

**These notes were taken by a student in class, and should be used for reference only. Please check them against the audio tapes for accuracy of content.**

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class One: Different Types of Meditation, Five Parts of Meditation Practice

**Text used for class:** *Prayer of Samantabhadra* - all teachings on how to prepare for meditation are based on this (taught by Buddha). We are also using **Je Tsongkapa's** (1357-1419) commentary from the **Lam Rim Chen Mo**.

#### Five parts to meditation practice:

- 1.) **Preparation to begin** - Six preliminary activities necessary - must have them to be successful in session. Shifts gears of the mind from external world to meditation.
- 2.) **Six conditions of the surrounding environment.**
- 3.) **Bodily posture** - Eight-point posture
- 4.) **Mental process** - Three steps: 1) five problems, 2) eight corrections, 3) nine mental stages.
- 5.) **Object of Meditation.**

Meditation is a tool; temporary pleasant side effects result from doing meditation. It is not an end, and does not have spiritual value unless focused upon a spiritual object. Mind is very influencible. Whatever the mind is around, it becomes like that, so if we focus it on a holy object, the mind becomes holy.

#### General Definitions of Meditation Types:

- 1.) **GOM-PA** (Sanskrit: *bhavana*): (most general description): Getting used to something by doing it over and over again. Bringing an object to your mind repeatedly until you get used to it - habituation. Burning something into the mind so that it is fixed within the mind.
- 2.) **SAM-TEN** (Sanskrit: *dhyana*): This is the name of the fifth perfection (concentration or meditation). It also refers to four levels of very deep meditation which result in being born in four levels of the form realm. The mind's concentration is in the first level of the form realm when you see emptiness.

#### **Three realms of suffering beings:**

- 1.) **Desire realm:** includes earth, bardos, hells, top of Mount Meru.
  - 2.) **Form realm:** we can't see it. Beings there live in a state of high pleasure, with beautiful bodies, rainbow bodies, etc.
  - 3.) **Formless realm:** no physical bodies - purely mental beings. Good deeds, great virtue (defined as avoiding bad habits) result in high rebirth. By being in deep meditation, you can't do any bad deeds, so you end up in a higher realm.
- 3.) **NYOM-JUK** (Sanskrit: *samapatti*): Called causal meditations (because they cause rebirth):
    - a.) meditation which will cause rebirth in the form realm, and
    - b.) meditation which will cause rebirth in the formless realm,
    - c.) cessation meditation, a state in which your gross mind is almost shut down. It is very blissful, but you still take rebirth.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class One, continued

4.) **SHI-NEY** (**SHI**=peace, **NEY**=stay) (Sanskrit: *shamatha*): This is always linked with **HLAK-TONG** (**HLAK**=exceptional, **TONG**=seeing) (Sanskrit: *vipashyana*): these two are always in union. **Shi-ney** is the highest evolution of meditation, and the most powerful. It should be merged with the perception of emptiness to be in its highest form. It is like a powerful gun, waiting to be pointed at something. **Shi-ney** is the instrument; the focus is wisdom (**hlak-tong**).

5.) **TING-NGE-DZIN** (Sanskrit: *samadhi*): One-pointed state of mind. One-pointed means you are able to keep your mind on one object. **Shi-ney** is the highest evolution of samadhi. In samadhi, one can hold the mind on one object briefly. In shi-ney, one can hold the mind on one object for a very long time.

6.) **NYAM-SHAK JE-TUP**: Meditation where you see emptiness directly. Contemplation about what you saw in emptiness as you come down (where you realize four Arya Truths).

