

## Saturday evening, 4 March 2005

Develop a good motivation thinking to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and for this purpose to listen to the teachings. In order to generate the mind of enlightenment we need to first have its causes, love and compassion. Therefore, we need to take all sentient beings as our objects and think “How nice it would be if all sentient beings were to have happiness and the causes of happiness,” this being love. Then think “How nice it would be if all sentient beings were free from suffering and its causes.” Then think “I myself will take this responsibility on my shoulders to separate all sentient beings from suffering and the causes of suffering and set them in the state of happiness.” We need to develop a mind of strong determination. Then, in order to generate the mind of enlightenment, think that we cannot yet do this, only a buddha can, and thereby generate the wish to attain buddhahood for this purpose.

We need to have a loving-kind mind toward all sentient beings. In order to develop this we need to have a mind toward all sentient beings that thinks they have all been my mother, father, brother, sister, and so forth. When they were our father or mother they were very kind to us. We need to think about this kindness. Since they were very kind to me, I need to repay their kindness. However, we are not able to give material things to all sentient beings, but we can give them love, therefore we need to try to do this. In this way we develop affectionate love, that is, love that sees all sentient beings in an attractive or appealing aspect. Then we need to develop compassion, then the extraordinary thought, and then the mind of enlightenment or bodhichitta.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* (Tibetan text page 164) says:

Whatever joy there is in this world  
All comes from desiring others to be happy,  
And whatever suffering there is in this world  
All comes from desiring myself to be happy.

(129)

By thinking of others there is much benefit to us, it brings the result of happiness. Thus, whatever happiness there is in the world it comes from having thought about other sentient beings, trying to take care of them. From this mind of cherishing others comes happiness and joy. All the good things we experience come from this kind of attitude. Therefore, we need to think that between ourselves and others, others are more important. Others are numberless, we are just one, therefore they are more important. Therefore, we should determine from the depths of our heart to try to benefit them. Whatever good things of this life and the next, that seen and the unseen, come from developing the mind that wishes to take care of and cherish others and from giving up the selfish mind. This is what brings all happiness. We need to try to understand this. Self-cherishing, thinking only of ourselves, brings many problems, difficulties and suffering. The source of all these is thinking of ourselves and not thinking of others.

On the other hand, wishing to harm others or to make them suffer and not wanting them to have happiness and excellence is not right. It is the cause of experiencing unbearable sufferings in the future. In fact, all the sufferings we experience in our daily life are the result of negative or non-virtuous actions that we created in the past by harming sentient beings. We need to understand that all difficulties and sufferings, all mental suffering and unhappiness, were created by ourselves in our previous lives. That is, motivated by ignorance we created many non-virtuous actions, which now result in suffering. On the other hand, all the happiness that we experience, all the things that go well, and all our mental happiness are the result of virtuous actions created in past lives. Therefore, we need to understand that if we create non-virtuous actions we will experience suffering, whereas if we create virtuous actions we will experience a good result, happiness and excellence. Therefore, there are two causes, non-virtuous actions and virtuous actions, or negative actions and positive actions. We collected these causes in the past and are creating them in the present. Because we are ordinary beings, our mind is overwhelmed by attachment, anger, hatred, jealousy, and so forth. When these afflictions arise in our mind, we engage in non-virtuous actions of body, speech, and mind. These then become the causes for experiencing suffering in the future. Understanding this, we need to try to abandon non-virtuous actions and engage in virtuous actions. Mentally we need to try to have a mind of non-attachment, non-hatred, non-ignorance, and so forth. We need to develop such virtuous minds as they produce actions of body and speech that will bring the result of happiness. We need to recognize this and then create as many virtuous actions as possible.

But what need is there to say much more?  
The childish work for their own benefit,  
The buddhas work for the benefit of others.  
Just look at the difference between them!

(130)

There is no need to say much. There is a difference between us and the buddhas. We think only to take care of ourselves, we cherish only ourselves. The result of this is many difficulties and sufferings. We do not want or desire problems or sufferings, yet still they arise. Why is this? It is because we only take care of ourselves and cherish ourselves. The buddhas, on the other hand, take care of and cherish other sentient beings, whereby they have completed the two collections and obtain complete success in whatever they do. If we look at what the Buddha did, we will see that he too was at one time an ordinary being but at the time of learning he took care of sentient beings. In other words, in the past we and the Buddha were similar, we wandered together in cyclic existence. However, the Buddha then began to take care of other sentient beings but we continued to wander in cyclic existence, suffering, and unable to get out. The Buddha took care of others whereby he abandoned all objects to be abandoned and attained omniscient mind, buddhahood, complete enlightenment. We need to understand that the Buddha did this and then we too need to follow his example. Therefore, we need to give up the self-cherishing mind and the mind conceiving of a self-supporting substantially existent self. These two minds produce, without our knowledge, many faults or defects that we cannot see with our eyes. We cannot see why we experience certain problems and sufferings, that is, we cannot see their causes, however they arise only because we created their cause in the past.

