

THE TIBETAN BUDDHISM READER



EDITED BY REGINALD A. RAY



ABOUT THE BOOK

Here is a portable collection of inspiring readings from the revered masters of Tibetan Buddhism. *The Tibetan Buddhism Reader* includes quotations from major lineage figures from the past such as Padmasambhava, Atisha, Sakya Pandita, Marpa, Milarepa, and Tsongkhapa. Also featured are the writings of masters from contemporary times including the Dalai Lama, Dudjom Rinpoche, Khyentse Rinpoche, Sakya Tridzin, Chögyam Trungpa, and others. Topics include cultivating compassion, letting go of ego, learning to become more alert and present in our lives, and developing a clear perception of our own true nature.

REGINALD A. RAY, PhD, is a faculty member at Naropa University and is President and Spiritual Director of the Dharma Ocean Foundation, which is dedicated to the practice, study, and preservation of the teachings of Chögyam Trungpa. He is also the author of many books, including *Indestructible Truth* and *In the Presence of Masters*.

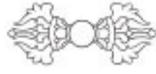
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The Tibetan

Buddhism Reader



EDITED BY

Reginald A. Ray



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Tibetan Buddhism is ultimately a method of spiritual edification, transformation, and awakening. When we contemplate the dharma in Tibet, it is easy to feel overwhelmed and lost in its riches—its philosophy and ethics; its descriptions of suffering, thirst, and karma; its vision of compassion and community; its colorful art and iconography; its dramatic and complex history. But we must always keep in mind that the entire Buddhist enterprise in Tibet, though sometimes seeming to roam far afield, always comes back and down to a single point: the human journey to spiritual fulfillment. For Tibetan Buddhism, spiritual realization is not just theoretically the only attainment worthy of our human state but is, more practically, entirely within our reach right now.

For any tradition to advance such a goal, at least in the modern world, would seem to invite not only skepticism but cynicism and ridicule. And yet Tibetan Buddhism, even as it “modernizes,” continues to insist that its methods, if taken seriously and followed, will lead to a transformation that gives the lie to beliefs in “original sin.” For, as it is held, all people, simply by virtue of being sentient beings, already have within them the summum bonum, the utter perfection of buddha-nature, and it requires only some trust and a little exertion to remove the coverings that obscure it.

This volume contains various sayings of Tibetan lamas, both present and past. All of these revolve around the central theme of Tibetan tradition: how the Buddhist methodologies can lead us out from our presently confused and uncaring state to a mode of awareness that is boundless and free and governed by love for others. These selections focus on our individual, personal experience: what the path feels like, how meditation unfolds in our lives, the particular problems and obstacles that arise for practitioners, the way to be genuinely helpful to others, and how the vividness and clarity of realization begin to dawn within our awareness.

The collection is divided into seven chapters that follow the structure of Tibetan Buddhism itself. The first looks at our human situation, marked by suffering, conditioned by karma, and yet—understood and directly addressed—replete with opportunity for change. Chapter 2 addresses the spiritual path itself, including its nature, characteristics, and qualities. The third chapter provides a view of the abundant lore surrounding the practice of meditation, the core methodology of Tibetan Buddhism. Teachings on compassion as it arises naturally out of the practice of meditation are outlined in the fourth chapter. Chapters 5 and 6 articulate teachings on emptiness and the buddha-nature, respectively, while the final chapter provides some glimpses of spiritual realization itself.

In this book I have selected passages that, I hope, will be useful in a practical way. They describe the journey up the great mountain of enlightenment: how it is sensed, perceived, and experienced—what the trail is like in the dark, lower forests; among the fragrant grasses and brilliant wildflowers in the upper meadows; and, above the tree line, in the desolate but spectacular proximity of the peak itself.