#### Six things to do before meditation (Six Preliminaries):

- 1.) **NE-KANG TSANG-MA** - clean up and tidy the room.
- 2.) **CHU-PA** - offering. Set up the altar and make offerings.
- 3.) **KYAB-DRO SEM-KYE** - going for refuge and generating bodhichitta (implies taking proper meditation posture first.)
- 4.) **TSOK-SHING MIK-PA** - visualize the lamas of the two great lineages (emptiness and compassion.)
- 5.) **DRIP-JANG TSOK-SAK** - purifying obstacles and gathering together the power of goodness by the seven ingredients.
- 6.) **SOLN-DEP** - requesting blessings.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Two: Six Preliminaries to Meditation

##### Six Preliminaries to Meditation:

- 1.) **Clean up and tidy the room** - this becomes the cause to help create a paradise later. Also helps to wake up and get the day going and to slow down the mind.  
(Do three prostrations before sitting.)
- 2.) **Offerings** - Water bowl offerings to the five senses - Fill and empty bowls from the left. Empty bowls at night to signify ready to die now. Wipe bowls before filling.
- 3.) **Posture** - Put left foot up first, etc. Go for refuge (fear and faith needed), and generate bodhichitta.
- 4) **Visualize merit field.** Start simply, by visualizing the silhouette of the root lama, and then begin to add features, color, and details later. See as young and vibrant without physical defects.
- 5.) **Purify obstacles.** Gather goodness by seven steps: Confession acts to remove negative energy before meditation, and the other six act to accumulate positive energy. **Ganden hla-gya-ma** is the 7-ingredient practice focused upon Je Tsongkapa, and which will be used in this class.

##### Seven steps:

- 1.) **CHAK-TSEL:** (Prostration) Folded hands touch crown, mouth, and heart to wish for body, speech, and mind of a Buddha. Go slowly and wish not to go down to rebirth in hells. Get up quickly. Three prostrations for teacher, teaching, and for those who follow teaching.
  - 2.) **CHU-PA:** (Offerings)
  - 3.) **SHAK-PA:** (Open yourself) Confession, purification of broken freedom, bodhisattva, and secret vows (very important). You can't concentrate if something is in your conscience. Do something like Vajrasattva visualization.
  - 4.) **YI-RANG-WA:** (Rejoicing) Being glad about the good things which you and others have done. It is more powerful to rejoice about your own goodness than that of others. It multiplies your virtue and potential exponentially to be very happy about your own good deeds.
  - 5.) **CHU-KOR KOR-WA:** (Turn the Wheel of Dharma) Requesting the holy beings to teach.
  - 6.) **SOLN-DEP:** (Requesting) Asking the holy beings to stay and not to break your relationship or to die.
  - 7.) **NGO-WA:** (Dedication)
- 6.) **SOLN-DEP:** Requesting to give you **jīn-lap** (potential to gain high spiritual goals) - to enable your ability to increase. Request to change ability in every path from simplest beginning to the highest one. After requesting, absorb the being through your crown into your heart.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Three: Six Conditions of the Environment

The Six Conditions of the Environment From Je Tsongkapa's commentary on **Dodey Gyen** (Sanskrit: *Sutralamkara*) by Asanga (c. 350 AD).

- 1.) **TUNPAY YUL**  
harmony place  
**Stay in a conducive place.**

##### **Five parts:**

- 1.) Everything you need to be comfortable physically should be there: enough clothing, heat, food prepared for you, etc.
- 2.) It should be a safe place.
- 3.) Should have a good environment, where you won't get sick, not too hot or cold or too noisy (sound is the worst distraction).
- 4.) Good friends: you should have an assistant in retreat with good morality, and similar values. Surrounding people support what you are doing. If people aren't supportive, you'll fail.
- 5.) Having goodness - not a lot of people around, and no noise. Don't go outside at all, and seal windows so you don't see anything, especially living creatures. No books, radio, or anything to do. Solitude should drive you into your mind.

(A note on **LUNG**: This is a condition caused by psychic energy imbalance. Symptoms include feeling bloated, anxiety, short quick breath, lightheadedness, getting giggly and silly, and not sleeping (very bad!). Eat heavy foods and protein to counteract it, and contact a lama. If you don't sleep for two days, and can't get a lama, get out of retreat.)

- 2.) **DU-PA CHUNG-WA: Attitude that you don't need much to be satisfied.** Few needs.