If I do not actually exchange my happiness  
For the suffering of others,  
I shall not attain the state of buddhahood  
And even in cyclic existence shall have no joy.

(131)

It is said that we need to exchange ourselves with others, that is, we need to give up our happiness and pleasure and try to eliminate others sufferings and benefit them. That is, we need to exchange our present attitude and give up our happiness and work to eliminate others sufferings. If we do not do this, we will only experience difficulties. It will not be possible for us to attain buddhahood. We need to stop thinking of our own happiness and to put effort into trying to eliminate others suffering, in this way we will achieve buddhahood. If we do not do this, but instead strive only to obtain happiness, pleasure, and good things for ourselves and do not strive to eliminate others' suffering or help them, then we will not achieve buddhahood. Even if we do not wish to attain buddhahood but only want to remain in this world, no matter what we do we will not experience excellent happiness. Even if we think it does not matter if we do not attain buddhahood but will stay in cyclic existence, there is no happiness in cyclic existence. We will not find excellent happiness. Some people outwardly look very happy but in their mind there is suffering. Perhaps they laugh and smile when other people look at them, for example, politicians do this. Maybe with the exception of George W. Bush who always has a serious look on his face, when he is shown on television everyday. Berlusconi, on the other hand, always has a big grin on his face, although inside he is very worried. Therefore, there are people in high positions such as that of president who look happy, yet inside they have mental and also perhaps physical suffering. On the other hand, some beggars really have a happy and relaxed mind. Perhaps physically they are not well off, but mentally they may be very content. Having received even just something to eat and drink, they lie down content. I lived in a house with twenty-two monks in Varanasi. In front of it there sat day and night a saddhu with a walking stick and begging bowl, who would sometimes chant "RAM, RAM, SITA RAM." Sometimes one of the boys from the Mahabodhi Society would give him some food. He would thank them for it and eat it. I once asked him whether he was happy and he said that he was, that he had been wealthy but had given up his house, belongings, wife, and child, to stay like this. He said that when he died someone would bring his corpse to the Ganges River, and therefore he had no problems. He asked his wife, children, and other relatives to never come to see him. He did this because he thought that they would be ashamed to see him so poor. I think that he was a real yogi, someone with higher realizations, although he appeared to just be a poor man.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* (Tibetan text page 165) says:

Let alone what is beyond this world –

Because of my servants doing no work  
And because of my masters giving me no pay,  
Even the needs of this life will not be fulfilled. (132)

We can see some faults directly with our eyes. There is no need to look to other worlds or future lives, **even now there are servants who do not work and even if one works a lot there are masters who do not pay one.** There are people, such as rich people in India, who keep others around them, such as body guards, not giving them anything but still they need to stay there. There are also those who have to do a lot of work but do not get paid for it. Why does this happen? One reason is that due to having familiarized with the self-cherishing mind in the past, we now experience its result. This means that the aims of the next life will not be achieved, nor will those of this life. This is because even though we work day and night we do not achieve even the aim of attaining money. This happens in cyclic existence or samsara.

### Saturday morning, 5 March 2005

Try to develop the mind wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and with this motivation listen to the teachings. Try to develop the mind of enlightenment. Think about the fact that our self-cherishing brings many disadvantages and the mine cherishing others brings many good things. Understanding this, develop the wish to exchange these two attitudes and for this purpose to do the meditation on taking-and-giving combined with the breath. We take upon ourselves the sufferings and problems of others motivated by compassion and motivated by love we give them all good things. Then, we try to actually exchange the attitudes. We then generate the extraordinary thought in our mind and after that develop the mind of enlightenment. We should try to do this kind of meditation. We, everyone of us, wish to have happiness and no one wishes to have suffering. All sentient beings are equal in this respect.