These passages eloquently illustrate the twofold Tibetan affirmation that (1) not only individuals but the world itself can and must be changed, but (2) this can be accomplished only by the lone individual, working on him- or herself in a spiritual way, cultivating self-knowledge and humility, on deeper and deeper levels finding out how the world works, and discovering the wellsprings of compassion for others. This work is lonely because one can rely only upon oneself. But at the same time, it is powerfully affecting: it can touch others through and through, and they can, in turn, impact others. In the traditional Buddhist analogy, just as a small spark can set an entire jungle ablaze, so the small spark of one person’s spiritual endeavor can set ablaze the ignorance, confusion, and aggression of the jungle of this world and make it a saner and better place. For proof, witness the examples

Buddhist-lineage men and women, from Shakyamuni Buddha himself down to the present, fourteen Dalai Lama.

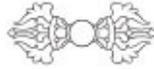
Foundations

Reflections on the Tradition

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE DHARMA

Other than the dharma, we cannot find teachings that express a complete understanding of our own innate mind, how our confusion begins and, ultimately, how it stops.

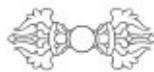
—Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche



THE NECESSITY OF TRADITION

Without depending on tradition, we cannot do anything. So until we become enlightened, we cannot reject faith that depends on tradition. In order to communicate, it is always necessary to deal with tradition. But if we rely on it with rigid attachment, then through our clinging, we are trapped by tradition.

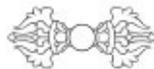
—Thinley Norbu Rinpoche



IF YOU HAVE A MAP, YOU WON'T GET LOST

The beauty of Tibetan Buddhism is that it has a clear structure from beginning to end. Perhaps you find all these outlines boring, but Tibetan Buddhism is alive today because of its clear structure. All four traditions have a clean-clear approach, and this should be much appreciated. If ten steps are involved in going from here to there but some of the information is missing, you cannot go all the way. If you have a clear map, however, you won't get lost.

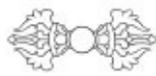
—Lama Thubten Yeshe Rinpoche



THE NECESSITY OF CORRECT VIEW

First, it is absolutely necessary to establish the correct view of the dharma. The view is the seed from which will ripen the perfect fruit of enlightenment. Having established the view, then one must meditate in order to incorporate the view into one's inner experience. By meditating, putting the view into practice over and over again, the fruits of meditation will come to maturity.

—Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche

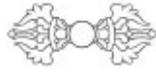


The Ground of Our Lives: Suffering, Impermanence, and Karma

WE EXPERIENCE DUHKHA—PAIN—ALL THE TIME

We are driven here and there with so much energy. Whether we eat, sleep, work, play, whatever we do, life contains *duhkha*—dissatisfaction, pain. If we enjoy pleasure, we are afraid to lose it; we strive for more and more pleasure or try to contain it. If we suffer in pain, we want to escape it. We experience dissatisfaction all the time. All activities contain dissatisfaction or pain, continuously.

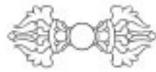
—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS ARE UNRELIABLE AND DIFFICULT

Human relationships—however they are serving us, however we hold them to be wonderful and cherishable relationships, providing a wonderful source of strength and guidance and held in such high regard—are always like walking on eggshells. They are always like being in a place where there are many thorn bushes, where there are so many dangers, where we constantly have to be paranoid and careful.

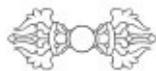
—Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche



THE TRUTH OF SUFFERING

The first noble truth is the full understanding of suffering. Of course, in an obvious way, people are aware of suffering and know when they have unpleasant sensations such as hunger, cold, or sickness. But the first noble truth includes awareness of all the ramifications of suffering because it encompasses the very nature of suffering. This includes knowledge of the subtle and the obvious aspects of suffering. The obvious aspect of suffering is immediate pain or difficulty in the moment. Subtle suffering is more difficult to recognize because it begins with happiness. But by its very nature, this happiness must change because it can't go on forever. Because it must change into suffering, the subtle suffering is the impermanence of pleasure. . . . The Buddha taught the truth of suffering because everything that takes place on a worldly level is a form of suffering. . . . The first truth is that one should be aware of the nature of suffering.