- 3.) **CHOK SHE-PA: Attitude of being satisfied with whatever you get.**

This and the prior point are very important. Once you go into meditation, let go of everything and be satisfied. Don't think you need something more or different to have a good retreat. (From *Abhidharmakosha* by Vasubandhu (C. 350 AD)).

- 4.) **JO MANG PANG**  
activities many give them up  
**Give up doing a lot of things. Do only the minimum necessary.**

- 5.) **TSUL-TRIM DAK-PA**  
morality pure  
**Avoid harming** (inflicting physical or mental suffering on) **any being**. If you go into retreat with any bad deeds on your conscience, you can not develop concentration. You must be trying to keep pure morality. Try to be especially good before going into retreat.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Three, continued

#### 6.) NAM - TOK PANG

fantasy, wrong thought give them up  
(regarding senses)

**Get rid of sense desires;** get rid of desire for things your senses are attracted to. Withdraw from the senses on a subtle level; the mind doesn't register the senses - taste, sight, sound, etc.

**GOM-RIM** (The Stages of Meditation) by Kamalashila (750 AD) was the source for this text. Also used Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakosha*, and included #2 and #3 from that.)

Another set of conditions which help concentration are the first four perfections. Each of the perfections supports the next. Charity supports morality, which supports not getting angry which supports joyous effort, which supports concentration, which supports wisdom.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Four: Eight-Point Posture of Vairochana

##### CHU - GYE LU - CHU

dharma eight body posture

**Eight-point posture of Vairochana** (sometimes called seven-point posture when they don't consider the last point - the breath).

##### 1.) KANG-PA KYIL-TRUNG

kang lotus posture

**Leg in full lotus** with left leg up first and then right leg. Do a half lotus if you can't do a full one. Don't sit in a posture which will distract you from meditation.

##### 2.) MIK MI - YE MI - SUM

eye not wide not far

**Don't keep eyes open too wide**, because that can be distracting, **and not closed**, because that might make you sleepy. Direct the eyes downward (about 45 degrees) on a point 6" in front of you. If you can't focus your mind because of distractions, just close the eyes for awhile. Have something plain in front of you, not colors, patterns, letters, etc., that will present a visual distraction. Focusing eyes on, or staring at, an object isn't meditating. The definition of meditation is to withdraw from the senses and focus the mind. It is very important for the eyes to be unfocused.

##### 3.) LU DRANG-PO

body straight

**It is very important to have the chest in one plane** - not leaning forward or backward. When you catch yourself leaning, correct your posture slowly to not interfere with breathing and meditation. You shouldn't lean against anything (except in long retreat when meditating all day and it is necessary to rest the back occasionally).

##### 4.) TRAK-PA NYAM

shoulders level

**Shoulders level** - left not higher than right, etc. Don't move for anything once in the posture, no matter what - itches, sleeping legs, etc. If you don't move, the feelings will go and you can then withdraw the senses.

##### 5.) GO MITO MIMA

head not high not bent down

**The head shouldn't be bent down or leaned backwards or to the right or left.** It should be centered and straight.

##### 6.) SO - CHU RANG - LUK

teeth lips natural position

**Teeth and lips as they are naturally**, not tight or clenched. If the mouth is closed, the corners get tight. If the mouth is open, it dries out. This position prevents excessive swallowing.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Four, continued

7.) **CHE YA-SOY RANG - LUK**

tongue top teeth keep in that area

**Keep tongue in the area of your upper teeth**, where it is naturally. This will prevent thirst.

8.) **UK** (from *Abhidharmakosha*)

breath

Count exhalation as one and inhalation as two, i.e., always start with exhalation. **Breath watching is meant to change gears and not as an object of meditation.** Should be very, very slow, so you don't hear your breath. Never force yourself to breathe slowly, and always breathe through the nose.

**Seat** is very important. The back of the seat should be higher than the front, to straighten the back, and there should be at least a thin mat on the ground to keep the legs warm and not falling asleep. Put kusha grass between the mat and the cushion.