(By rejecting the method that) establishes both foreseeable and unforeseeable joy,  
I cast magnificent delight completely aside,  
And then, because of inflicting misery on others,  
In confusion I seize hold of unbearable pain. (133)

When we try to do something to benefit others, we can see some results and some we cannot see. This means that, for example, there are some sufferings that we can see, for example, even when we try to help some people they repay us with unkindness that we can see. Thus, there are some results of good or virtuous things that we do that we can see in this life, and there are some results of the bad or non-virtuous that we do that we can see in this life. However, there are also results that will ripen in future lives that we ordinary beings who do not have clairvoyance cannot see. We do not know what will happen after we die. However, having created karma, it follows us like a shadow follows the body. When we create virtuous actions and non-virtuous actions there are results that come in this life but there are also results that we do not see. When we create some actions we know and recognize them, but there are others that we do not know and recognize. However, we constantly create actions. Sometimes we wish to harm someone or make problems for someone. Sometimes we do actions not wishing to harm someone yet we harm them. For example, in the case that there already exists a shop or coffee bar and we wish to open another one even though in our mind there is no wish to harm the owners of the other shop or coffee bar but due to people coming to our bar to drink coffee the other bar has less customers whereby we harm them. Mentally we did not have the wish to harm them, yet still our actions harm someone else. It means that we were unable to see before that we would harm another person. Therefore, we need to be careful even in our work. We should try to do so, but it can happen that due to our actions an unforeseen and unpleasant result arises. We need to give up certain negative actions and to develop love and compassion.

If all the injury,  
Fear and pain in this world  
Arise from grasping at a self,  
Then what use is that great ghost to me? (134)

In our world, this place, there are many things that harm us, for example, human beings harm us and non-humans, other types of beings such as demons and spirits, harm us. There are many things that can harm us, even the elements – fire, wind, water, and earth – can harm us. Due to this many beings live in fear of what can happen. Others live with strong pain. All of this arises from the self-grasping, the conception of a self.

There are many fears, for example, the eight external and eight internal fears mentioned in the context of a praise to Tara for a total of sixteen fears. The cause of all these is the conception of a self. The external fears are related to fear of harm from earth, water, fire, wind, and so forth. It also includes fear of thieves and bandits, and fear of elephants, tigers, and so forth, animals that can harm us. However, whatever fear, suffering, or pain there is, it has as its source the conception of a self, the self-grasping mind. Therefore, we need to recognize the conception of a self as the main cause of our problems. Thus, our main enemy is the conception of a self. Everything is produced by this conception of a self. If we study Buddhist philosophy we will see that the *Madhyamakavatara*, for example, says that all our shortcomings arise from the view of the transitory collection. The view of the transitory collection that thinks “I” conceives oneself to be inherently existent, and that which thinks “mine” conceives other things to be inherently existent. Due to this we think “my friend,” “my enemy,” and “strangers,” dividing people into these three categories. Thinking “my friends,” “my relatives,” and “my belongings,” we generate attachment. Thinking “my enemy,” we generate anger and engage in harmful actions toward that person. Then we ignore strangers, not thinking to take care of them. In this way we generate the three mental poisons – attachment, hatred, and ignorance. Thereby we create many non-virtuous and negative actions. These bring the result of many sufferings, problems, and difficulties.

Therefore, we need to try to eliminate the three mental poisons and first of all develop the equanimity that sees all sentient beings, one’s friends and relatives and one’s enemies, as equal. When this meditation begins to go well, we can start to see everyone as our friends. We should think of all sentient beings as “my friend.” If we are friends with someone we need to mutually help each other, however in this case we generate the attitude that mainly thinks to help them. We should slowly change our mind by thinking in this way. At the end, wishing to take care of others, we generate the mind of enlightenment that wishes to attain buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings.

If I do not completely forsake it  
I shall be unable to put an end to suffering,  
Just as I cannot avoid being burnt  
If I do not cast aside the fire (I hold).

(135)

In this context it seems to be saying that we need to give up the self-cherishing mind and the self-grasping mind, the conception of a self. If we are unable to abandon the conception of a self we will not be able to abandon its result, the suffering that we will experience. For example, if fire is coming toward us and we do not try to put it out with its antidote when it is still small, it will burn us and will only become bigger and bigger. If a fire is burning, sometimes if we pour water on it the fire only gets bigger and spreads more. Then what do we need to put on it? Salt can help to extinguish it. A small fire, for example, that of a burning cigarette butt thrown on the ground, can burn down thousands of acres of trees. In a similar way, the mental affliction of anger or hatred can burn our virtuous energy. Even one instant of anger can destroy the virtue collected over a period of many eons. Therefore, it is important to control our mind and protect it from anger and hatred. We should try to always be patient. It is not enough to have the word “patience” on our lips, we need to develop it from our heart. When something unpleasant happens we tend to say the word “patience,” but although it is a nice word we need to develop patience from the depths of our heart. This is one of the main antidotes to anger. If anger arises in our mind, it disturbs our mind and sometimes also our body as it makes us shake. There is the danger of a heart explosion! This sometimes happens, therefore we need to be careful.