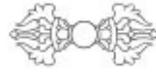
—Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche



PAIN NEVER GOES AWAY

It is not so much that pain is an obstacle. Rather, as we go on, pain becomes an obstacle because we want to get rid of it. . . . The problem seems to be the attitude that the pain should go, then we will be happy. That is our mistaken belief. The pain never goes, and we will never be happy. That is the truth of suffering, *dukkha satya*. Pain never goes; we will never be happy. There's a mantra for you. It's worth repeating.

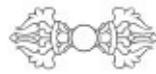
—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



OUR WORLD IS RELENTLESSLY IMPERMANENT

Change is continuous. Day by day, one season slips into the next. Day turns into night and night into day. Buildings don't suddenly grow old; rather, second by second, from the moment they're constructed, they begin to deteriorate. . . . Think of beings inhabiting this universe. How many people born a hundred years ago are still alive? . . . We see the play of impermanence in our relationships as well. How many of our family members, friends, people in our hometown, have died? How many have moved away, disappearing from our lives forever? . . . At one time we felt happy just being near a person we loved. Just to hold that person's hand made us feel wonderful. Now maybe we can't stand to see him, we don't want to know anything about him. Whatever comes together must fall apart, whatever is once fathered must separate, whatever was born must die. Continual change, relentless change, is constant in our world.

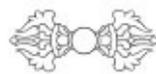
—Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche



WHY WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE ORIGIN OF SUFFERING

The first noble truth makes it clear that there is suffering. Once we know what suffering is, we must eliminate that suffering. It is not a question of eliminating the suffering itself but of eliminating the causes of suffering. Once we remove the causes of suffering, then automatically the effect, which is suffering, is no longer present. This is why, to eliminate this suffering, we must become aware of the second noble truth, the truth of universal origination.

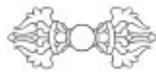
—Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche



WE WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE CONSEQUENCES

The mind is like a fertile field—all sorts of things can grow there. When we plant a seed—an act, a statement, or a thought—it will eventually produce a fruit, which will ripen and fall to the ground and perpetuate more of the same. Moment by moment, we plant potent seeds of causation with our body, speech, and mind. When the right conditions come together for our karma to ripen, we will have to deal with the consequences of what we have planted.

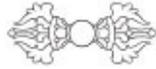
—Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche



WE ARE SO IGNORANT OF KARMA

Although we are responsible for what we sow, we forget that we've planted these seeds and either give credit to or blame people or things outside of us when they ripen. . . . In the moment, we have thought, we speak or act. But we lose sight of the fact that each thought, word, and action will produce a result. When the fruit finally ripens, we think, "Why did this happen to me? I've done nothing to deserve this."

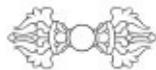
—Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche



WE ARE CONSTANTLY CREATING NEGATIVE KARMA

Some people pretend to themselves that they don't have any negative karma and they are not creating any new negative karma either. . . . Once we investigate the deluded state of mind, we understand that all evil deeds are done by the mind and that this deluded state of mind is constantly busy making new negative karma. Unless we are in a state of *rigpa* [the awakened state], in which the three poisons are purified, any normal mind is continually engaging in one of the three poisons and is therefore constantly creating negative karma. There is no point in denying that.

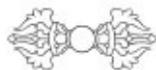
—Tulku Urygen Rinpoche



WE MUST WORK AT THE CAUSAL LEVEL

Once we commit a negative action, unless it is purified we will experience its consequences. We cannot shirk the responsibility or try to make the karma disappear by justifying it. It doesn't work that way. Whoever commits an act will infallibly experience its results, whether positive or negative. Even the movement of our thoughts, words, and deeds is like a stitch in the fabric of our coming reality. Later in our present experience are oceans of karma from countless past lifetimes, which under the proper conditions will come to fruition. In order to find liberation from samsara, we must work at the causal level, not the level of results, the pleasure and pain that are the consequences of our behavior. To do so, we need to purify our earlier mistakes and change the mind that plants the seeds of suffering. We must purify the mental poisons that perpetuate endless karma.

—Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche

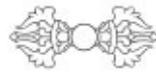


THE FOUNDATION OF ALL DHARMA PRACTICE

Considering all the misery of samsara and of the lower realms, my devotion and perseverance do not

seem great. Thoughtful people who accept the great law of cause and effect are capable of such perseverance. Those who do not believe in the dharma have little understanding and are incapable of abandoning the eight worldly reactions. That is why it is important to believe in the law of karma. . . . The foundation of all dharma practice lies in belief in the law of karma.

—Milarepa

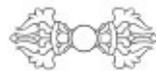


Our Unique Opportunity

A RARE OPPORTUNITY

The real point of these is to appreciate that this human life offers a rare opportunity for one to achieve liberation, to realize the urgency of doing so, to generate a strong conviction that the ordinary samsaric condition produces only suffering, and to realize that suffering comes about through karma and is the effect of negative actions. When we have a genuine understanding of these . . . , their main point has been realized. You should not merely think about them but experience them in your very being. Make this experience part of yourself.

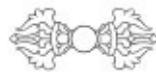
—Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche



PRECIOUS HUMAN BIRTH

Our consciousness is not something that can die. After death we are forced to experience the effect of our former karmic actions. Due to ignorance we have wandered endlessly in samsara, unable to be liberated, continually circling between the three lower and three higher realms, one after the other. In order to free ourselves from the six realms of samsaric existence, we need to practice the sacred dharma now while we have a chance.

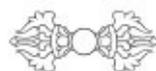
—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche



OUR TASK

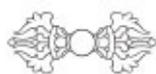
Our task is to recognize and realize our own buddha-nature. However, if we are in a body that is incapable of this, we can't do so. Even the strongest animals, like elephants and tigers, have no way to realize their own nature. Among the six classes of sentient beings in samsara, only human beings can recognize their buddha-nature; only humans have the capacity to understand the meaning of the teachings. We may be living in a dark age, but we still have the ability to recognize our own nature.

—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche



While a sailor has a boat, he should cross the ocean; while a commander has a company of brave men gathered together, he should defeat the enemy; while a poor man has a wish-granting cow, he should milk it; while a traveler has a superb horse, he should ride it to faraway places. Now, while you have precious human life and a teacher who embodies the buddhas of past, present, and future, think with great joy and enthusiasm how you will travel the highway of sacred dharma, drawing ever closer to the ultimate goal of liberation and enlightenment.

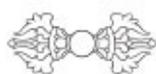
—Shabkar, quoted by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche



MAKE THE MOST OF THIS LIFE

If we do not know how to turn our own suffering into favorable circumstances for our own awakening, if we cannot cultivate the depth of our own intelligence, if we cannot change our condition of being an ignorant person to an awakened one, who can do it for us? If this is not done in this life, never millions of aeons will it be different. Especially if you cast away your precious human life in just doing unimportant business that doesn't concern your long-term well-being. Just getting a roof over your head, just feeding your children, just having some means to live—all human beings require those things. Even animals require those things. But beyond that, if you hold on to some very self-important image of yourself as a lawyer or doctor or businessman or whatever—in the end it won't be me who is speaking to you; it will be you yourself feeling a tremendous loss of this precious human life. You cannot immediately change so drastically and become Milarepa. But you could change day to day, minute to minute in the time you have.

—Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche



WHY NOT TAKE YOUR FUTURE INTO YOUR OWN HANDS?

Now is the time to free ourselves from samsara. Unless we do it in this lifetime, it is not going to happen all by itself. We have to take care of ourselves. Right now we have the ability to receive teaching and practice the dharma. Isn't this the right time? Wouldn't that be better than continuing to act like an animal, concentrating only on eating and sleeping, and letting the time run out? Why not take your future into your own hands?