**The left hand is placed down first and the right palm rests on it.** Thumbs touch and elbows out slightly, with palms resting on the pit of the ankle.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Five: Five Problems within Meditation

#### Five Problems and Eight Corrections: (from Pabongka Rinpoche's Lam Rim)

##### NYEPA NGA

problem five            Five problems which arise in meditation.

##### NYENPO GYE

antidote eight            Eight corrections to the five problems.

#### Five Problems:

- 1.) **LE-LO**  
laziness

**Laziness:** Not wanting to meditate, not feeling like it. When we do it even though we don't want to is when we will make the most progress and attain shamatha.

##### **Corrections:**

- a.) **TING-NGEN-DZIN LA DEPA**  
one pointed focus    towards faith

**Having attraction and admiration for the good qualities of meditation.** These include knowledge that you can only move from one path (of the five paths to Buddhahood) in a state of deep meditation, that you can't be in deep meditation without practicing daily, that you must have one-pointed concentration to attain the good qualities of Buddhism, etc.

- b.) **DUN-PA**  
want it

**You want shamata,** because of understanding the good qualities described above.

- c.) **TSUN-DRU**  
effort

**Trying hard to meditate,** as a result of wanting shamata. Your wanting it causes you to try to get it, so that you are willing to sit to meditate when you are tired and don't feel like it.

- d.) **SHIN - JANG**  
practiced ease

**By doing it over and over again, it becomes natural and easy,** mentally and physically. The body becomes used to the posture. You must do it continually. If you only do it for a few weeks and then take a break, it won't work. The mind will do whatever you want. With **shin-jang** (practiced ease), you can force the mind to focus as long as you want. This is the actual correction for laziness. The other three lead up to this correction. When you get good at it and enjoy it, you'll want to do it regularly. Think about what you want to do instead of meditating. It is impermanent, and will be lost; it is suffering to get it and there will be suffering to keep it. Meditate instead.

- 2.) **DAM - NGAK JE - PA**  
instruction/advice to forget

**Forgetting the instruction:** You lose the object of concentration. The object of meditation slips away completely.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Five, continued

Antidote:

- e.) **DREN - PA**  
remembering

**Recalling the object if you've lost it, or remembering the object before losing it.** Habituate yourself to it so it's familiar and not lost. The greatest enemy to remembering is to change objects of meditation. Pick one and keep it a long time or until you attain shamata.

- 3.) **JING - GU**  
mental dullness agitation

[**NE - CHA**                      **SEL - CHA**                      **NGAR - ME**  
stay aspect: fixation    clear aspect: clarity    intensity, flexible strength]

#### **Mental dullness and agitation:**

**Dullness:** It can be obvious or subtle. **Obvious dullness** is when you have **fixation** on the object and it has lost its **clarity**. With **subtle dullness**, you have **fixation** and **clarity**, but no **intensity**. This kind of meditation makes you forgetful, and you lose intellect. Dullness or sinking is the worst enemy of meditators, because it can be mistaken for progress, while actually it is causing detriment.

**Example of the cup:** You can hold a cup firmly or loosely. Holding the cup is having fixation. Holding it loosely is fixation and clarity; holding it tightly is fixation, clarity and intensity. Clarity refers to the subject (the meditator), not to the object of meditation. It doesn't refer to how clear the picture is, but to how clear your mind is, how alert, bright, and fresh it is. Increasing clarity brings the mind back to an alert state. It doesn't mean trying to see the Buddha's fingers more clearly or with more detail. Intensity refers to the degree of clarity. Having intensity means having a greater degree of clarity.

**Agitation** is mental wandering toward a virtuous object, a desire, or an adverse object.

#### **Antidote for agitation and dullness:**

- f.) **SHE-SHIN**  
watchfulness

You watch your mind to see if dullness and agitation are present. Not continually watching mind (you wouldn't be able to meditate), but checking it occasionally, such as every five minutes.

The only way to completely eliminate or destroy anger and afflictive emotions is by seeing emptiness directly. Once you see emptiness directly, you will be totally enlightened within seven lifetimes at the most. **This is the main incentive to meditate.** It can only happen from daily meditation. Use common sense; if posture or a practice cause pain for months and prevent meditation or concentration, then change it.