When attachment arises in our mind, it appears to be soft and nice. When attachment arises in our mind, we do not see it to be a problem. It seems to be a close friend. However, anger arises due to not liking someone, an external enemy. We have to observe the different functions of these mental factors. We need to check this. For example, it is not easy for our enemy to cheat us as we are very careful in his or her regard. On the other hand, it is much easier for a friend to cheat us. When he or she says, for example, “Let’s go enjoy ourselves. Let’s go to the mountains. Let’s go to the beach,” we easily agree to do this. Attachment functions in a similar way, it easily fools us. We need to try to understand this.

Ignorance also arises in our mind. It makes us confused about what to do, due to which we are unable to do anything. It has different functions. For example, when we meet a stranger we do not think to help him or her because he or she has not helped us. Ignorance does this. Ignorance, when strong, stops us from doing anything.

We should check the mental poisons that arise in our mind. We will see that they are the source of many problems and suffering. Therefore, we need to try to exchange ourselves with others. How can we do this? It means that we need to change our attitude. It is not like changing dollars into euro, or euro into dollars. It is also not like changing husbands with another woman! It is not like this. What does it mean to exchange ourselves with others? It means to mentally change, that is, to mentally give up self-cherishing and to cherish others. I think this is shown in the next verse.

Therefore, in order to allay the harms inflicted upon me  
And in order to pacify the sufferings of others,  
I shall give myself up to others  
And cherish them as I do my very self. (136)

We need to give up self-cherishing. The attitude of giving others up, neglecting them, and only cherishing ourselves is the source of all our suffering and misery. We continually experience that which is undesired. This is the result of karma. Therefore, we need to try to give up thinking of our own happiness and to take care of and cherish others. This is a source of peace for ourselves.

Therefore, we need to give up cherishing ourselves and practice cherishing others; this is the meaning of exchanging ourselves and others, that is, the exchange of these two attitudes. Previously we did not take care of other sentient beings but only thought of ourselves, but now we give up ourselves and try to take care of others. This is not easy but we need to try to do it. If we try and try again, something will happen. We can see that our mind easily becomes familiarity with things. For example, we think “my body,” but where does it come from? It comes from others, from the mixing of the white and red fluids of our father and mother into which our mind entered. Therefore, it would seem that this body belongs to others not to us, yet we think “my” in relation to it. This is due to familiarity with the thought “my body.” Due to familiarity we can also come to cherish others such that this attitude arises spontaneously. We will automatically think that this person has been my father, mother, brother, sister, and so forth. Then it becomes easy to cherish others, this attitude arises easily and spontaneously without need for effort. Thus, we try to cherish and take care of others and eliminate the self-cherishing mind and the conception of a self-supporting substantially existent self.

“I am under the control of others,”  
Of this, Mind, you must be certain;  
Now, except for benefiting every creature,  
You must not think of anything else. (137)

Whose control are we under? Sometimes we are under the control of the police, government spies, and so forth. We need to understand our mind, that is, we need to hold a discussion with our mind. We ourselves and our mind need to have a dialogue. We should say to our mind, “I am under the control of other sentient beings. You, Mind, must definitely understand this.” We are in the service of other sentient beings, that is, we work for them. This is good. All compounded phenomena are called “other-powered” because they are under the control of something else. They are not powered by themselves, but are under the control of something else, causes and conditions. Our mind, for example, is under the control of the mental afflictions, sometimes it is overcome by attachment, sometimes by anger, sometimes by pride, sometimes by ignorance, sometimes by doubt, and so forth. There are many afflictions that overcome our mind, therefore our mind is under the control of the afflictions. In this way, our mind is often agitated, nervous, and so on. We ourselves now need to control our mind. We need to bring it under our control. Then the mind needs to gain control over the afflictions. Doing this, there will arise a result. What result? Our mind will be very relaxed, happy, clear, and able to understand. We will experience mental happiness and pleasure. To pacify our mind and control the negative emotions is the very best. We need to try to do this. We should try! We need to recognize our own faults, the afflictions, by examining our own mind. Then, try to apply their antidotes in order to eliminate them. By doing so, we will experience real and final peace. Therefore, we need to try to

examine our own mind. We should not check outside. If it is our job to check material things such as what is under the ground or under the water, only then should we do this!

