

There are no stops, there is only a destination. Every breath is getting closer to death. Some people avoid this subject and avoid the truth, thinking that by not facing it, it will not happen.

Imagine, out of the seventy years that we are basically alive, half of it we spend sleeping. The other half is spent working, eating, quarrelling, shopping, traveling, watching television. Very little time is spent on Dharma. And even the very little time that we spend on Dharma, is it

really Dharma? That's how rare and precious Dharma is.

When we are young, we put off our Dharma practice until we are stable in life and we have some wealth. When we are middle-aged, we get distracted; every week we're signing another contract and thinking, "After that one, I will practise the Dharma." When we get older, we look back and regret and look at all the practices that we could have done and did not...

Age is no guarantee. Children or young people often die before older people. Health is no guarantee. Healthy people die before sick people. The very things that are meant to keep us alive can become conditions that actually kill us, like food, housing, or medicine. In general, huge trees, forests, mountains, planets all can be destroyed, and they are so strong and big and solid. And our bodies are so fragile. Near and dear ones give rise to attachment and pain; no one can share our experience of death.

If you remember death, your Dharma practice becomes pure, your Dharma actions become powerful and effective, beneficial in the beginning, beneficial in the middle and beneficial at the end, and in the hour of death you will go with satisfaction, knowing you have spent your life meaningfully. We should be more worried about what's going to happen after death than before death.

"When doctors give up on me, when rituals no longer work, when friends have given up hope for my life, when anything I do is futile, may I be blessed to remember my Guru's instructions" – how incredibly deep.

So when we attend Dharma talks, read this book now or do any Dharma activities however minor, we should develop good motivation and constantly propel ourselves to be free of worldly concerns,

contemplating on death and impermanence as I have described just now. And afterwards, do not go back to your old ways; do not go back to your old habits. Do not think "That monk is a great actor, he was a great joker, he made us laugh – when is the next show?"

We must contemplate, we must remain silent and not go back to our old ways, not start gossiping, not start talking, not start putting other people down, getting angry, fighting. We should take courage and make a difference and practise it immediately, this moment and not let it degenerate, but let it excel and grow.

"This human form endowed with freedom,
 more valuable than a wish-granting gem
 obtained only this once,
 is difficult to acquire, is easily lost,
 passing like a flash of lightning in the sky.
 Remembering this and understanding
 that all worldly activities are like husks,
 at all times, day and night,
 you must try to take advantage
 of its essential significance.
 I, a yogi, have practised in this way,
 you, o liberation seekers
 should do likewise",

Je Tsongkhapa urges us.
 May his kindness be our guide.

This is the essence of the Buddha's teachings.

May we gain Bodhicitta and realisation of emptiness –
and by that may we gain full Enlightenment.

And when we gain full Enlightenment
we don't run to Amitabha Heaven,
get on a nice red couch and relax
and sleep and just be free and happy,
but come back again and again
to serve sentient beings until the end of time.

Until the last sentient being
is finished with suffering,
may I continue to take rebirth again
and again and again to benefit others.

Please pray like that and the power will come.



APPENDIX

EXCHANGING “SELF” AND “OTHER”

Tonglen – giving and taking



“Giving and taking” (*Tonglen* in Tibetan) is a supremely powerful method to generate deep closeness with oneself and others while at the same time attacking the roots of the self-grasping and self-cherishing mind. For a long time Tonglen has only been taught to the most advanced practitioners. During Geshe Chekawa’s time it became known as the “Dharma of lepers”, because many lepers found their illness cured through this practice.

We calm our body and mind and take refuge in the enlightened Ones. We remember our truest wish – the unchanging happiness of every living being. Then we start breathing in others’ pain and difficulties through the right nostril, visualised as black smoke that enters our heart, completely shattering our self-cherishing mind. The black smoke dissolves simultaneously with our ego. Now, through our left nostril, we breathe out the pure white light of the holiest love and wisdom we can conceive of, seeing and feeling how it fills and heals and transforms all beings until they are in a state of lasting happiness and free of any type of suffering, appearing as female and male Buddhas.

It is recommended to start by visualising and practising with someone close to us (this can be ourselves; for most of us this is very important), whose pain to see we can hardly bear. Later we move on to someone neutral and finally to someone we dislike or hate. We gradually expand our practice to include all living beings.

We can elaborate the visualisation or simplify it; whatever works to open ourselves to a direct, intimate and transforming experience. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has stated that we can also simply breathe in others' pain and send them happiness without any visualisation. In this way, we can practise anywhere and anytime.

As beginners, we give and take indirectly, through visualisation, but with sincere motivation and deep faith nothing is impossible, and one day we can be like the great Masters who radiate blessings and absorb sufferings and karma directly, by simply being present. Since they have gone far beyond any concern for themselves, they are constantly and spontaneously filled with blissful compassion and the fervent longing to serve all beings in realising their Buddha-nature.