—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche



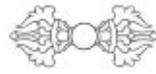
Samsaric Games

SPIRITUAL MATERIALISM

There are numerous sidetracks that lead to a distorted, ego-centered version of spirituality; we ca

deceive ourselves into thinking we are developing spiritually when instead we are strengthening our egocentricity through spiritual techniques. This fundamental distortion may be referred to as spiritual materialism.

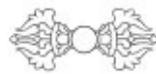
—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



RELYING ON THE DREAM WORLD

Self-deception seems always to depend upon the dream world, because you would like to see what you have not yet seen rather than what you are now seeing. You will not accept that whatever is here now is what is, nor are you willing to go with the situation as it is. Thus, self-deception always manifests itself in terms of trying to create or recreate a dream world, the nostalgia of the dream experience.

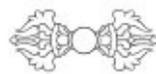
—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



THE PERVERTED NOTION OF “I”

The mind, dividing experiences into subject and object, first identifies with the subject, “I,” then with the idea of “mine,” and starts to cling to “my body,” “my mind,” and “my name.” As our attachment to these three notions grows stronger and stronger, we become more and more exclusively concerned with our own well-being. All our striving for comfort, our intolerance of life’s annoying circumstances, our preoccupation with pleasure and pain, wealth and poverty, fame and obscurity, praise and blame, are due to this idea of “I.”

—Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche



WHAT IS OUR MAIN PROBLEM?

It is that we think, “I am the worst person in the world. I am full of hatred, desire, and ignorance. These concepts are totally negative, and you must purify them. From the time you were born until now, you have been carrying around this self-pity view. Cry, cry, fear, fear, emotion, emotion. Obsessed with your own shortcomings, you put tremendous pressure on yourself. You punish yourself by regarding yourself as ugly and worthless. Other people may think you are beautiful, but you still project yourself as ugly.

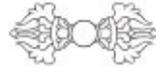
—Lama Thubten Yeshe Rinpoche



OUR BASIC PROBLEM IS ALWAYS TRYING TO PROVE SOMETHING

The basic problem we seem to be facing is that we are too involved with trying to prove something which is connected with paranoia and the feeling of poverty. When you are trying to prove or get something, you are not open anymore, you have to check everything, you have to arrange everything “correctly.” It is such a paranoid way to live and it really does not prove anything. One might say records in terms of numbers and quantities—that we have built the greatest, the biggest, we have collected the most, the longest, the most gigantic. But who is going to remember the record when you are dead? Or in two hundred years? Or in ten years? Or in ten minutes? The records that count are those of the given moment, of now—whether or not communication and openness are taking place now.

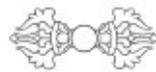
—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



WANTING TO BE SOMEBODY

We want to *be* somebody, to *mean* something in this human society, in our relationships to other human beings. This is very dangerous. This is a very, very tight rope that you hang around your neck while you give the other end of the rope to a dangerous hand. Nonetheless, we all long for that. . . You want to *be* somebody in relation to the people with whom you have a connection. Of course, if it is in a good way, then it will be good. But if it is from a poverty mentality arising strongly to the surface, if it is with your sense of ego attachment strongly present, and then wishing to be the jewel, to be the cherished person, then this is a sellout of your own freedom and your own sense of nobility. When you start to go after that, before long you will be dancing like a monkey. In India they have these monkeys on the street who have a string around their neck and, through their keeper’s guidance, will dance and do all sorts of tricks. They jump through rings, jump from one stool to the next, and so on. You will actually become like that.

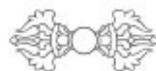
—Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche



OUR BLIND FAITH IN SAMSAARA

We talk about blind faith in religion, but actual blind faith exists in our everyday world. What do we really trust? We trust our senses, our perceptions, our culture, our thoughts, completely, one-pointedly, and blindly. We trust this more than we trust our religion. So the idea of having blind faith in religion is totally a myth. The real blind faith exists in our worldly existence. We trust anything that is within the range of experiences of our mind, whether it is perceptual or conceptual mind.