### Saturday afternoon, 5 March 2005

Try to generate bodhichitta wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. Try to always have the mind wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

For my own sake, I should not do anything  
With these eyes and so forth that I have left at the disposal of others.  
It is quite incorrect to do anything with them  
Which is contrary to the benefit (of others). (138)

Since we wish to give up the self-cherishing mind and take care of and cherish others, to apply ourselves to the opposite would not be right. To have dedicated ourselves to taking care of others and to have put ourselves under their control, it would not be suitable to then do something with our eyes for our own sake. For example, if having done this we were to damage our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, or body, it would not be right. In other words, having dedicated our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, or body to others from the depths of our heart, if we then damage them this would be like damaging something that belongs to them. We should look at others with a nice expression and a pleasant mood. We should not frown and grimace at them! This would be a mistake. Therefore, when with our eyes we look at someone's face, we should have a nice expression. When listening to them with our ears, we should do so with interest and in a nice way. If someone says something to us we should acknowledge it and not turn away from them. It is not right to do this. Toward all sentient beings we should not have bad conduct of body, speech, and mind. We have mentally dedicated our body, speech, and mind to others' service, that is, to taking care of them, therefore whatever we do we should do it in an unmistakable way. We should try to help and benefit them and to not harm them. If we cannot help or benefit them we should at least not harm them. In this way try to do good things.

Thus sentient beings should be my main (concern).  
Whatever I behold upon my body  
I should rob and use  
For the benefit of others. (139)

If we have nice ornaments or jewelry, earrings, bracelets, and so forth, on our body we should try to offer them to other sentient beings. We should take or rob them from our body and offer them to others. If someone has very poor clothing in cold weather and seems to be suffering from cold while we have a good coat, we should give it to him or her. If, for example, we have a lot of delicious food we should give some of it to others who are lacking in food. In this way we should try to practice taking care of other sentient beings with the wish to benefit them. Whatever belongings or wealth we have, we should try to use them for the benefit of others. We should mentally think that whatever food, clothing, good possessions we possess, we offer to others. This would be perfect.

We see that in many families that the parents strive to accumulate wealth in order that when children are born to give them good clothing, good shoes, and other good things, to send them to a good school, and so forth. They give them whatever they need to study, books, pens, notebooks, and so forth. Just as parents take care of their children, we too need to take care of all sentient beings as if they were our sons and daughters.

Considering lesser beings and so forth as myself,  
And considering myself as the other,  
(In the following way) I should meditate upon envy, competitiveness, and self importance,  
With a mind free of distorted concepts. (140)

Having exchanged the mind of self-cherishing for the mind of cherishing others, what should we do? Bodhisattvas consider all lesser or lower sentient beings as they do themselves, that is, they do not

differentiate lesser, equal, and superior beings. Thus, they do not generate pride with respect to those who are lower, they are not jealous of or competitive with those who are equal, and they do not generate pride with respect to those who are higher. These attitudes do not exist in bodhisattvas, whereas other people have them. Bodhisattvas think of themselves as lower and others as higher. We need to try to do the same. While sentient beings have such attitudes, bodhisattvas hold themselves lower than others and therefore take care of and respect other sentient beings. They think of others as themselves and mentally exchange themselves with others. We instead grasp or apprehend self and others, however we should change this attitude or mind. Rnam rtog med pa (a mind free of distorted concepts) means that we should not have doubting thoughts in our mind.

If we were a bodhisattva, such as Devadatta, who thinks to exchange self and others, we imagine being jealous of those who are superior, being competitive with those who are equal, and being proud with respect to those who are lower. There are three attitudes. If others are superior we are jealous of them, if they are the same level of ourselves we compete with them, and if they are lower than us we generate the pride of being superior. This is our nature. However, in this case the text says to actually meditate on jealousy, competitiveness, and pride, which appear to be good in this context. Thus, a bodhisattva meditates on jealousy, competitiveness, and pride. The text says this, as does the commentary. However, this other commentary is a little bit different. Here too it says that we should meditate on envy or jealousy, competitiveness, and pride. However, jealousy is not real jealousy. For the mundane dharma or concern of jealousy, a bodhisattva tries to respect other sentient beings who are not him, cannot be found by him, and praises them and criticizes himself. All sentient beings are like ourselves, we try to take care of them and make them happy. To do this, we consider ourselves to be them, and then generate jealousy toward ourselves. We become the object of the jealousy. If we want to be jealous, we should be jealous of ourselves. This is what is said here. Likewise, with respect to competitiveness, we should generate this attitude toward ourselves.