Once you see emptiness directly, you will be totally enlightened within seven lives at most. This is the main incentive to meditate - seeing emptiness can only happen with daily meditation.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Six: Five Problems within Meditation (cont.)

#### 4.) DU MI-JE-PA

**Not taking action:** It takes effort to change the state of dullness and agitation.

**Antidote:**

g.) **DU JE-PA:** Taking action

Antidote for dullness: **DRIM-PA, tightening up on your concentration.** You can tighten concentration on the object of meditation, in order to return intensity and clarity. Loss of confidence or depression also results in loss of clarity and intensity, so you may need to **uplift and encourage yourself.** If you can't tighten concentration on the object of meditation, then **shift to another object** of concentration.

**Objects to act as antidotes for dullness:**

\* The best object is the thought of how lucky we are to be alive, healthy, and to have dharma and perfect human conditions in a joyful way. When uplifted, shift back to the original object.

\* The thought of the benefits of behaving well toward your lama will accumulate virtue while your focus is away from the original subject.

\* Focus on a bright light.

\* Think of the good qualities of Buddha.

If these don't work, then :

\* Break the meditation and stretch.

\* Go to a cold place to get refreshed.

\* Go to a wide open place to look at the sky or at wide vistas - something to uplift the spirit.

\* Pace back and forth, get exercise.

\* Splash face with water.

Then go back to meditate.

**Antidote for agitation: HLU-PA** (loosen up).

When concentration is too tight, the mind will go off to other objects.

Agitation may be caused by ungrounded, giddy happiness. You need to come down.

\* Mentally loosen up on the object and bring the mind down.

\* If that doesn't work, shift to another object, such as the inevitability of death or the three types of suffering in my life.

\* Count your breaths. Counting breath meditation is used to shift the mind to neutral before going to an object of meditation, or to bring the mind down when it's holding too tightly to an object of meditation.

#### 5.) DU JE-PA: Taking action when it's not necessary.

**Antidote:**

h.) Leave it alone.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Seven: Nine Stages of Meditation

##### Nine Stages of Meditation:

SEM NE GU

mind state nine

As you encounter the five problems and apply the eight corrections, you attain **nine levels of progress:**

- 1.) SEM JOK PA .....▶ concentration  
mind putting

**Putting the mind on the object in meditation.** Learning the object from your lama and putting your mind on it is the first step. You have very little ability to hold the object except for a brief moment now and then. (You'll think your mind is worse than it was before you meditated because of lack of focus. You're just seeing the mind clearly for the first time.)

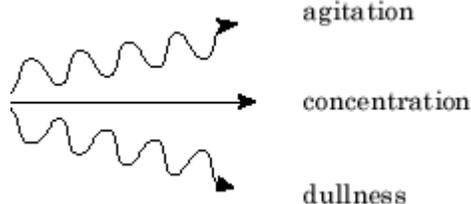
- 2.) GYUN-DU JOK PA - - - - - ▶ concentration  
in a stream putting the mind on the object.

**Putting the mind on an object in a stream.** You can keep the mind on the object for a short while (like the amount of time needed to say a rosary of *OM MANI PADME HUM*). At this stage you keep the mind on the object a minute or two, and then it seems the distractions surge back to the mind in great force. The periods of distraction are longer than the periods of concentration. Dullness and agitation are predominant at this stage.

- 3.) LEN-TE JOK-PA - - - - - ▶ concentration  
patch putting the mind on the object

**Patch-like fixation or putting the mind on the object.** You are patching your continuity. You have a stream of concentration, and it breaks, so you patch the break in concentration to continue the stream of concentration. Characterized by shorter breaks in concentration at this stage. You have gained pretty powerful **dren-pa** (recall, recollection) at this stage - a strong ability to go back to the object readily.