—The Dzogchen Pönlop Rinpoche

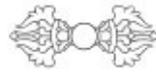


SEEING NOTHING BUT DARKNESS

When one explains the dharma, people say, “This person is a fool. He knows about the dharma but he knows nothing of worldly affairs.” If one explains how to achieve happiness and how to escape rebirth

in the lower realms, people simply do not believe it. Because of their jaundiced views, they misinterpret. They are like people who cover their eyes when the sun shines; they see nothing but darkness. This is only due to their wrong perception.

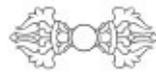
—Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche



HOW TO WIN A FOLLOWING

Playing the simple meditator and keeping a low profile would not be successful—who would know about your realization then? If you happened to be an upstart lama with a penchant for fame and fortune you would have to brag a little. You would need to tell about how many dharma lineages and teachings you held, how long you stayed in retreats, how special your realization is, how you tamed both gods and demons, and the like. Then things would happen; you would be swarmed by sponsors and followers like a piece of rotting meat covered with flies.

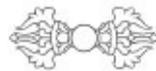
—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche



WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

As Patrul Rinpoche says, “When young, we are controlled by others and cannot practice. . . . In adulthood, we chase after the objects of pleasure and cannot practice. When we are old, we lose our physical strength and cannot practice. Alas, alas! What do we do now?”

—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche

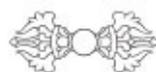


Renunciation

WHERE DOES THE PATH BEGIN?

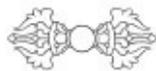
The starting point of the path of liberation is the conviction that the whole of samsara is meaningless and the genuine determination to be free from it.

—Patrul Rinpoche



CULTIVATE DISENCHANTMENT WITH SAMSARA

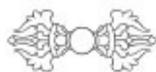
Whatever apparent comfort, happiness, or prestige is to be found here in samsara, it lacks the tiniest scrap of constancy or stability and in the long run can never resist the round of suffering. Therefore cultivate disenchantment with it all.



SAMSARA IS WRETCHED; RENOUNCE IT

Geshe Chim-pu-pa, when asked for a precept by a yogi, said, “Appearances are illusory; do not hold them as truly existent. The five aggregates are flesh and blood; do not hold them as ‘mine.’ Possessions are accumulated by the effects of former karma; do not make so much effort to acquire things. What you have been doing makes you miserable; limit your activities. Samsara is wretched; do not accept it as meaningful. Follow this precept now—do not say, ‘I will do it in the future when the days are longer.’”

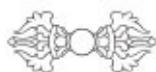
—Geshe Wangchen



CONTEMPLATE DEATH AND IMPERMANENCE

When we contemplate death and the impermanence of life, our minds automatically begin to take an interest in spiritual achievements. . . . Meditation on impermanence and death is very useful, for it cuts off attraction toward transient and meaningless activities.

—His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama



MEDITATE ON THE SUFFERINGS OF SAMSARA

Meditation on the sufferings of samsara is the basis and support for all the good qualities of the path. It gives you the inspiration to take up the dharma. It gives you confidence in the principle of cause and effect in all your actions. It makes you renounce the goals of this life. And it makes you feel love and compassion for all beings.

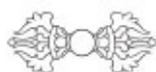
—Patrul Rinpoche



WHY IS RECOGNIZING IMPERMANENCE IMPORTANT?

At first, to be fully convinced of impermanence makes you take up the dharma; in the middle it whips up your diligence; and in the end it brings you to the radiant dharmakaya.

—Padampa Sangye

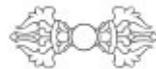


In Buddhist training, revulsion and renunciation are called the two feet of meditation practice. Revulsion is losing our appetite for samsaric existence and realizing that samsaric pursuits are futile and pointless and do not yield any permanent pleasure and happiness whatsoever. Renunciation means to understand that time is running out and everything passes.