With respect to those who have studied much and have good qualities, we should think that we are lower. Who made us lower? Ourselves or others? While we ourselves have not studied much and do not have many qualities, we think that we have many qualities even though we have not studied. Why? Because inside us we have the tathagata nature, the buddha lineage. Due to this we have good natural qualities. The tathagatagarbha or tathagata essence is the buddha nature, the naturally-abiding lineage that enables our mind to transform into the truth body of a buddha and the emptiness of our mind to transform into the nature body of a buddha. We have this potential. Higher and lesser qualities are a dependent-relation. We are higher to some and lower than others, therefore higher and lower is a dependent-relation.

We can therefore meditate like this on envy or jealousy, on competitiveness, and on pride. For example, between a bodhisattva on the path of preparation and a bodhisattva on the path of accumulation, the bodhisattva on the path of preparation is higher and the bodhisattva on the path of accumulation is lower. Between a bodhisattva on the path of preparation and a bodhisattva on the path of seeing, the bodhisattva on the path of seeing is higher and the bodhisattva on the path of preparation is lower. Thus, higher and lower are dependent.

In any case we should take upon ourselves the sufferings of others and give our happiness to others. This is important.

“He is honored, but I am not;  
I have not found wealth such as he.  
He is praised, but I am despised;  
He is happy, but I suffer.

(141)

Someone is honored more than us because of possessing more good qualities. He possesses the seven jewels of aryas, such as morality. He also possesses more hearing, thinking, meditating than us, therefore he is honored. We ourselves are lower due to not possessing such qualities. Therefore, we think “You have qualities, I do not.” Thinking this, we need to put effort into obtaining these qualities. If we do not have qualities we cannot do anything, therefore we must put effort in developing them. For this, we need to do something.

“I have to do all the work  
While he remains comfortably at rest.  
He is renowned as great in this world,

But I as inferior with no good qualities at all.

(142)

This verse goes together with the previous in terms of meaning. Others have many qualities due to which they are renowned as great in the world, whereas we are renowned as inferior due to lacking qualities and not having studied. Therefore, we must study. We need to gain such qualities. We need qualities such as morality, as well as the wisdom arisen from hearing or studying, the wisdom arisen from thinking, and the wisdom arisen from meditation. We also need faith in the Mahayana teachings. We should try to gain such qualities. Since we need good qualities, we should strive to do whatever is necessary to obtain them. If we do not do anything but just eat, talk, and sleep and just engage in mundane activities such as making money motivated by mundane dharmas it might be helpful for this life. However, it will not be helpful for our future lives. We need to practice the Mahayana like a bodhisattva does. We need to safeguard the bodhisattva vows or the vows of the engaging mind of enlightenment. To do this, we should study and learn the eighteen root vows and forty-six secondary vows. We need to identify mainly the eighteen root vows and to make sure that we do not commit a defeat with respect to them in our mind. We should, for example, give up praising ourselves and criticizing or despising others. We tend to do this now thinking, “I am good. I am knowledgeable. I am humble. Others are not like this. They are very proud. They are very hard.” We think that we are better than others. All of us do this. However, a bodhisattva does not. We need to think that we are bad and that other sentient beings are better than ourselves. We have to train our mind in this way. Like this, we will develop qualities. We will not lose anything by doing this. We will not lose our qualities or our wealth by doing this, they will remain.

“But what do you mean I have no good qualities? –

I have all good qualities;

Compared to many he is inferior,

And compared to many I am high.

(143)

Think that compared to others who are higher, we are lower. However, compared to others we are higher and they are lower. We should not be depressed but with strong effort determine to achieve enlightenment in order to take care of others. For this reason, we should meditate. We should strive to gain these qualities by cherishing others and taking care of them, and for this reason we should meditate.

“The deteriorated state of my morals and views

Is not due to me but due to my disturbing conceptions;

In whatever way he is able he should heal me,

Willingly I shall accept any discomfort involved.

(144)

Due to the power of strong mental afflictions our morality and views have deteriorated. Due to the arising of strong afflictions, our morality and view have degenerated. It is not that we wish to destroy or degenerate them. Due to not being able to control or overcome the afflictions, they cause our morality and view to degenerate. “View” refers to the realization of emptiness or to the correct view of the law of actions and results. It does not refer to bad views, such as the view of the transitory collection and so forth, as it would not be bad for them to degenerate. These views are the view of the transitory collection, view of an extreme, view holding a bad view as supreme, view holding bad morality and conduct as supreme, and wrong view. Since it is good that such views degenerate, in this context “view” refers to a good or correct view.