GLOSSARY



BODHICHARYAVATARA – considered by many realised Masters as one of the most enlightening texts of all time. An ideal companion for the book you are just reading. Sanskrit for “the way of the Bodhisattva”, containing Shantideva’s teachings on how to activate and cultivate

BODHICITTA – the altruistic determination to attain Enlightenment in order to free all beings from suffering. In India and Tibet there were two methods mainly practised to attain it. One focuses on developing loving kindness towards all (recognising all beings as having been our mothers, remembering their kindness and determining to bringing them great benefit), the other on exchanging oneself with others. Je Tsongkhapa in his spiritual genius combined the two. Just like the other holy faultless Tibetan traditions of Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu have their very special extraordinary methods, this particularly powerful way of developing Bodhicitta is one of the wonders of the Gelugpa school of Buddhism.

BODHISATTVA – who dedicates every breath to attaining Buddhahood as directly as possible, so as to liberate every living being as well.

BOMOH – sorcerer

DHANA – offerings to spiritual teachers and communities

DHARMA – the actual object of refuge; enlightening teachings that inspire the correct conduct to realise them.

GREAT AWAKENING – Enlightenment

GURU, LAMA – our spiritual teacher that guides us, life after life if necessary, all the way to Enlightenment.

GURU DEVOTION – the most direct way to the final surrendering of our dualistic self-grasping mind which is the source of all confusion and unhappiness, and therefore the quickest way to Enlightenment.

JE RINPOCHE – Mahasiddha Je Tsongkhapa, embodying Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri and Vajrapani, the Buddhas of compassion, wisdom and power. Founder of the Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism.

KOWTOW – bow, pay respect and also prostration.

LAMRIM – Je Tsongkhapa's miraculous feat of clearly showing the entire path to Enlightenment. One of the most important texts one could ever study.

LOJONG – Mind Training. Traditional term for the practices described in this book.

LOWER REALMS – animal realm: beings who live in fear of being eaten by another, cannot speak and cannot activate their Buddha-nature; hungry ghost realm: beings who suffer from extreme hunger and thirst; hell realms: beings who suffer from extreme hot or cold. Strong grasping, greed and hatred propel us there unless we cultivate selflessness and realise our Buddha-nature.

MAHAYANA – the great vehicle. Practising Dharma with the vast aim of benefiting all beings.

MANDALA – symbolic representation of the universe visualised as Buddha Land. Offered to one's spiritual Master or a Buddha as the best we have to give.

MEDITATIONAL DEITY PRACTICE – connecting via visualisation, prayers and mantras with a Buddha one has a special affinity to. “Downloading” their holy qualities into our system to activate our corresponding holy potential.

MERITS – positive spiritual energy that is needed to activate our enlightened potential.

NAGARJUNA – propounder of the supremely sublime Middle Way philosophy.

OM MANI PADME HUM (pronounced om mani peme hung) – Mantra, the spiritual energy of the Buddha of enlightened compassion, Avalokiteshvara (Sanskrit), Chenrezig (Tibetan), Kuan Yin (Chinese), in the form of sound.

PALDEN LHAMO – female Dharma Protector.

PANDITA – Sanskrit for scholar. Someone highly accomplished in dharmic studies.

PROFOUND INSIGHT – wisdom; seeing phenomena's actual mode of existence.

PROSTRATIONS – they purify negative physical karma and advocate humility. A very profound and important Buddhist practice.

PUJA – liturgy; a set of prayers and mantras performed to clear obstacles and invoke the blessings of enlightened Beings.

SHANTIDEVA – Sanskrit for “god of peace” – enlightened Master from Nalanda Monastery in ancient India.

TANTRA – swift profound practices by which Enlightenment can be attained within one short lifetime.

TARA – the swift saviouress; female Buddha of fearless enlightened activity.

VAJRASATTVA – Buddha of original purity.

VAJRAYOGINI – the union of bliss and emptiness in ecstatic wrathful female form. Her practice contains the essence of all Tantras and is supremely powerful in our times.

YIDAM – meditational deity to whom one has a special affinity.



The heart of Buddhist wisdom in eight short verses, elucidated by a fearless pioneer of contemporary Dharma.

Unconditional love and freedom are here and now if we let go of self-centred obsession and let ourselves be embraced by WHAT IS.

The very life we are living, with all its difficulties, failures and frustrations, can be the road to liberation. The world can be our school of transformation. Everybody becomes our best friend. We become our own best friend.

Deeper and deeper, from learning to cherish all beings as precious, to realising that those we perceived as enemies are our supreme teachers, the teachings in this book take us, into our innermost heart where we discover that we are the light we have been longing for.

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"I rejoice in Tsem Rinpoche's endeavours to make these liberating instructions available to an international audience. His skills at conveying timeless wisdom in a contemporary way make him a precious spiritual friend to have..."

*His Holiness the 101st
Gaden Tripa*

"Compassion Conquers All has given me a new way of understanding the way I do things and to make other people the focus of what I do every day. Surprisingly, it has made difficult situations and everyday living so much lighter and full of peace..."

Gillian Hung
*President of Malaysian Official
Designer's Association (MODA)*

*"If we practise these eight verses alone,
we can gain Enlightenment."*

Tsem Tulku Rinpoche

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