Revulsion is the feeling people suffering from jaundice or liver disease experience when served fried food; either they are very nauseated or they vomit. In the same way, when we realize that all the achievements of the six realms of samsara are futile, insubstantial, and meaningless, we lose our appetite for them.

Renunciation, wanting to be free from samsara, is to realize that all conditioned samsaric states are painful and everything is impermanent. We need to acknowledge sincerely and honestly that our life is a fleeting, fragile existence.

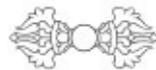
—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche



HOPE IS A HINDRANCE

We can quite safely say that hope, or a sense of promise, is a hindrance on the spiritual path. Creating this kind of hope is one of the most prominent features of spiritual materialism. There are all kinds of promises, all kinds of proofs. We find the same approach as that of a car salesman. . . . So much hope is planted in your heart. This is playing on your weakness.

—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche

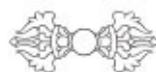


HOPELESSNESS AND DESPAIR

Hopelessness is not quite the same thing as despairing. There is a difference. Despair is laziness, lack of intellect. One is not even willing to look for the reason for the despair. It is a total flop. But hopelessness is very intelligent. You keep looking. You flip page after page, saying, “That’s hopeless, that’s hopeless.” You are still very vigorous, hopelessly vigorous. You’re still looking for hope, but each time you have to say, “Oh, no. Yuck!” Hopelessness keeps going; it is very vigorous, very inspiring.

Hopelessness doesn’t mean that you are miserable particularly. There’s lots of room for energy, more energy and more joy. But joy is probably the wrong word—a sense of wholesomeness, healthiness, a sense of well-being because of hopelessness.

—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



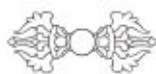
FAME

Practitioners regard fame as an evil. A practitioner who dreams that he is famous should regard that as

an obstacle of Mara.

~~Think about it! Fame is just like the name tagged to a corpse. After one dies, one's reputation will not be of any help to the mind that travels on. The messengers of the Lord of Death in the bardo state will not respect someone just because he is famous.~~

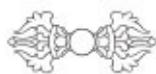
—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche



GOOD CIRCUMSTANCES, THEIR ATTACHMENTS, AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

It is said that good circumstances are more difficult to deal with than bad ones, because they are more distracting. If you have whatever you could wish for—wealth, a comfortable house, clothing—you should view it all as illusory, like possessions obtained in a dream, rather than feeling compulsive attachment to it. If someone gets angry with you or threatens you, it is relatively easy to meditate on patience, or if you fall sick, to cope with the sickness. Since such things are causes of suffering, and suffering naturally reminds us of the dharma, in a way it's easier to integrate these difficult circumstances into your path. But when things are going well and you feel happy, your mind accepts that situation without any difficulty. Like oil spread all over your skin, attachment easily stays invisible, blended into the mind; it becomes part of your thoughts. Once such attachment to favorable circumstances is present, you become almost infatuated with your achievements, your fame, and your wealth. That is something very difficult to get rid of.

—Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche



HOW IMPORTANT ARE OUR LIFE SITUATIONS, OUR CONTEXTS?

All the particular contexts are not so important. We make the contexts a big deal, but the essence is about happiness, about peace, about freedom from suffering, freedom from pain. In this way if we learn how to actually rely much more on the Three Jewels—starting with taking refuge to be free from ordinary suffering and pain—we could slowly strengthen our refuge so that in the end we are taking refuge to be free from the suffering of samsara and the cycle of existence totally. In this way all the contexts—all the outer shells of what we are trying to accomplish—in essence are not so important unless you want to be a fool and hold on to the shell and not to the essence. Of course, we do that a lot of the time; it's not very surprising.