Whatever happens we need to develop a loving kind mind toward all sentient beings. We should try to do this always. By doing so, we will achieve our aims. Therefore, we need to try to do this. If we do not try, nothing will happen. Therefore, we must always try. We should try even in our busy world, in which we do not have much time, to set aside a bit of time to meditation or prayers or the recitation of sadhanas and so forth.

## Sunday morning, 6 March 2005

Develop the thought wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and for this purpose listen to the teachings. Try to develop love and compassion toward all sentient beings. We should then try to do whatever we can to eliminate other beings' suffering, problems, and difficulties.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* (Tibetan text page 168) says:

“But I am not being healed by him,  
So why does he belittle me?  
What use are his good qualities to me?  
(Although) he has good qualities, (he does not benefit me). (145)

“If you are a bodhisattva who has great compassion, you should try to help me who is poor and degenerate, therefore why do you not help me? You should help me. I try to increase my own qualities in spite of the difficulties and suffering, I must accept them. A bodhisattva has many qualities, therefore you need to use them to benefit me, but you do not. Why? Instead you despise and belittle me. Why? If a bodhisattva has good qualities he must use them to help me so that my own qualities can grow and develop. If I had good qualities, I would try to use them to help or benefit all sentient beings. But I am unable to do so, as I do not have such good qualities. Therefore, since you are a bodhisattva, you must use your good qualities to help sentient beings.” A bodhisattva is someone who always tries to help sentient beings because he is compassionate. This means that we too need to develop the qualities of bodhisattvas – compassion, love, bodhichitta, and so forth. Bodhisattvas have many qualities, all of which cannot be expressed here. Bodhisattvas practice generosity and try to help other sentient beings by giving them material things, the Dharma, and protection. They always try to be of help to others.

Bodhisattvas also practice pure or stainless morality and try to lead other sentient beings, human beings, in good morality or discipline. Therefore, bodhisattvas do everything possible to help other sentient beings. How else can they help other sentient beings? For this reason, we too should engage in the activities of bodhisattvas, trying to develop the mind of generosity, the mind of morality, and the mind of patience. We need patience. There are different types of patience. Whenever we experience problems or sufferings, we need to try to accept and bear them. Also when studying emptiness, the profound, or the vast of the Dharma, and when studying other non-Dharma subjects we need patience. When studying we should not think, “I am tired. I cannot understand it.” If we do, this would imply that we cannot bear even a bit of tiredness. This is not good. Also bodhisattvas, when others do not appreciate them and act against them, generate patience. In family life when there is a naughty child and the parents give it whatever it wants but still it just does more naughty things, patience is needed. We should try to treat him or her in a good way but at the same time impose some discipline or rules that he or she needs to accept. In short, we should follow the example of the bodhisattvas.

“With no compassion for the beings  
Who dwell in the savage<sup>1</sup> mouth of evil realms,  
Externally he is proud of his good qualities  
And wishes to put down the wise. (146)

“You lack compassion for other sentient beings who dwell in the savage mouth of the bad migrations. While they are in this situation, externally you are proud of your good qualities but they are of not benefit to any sentient beings. You show off your good qualities with arrogance and even put down the wise.” There are those who do not have good qualities but think of themselves as better or higher than wise or good men and put them down. They show off, pretending to have qualities such as compassion, but in reality they do not benefit others and may even harm them. We should try to respect such beings and wish to attain their qualities in the future. We should not criticize and deprecate those who have higher qualities than ourselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Originally the translation said “poisonous” but Geshe Jampa Gyatso explained that *gdug pa* is a word that refers to wild and savage animals who devour any animal that comes in front of them, for example, as a cat catches and eat insects and small birds. The migrating beings who go to the lower realms are as if in front of the savage mouth of a tiger, lion, and so forth that, lacking compassion, would immediately and cruelly devour them.

In short, we should exchange our attitude, wishing to take care of and cherish others. We exchange places with others by mentally giving up the self-cherishing thought and instead cherishing others. Bodhisattva practitioners or Mahayana practitioners must cultivate this kind of attitude. For example, we are bodhisattvas, other sentient beings are not. However, bodhisattvas should see themselves as lower than others, and see others as higher. In this way they generate respect for others and try to help them, while putting themselves down. This is the meaning of bodhisattvas meditating on jealousy or envy and so forth. You can read more about this in Geshe Yeshe Tobden's commentary on *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*, which has been translated into English by his disciple, Ngawang Choepel, who used to translate for him and is now a flute player who lives in America.