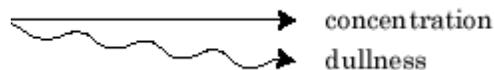
- 4.) NYEWAR JEK-PA  
closely mind is placed on object



**The mind is placed closely on the object.**

Recollection is so strong that your mind can't lose the object completely. Can lose clarity or intensity, but not fixation. Still lots of coarse dullness and agitation. You no longer struggle to keep the object, but struggle with the quality of meditation. Your ability to recall at this point is completely matured and complete. The tendency at this stage is to bring the mind in too forcefully, and subtle dullness results.

- 5.) DUL - WAR JE-PA  
bring under control to do it



**Bringing the mind under control.** You need very strong watchfulness to catch the subtle dullness. Watchfulness is powerful at this level. This level is different, because you have fixation and clarity, but not intensity.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

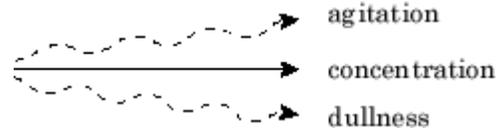
#### Class Seven, continued

- 6.) **SHI-WAR JE-PA**  
peace      make it



Make the mind calm by correcting subtle agitation which results from overcorrecting subtle dullness in step five. When correcting dullness, you may get too up, and need to bring yourself down. There isn't much subtle dullness at this level. You need very strong watchfulness to get to levels five and six. Watchfulness is complete at this stage.

- 7.) **NAM-PAR SHI-WAR JE-PA**  
totally      peace      make mind



**Here you make the mind totally calm.** Because watchfulness and recollection are totally complete, it is difficult for dullness and agitation to occur. You must still make an effort to focus the mind, however. You don't have to be very concerned about subtle dullness and agitation occurring, but still it requires effort to wipe them out. They are no longer attacking you. You are attacking them.

- 8.) **TSE CHEK-TU JE-PA**  
one-pointed      make it

**Bring the mind to one-pointedness.** At the beginning of the session, you make a small effort to place the mind on the object, and then it remains there effortlessly.

- 9.) **NAM-PAR JOK-PA**  
even      place mind on object

**Place the mind in deep meditation.** There is effortless entering and abiding in deep meditation. Practicing meditation over and over again leads to this level. You can't perceive emptiness directly without this level of concentration.

In stages **one** and **two**, you are not concentrating very well.

In stages **three** through **seven**, meditation is pretty good, but you have dullness and agitation.

In stages **eight** and **nine**, you don't need watchfulness anymore.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation Class Eight: Object of Meditation

**Three kinds of Meditation** (Each with a different object):

- 1.) **JOK-GOM: Putting the mind on an object**, such as a Buddha image. This is what people normally think of as meditation.
- 2.) **SHAR-GOM: Review meditation** - going along certain steps of an outline with one-pointed mind, so you know them backwards, forwards, in mixed order, etc. The steps of the outline are the object of meditation, which you review repeatedly in different ways.
- 3.) **CHE-GOM: Analytical meditation** - debating a concept with yourself. As a result of this, you will come to a conclusion, and then switch to **jok-gom** using that conclusion as an object.

Any of these can be done as shamata (**shi-ney**) meditation with single-pointed concentration. The class will use a lam-rim outline as an object of meditation. The teachings or an image of the Buddha are considered a part of the Buddha. These are the most virtuous objects of concentration.

#### **YON - TEN SHIR GYURMA LAM-RIM**

good quality source he who is path steps

This lam-rim is called *He who is the Source of all Good Qualities*, by Je Tsongkapa; taught at Ra-Dreng Monastery. This will be the object of meditation for the next six months. It contains all the stages necessary for attainment, so it is a complete path. The first lam-rim (in the *Prajnaparamita*), was spoken by Buddha.

**The Five Great Texts** (open teachings):

- 1.) Perfection of Wisdom (Sanskrit: *Prajnaparamita*)
- 2.) Middle Way (*Madhyamika*)
- 3.) Vowed Morality (*Vinaya*)
- 4.) Higher Knowledge (*Abhidharma*)
- 5.) Buddhist Logic and Perception (*Pramana*)

These teachings include the four great topics of Indian Buddhism, and represent all of Buddhist knowledge (apart from the secret teachings). Numbers three and four comprise the Theravada teachings, which are held in Thailand and elsewhere. Not all teachings reached every country. Numbers one, two, and five are Mahayana only.