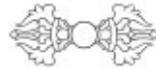
In the end the outer shell will never last. The inner essence, if it is about our own freedom and happiness and peace, is about our own mind—and if that could be cultivated regardless of the outer shell and outer contexts, what's the point of holding on to the outer contexts and shell? And if you gain this sense of inner abundance, it is limitless; there is no need to try to increase all your outer contexts and outer shells. You simply have abundance, which you feel from the inside, and you couldn't wish for more contentment than what you have already found in your life.

—Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche



We must surrender our hopes and expectations, as well as our fears, and march directly into disappointment, work with disappointment, go into it and make it our way of life. . . . If we can open up, then we suddenly begin to see that our expectations are irrelevant compared with the reality of the situations we are facing. This automatically brings disappointment. Disappointment is the best chariot to use on the path of the dharma. It does not confirm the existence of our ego and its dreams.

—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



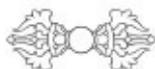
The Path

The Nature of the Spiritual Path

FOLLOWING THE PATH IS THE LOGICAL THING TO DO

If we reflect deeply, each action has a reaction, and everything we say and think has an effect on ourself and on others. Thus we have the potential of creating useful actions and of not creating useless ones. If all these potentials exist within a human being, what would be the logical thing to do? Continue as we are doing, or try the best we can to genuinely develop the qualities that do not unnecessarily bring harm or hurt to other sentient beings?

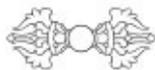
—Ven. Khandro Rinpoche



THE SPIRITUAL PATH IS NOT EASY

The problem is that we tend to seek . . . easy and painless answers. But this kind of solution does not apply to the spiritual path. . . . Once we commit ourselves to the spiritual path, it is very painful and we are in for it. We have committed ourselves to the pain of exposing ourselves, of taking off our clothes, our skin, nerves, heart, brains, until we are exposed to the universe. Nothing will be left. It will be terrible, excruciating, but that is the way it is.

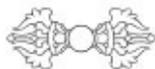
—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



PURIFYING THE MIND IS NOT EASY

Buddha showed that purifying the mind is not easy. It takes a lot of time and hard work.

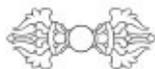
—His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama



PLEASE BE DILIGENT!

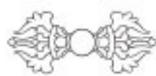
Please be diligent in practice. Really, the difference between buddhas and ordinary beings is diligence.

—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche



Ultimately, it is definitely true that there *is* nothing to do, but this is true only after one has passed through to the other side of understanding, experience, and realization. To maintain an intellectual conviction of the view without having undergone the training is a severe misunderstanding. This is how the self-professed “*dzogchen* practitioner” goes astray.

—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche



EXERTION: WAITING COULD BE HARD WORK

Hardworkingness or exertion does not necessarily mean doing a lot of things. Waiting in itself could be very hard work, being is very hard work, and there are so many temptations not to do it.

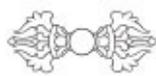
—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



CUTTING THROUGH

The spiritual path is the process of cutting through our confusion, of uncovering the awakened state of mind. . . . It is not a matter of building up the awakened state of mind but rather of burning out the confusions that obstruct it. In the process of burning out these confusions, we discover enlightenment.

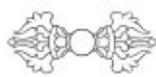
—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche



OBSTACLES ARISE WHEN ONE TRIES TO PRACTICE THE DHARMA

Often it happens that one meets obstacles when practicing the dharma—one falls sick, unfortunate circumstances don’t really work out, the aims one pursues are unsuccessful. Something always seems to go wrong, one experiences unhappiness, and so forth. . . . It is certainly true that practitioners have more obstacles than normal people, but one shouldn’t think that because of this, negative actions are more profitable than dharma practice.

—Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche



GETTING OUR PRIORITIES RIGHT

When the dharma brings you hardships, then however many different kinds of suffering you might have to undergo, like Jetsun Mila and the Conquerors of the past, in the end your happiness will be unparalleled. But when wrongdoing makes you rich, then whatever pleasure you might temporarily obtain, in the end your suffering will be infinite.

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