“In order that I may excel  
He who is regarded as equal with me,  
I shall definitely strive to attain material gain and honor for myself,  
Even by such means as verbal dispute. (147)

This verse is in the context of generating competitiveness or rivalry. There are different points regarding this in terms of competition for material things, for honor, for good qualities, and so forth. For example, we think that someone else has such and such number of good qualities and that we too possess the same number of qualities. Here the text says “I shall definitely strive to attain material gain,” this is competition in terms of material things is one kind of competition. Another kind is competition in terms of the honor one receives from other sentient beings.

In this context the other person is equal to us. We then enter into competition with him or her, thinking that we are better. We even argue or debate with the other person about this. In order to gain material things or honor we are disposed even to dispute with others. We say, “I have good qualities. I am very compassionate. I am very learned. You, on the other hand, are not like this.” “I know everything.” The Tibetans mention five sciences, we say that we know all of them! We say this to other people who then believe us and as a result give us material things, as well as honor and respect. For this purpose, we engage in doing this. Even with respect to others are equal to us in qualities, we show ourselves to be higher and better than them. Such talk is not right. However, there are those who do this. We can make others angry and unhappy if we say that they do not possess qualities that they in fact do possess. Therefore, we should praise others saying “You are very nice. You are humble. You are honest,” whereby we make them happy. On the other hand, if we say to others that they are not nice, that they are ugly, that they are not honest, and so forth, we make others angry and sad. If we look at their faces, we will see that their expression is sad or that their faces become red. I have seen that when politicians meet on the television program *Porta Porta*, sometimes someone says something and the other person becomes red and angry! I have seen this. Others, on the other hand, do not show their anger but remain relaxed and laugh. In short, with respect to others we should show a nice expression and say nice things whereby they will become happy. This was mentioned earlier on in *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*. In any case, we should try not to make others sad, to make them angry, or cause them suffering.

“By all means I shall make clear to the entire world  
All the good qualities I have,  
But I shall not let anyone hear  
Of any good qualities he may have. (148)

We think “I have many good qualities, I will reveal them clearly to the entire world. However, I will not proclaim the good qualities of others and instead will make sure that they remain hidden.” Thus, we reveal and proclaim our own qualities, while making sure that others' qualities are not revealed. For example, with respect to a classmate who has the same knowledge and has studied the same material, we talk only about our own qualities and do not mention any of our classmate's qualities. This is competition in terms of qualities, thinking “I have qualities, you do not.”

“Also I shall hide all my faults,  
I will be venerated, but not he;  
I will find a great deal of material gain;  
I will be honored, but he shall not. (149)

Although we have faults, we keep them hidden, trying not to show them. We think, “If I were to proclaim my own faults, others would not venerate me. If I hide my faults and clearly proclaim others’ faults, then other sentient beings will venerate me and not them. In this way, I can receive offerings of material things such as good food, clothing, cars, watches, and computers – whatever I want. In this way, the person with whom I am in competition will not receive anything. No one will venerate him and no one will make offerings to him.” In this way, we compete with others, putting them down and putting ourselves up. This is not good! There are those who try to hide their faults and proclaim their qualities, while revealing others’ faults and hiding their qualities. Some people do this, Shantideva recognizing this said that it was not good to do. This was done in the past, and is also done now. Now due to technological developments material things are more improved than in the past. However, there are now also weapons that can destroy an entire city in one blow. In the past there were only bows and arrows therefore this could not happen. There were slingshots with which stones were shot at others. Near the Vatican there is an example of a catapult. None of these weapons could cause much destruction. But now automatic machine guns can kill many people one after the other with the touch of a finger.

“For a long time I shall look with pleasure  
At his being made inferior,  
He will become the laughing stock of all,  
Regarded among everyone as an object of scorn and derision. (150)

We find pleasure in looking at someone who has been made inferior. In other words, at someone who did bad things to ourselves or did very bad actions, we laugh as if they had become crazy. We experience pleasure in seeing that this person has been destroyed. We take this person as an object of laughter or ridicule. Others look at his faults and treat him with scorn.

When exchanging ourselves with others, the pride that thinks that we are higher than others needs to be eliminated.

In short, in daily life we have to try to keep our mind more quiet and content. We should try to have less desire for material things and to be more satisfied. We should also try to help and benefit other sentient beings but if we cannot do this we should at least try not to harm them.

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