None of these teachings include the full lam-rim individually. The lam-rim incorporates all of the information of the five topics.

**Four Great Divisions of this Lam-Rim:**

- 1.) Root of the path: Taking a lama, and lifetime behaviour in relationship with them.
  - 2.) How to practice and purify the mind after taking a lama.
  - 3.) Request for help in practice.
  - 4.) Prayer to meet lamas and to achieve goals.
- (these will be expanded one-by-one over the rest of this class)

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Eight, continued

#### 1.) **The Root of the Path: Taking a Lama**

- A.) Developing faith
  - 1.) How to think about him/her
  - 2.) How to act toward him/her
- B.) Develop reverence for the Lama by remembering his or her kindness.

**Ten Qualities of a Lama** someone you can trust with your spirit and mind. (From Maitreya)

The first three are the three trainings:

- 1.) Practicing the ten moralities (not killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying slandering, harsh words, idle gossip, or creating ill will)
- 2.) Having mastered concentration.
- 3.) Having mastered wisdom (understanding or perceiving emptiness).
- 4.) Knowing more than the student.
- 5.) Willing to make great efforts on behalf of the students.
- 6.) Understanding the scriptures perfectly.
- 7.) Should have perceived emptiness (directly), i.e. the descriptions are internally consistent and lead you to some realization.
- 8.) Skillful teacher.
- 9.) Should love the students.
- 10.) Doesn't tire of teaching the same thing again and again.

or at least:

#### **Five qualities of a good lama:**

- 1-3.) Controls self with morality, concentration, and wisdom (three trainings).
- 4.) Has perceived emptiness intellectually or directly.
- 5.) Loves students.

#### **Minimum, minimum five qualities of a good teacher:**

- 1.) In the great division between worldly and dharma attitude, they should be devoted mainly to dharma (internally, not in externals such as job, etc.).
- 2.) In the division between this life and future life, they are working mainly toward future life (also in internal attitude).
- 3.) They take care of others before themselves.
- 4.) They are not careless in their physical, verbal, or mental actions.
- 5.) They doesn't teach their students a wrong path.

When the text says "bless me", it means to change my Dharma aptitude or ability to learn.

The main way to please a lama is to put into practice what they teach. This is the highest offering you can make.

**There is a great danger to just learning information and wanting more without internalizing or putting it into practice. This causes your heart to become hardened to the Dharma.**

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III, Level One

### Class Nine: Object of Meditation; Lam-rim - Lesser Scope

#### How to practice to purify your mind (after taking a lama):

- 1.) **NYINGPO LENPAR KULWA**  
essence get to or take to urge

**Urge to take the essential meaning of your life; to get the most out of it.**

- 2.) **NYINGPO LENPAY TSUL**  
essence take how to

**How to go about taking the essence from this life.**

To develop the urge to get the most out of life, meditate on:

#### **Eight ways of lacking opportunity:**

- 1.) Having wrong view (the worst is denying karma)
- 2.) Born as an animal
- 3.) Born as a craving spirit
- 4.) Born in hells
- 5.) No teachings
- 6.) Uncivilized - no vowed morality (eight of them - lay persons' vows, ordained vows, etc.)
- 7.) Handicapped, retarded, etc. - no faculty to learn or practice
- 8.) Born as a pleasure being

**Ten fortunes:** (five relate to you; five relate to the outside world)

- 1.) Born as a **human**
- 2.) Born in a **civilized land** (where someone is keeping vowed morality)
- 3.) **Faculties intact** - can hear, see, think, etc.
- 4.) **Didn't commit the five heinous crimes** (killing mother, father, or an arhant, trying to harm the Buddha or to split up the Buddha's monks)
- 5.) Have **faith** in the teachings
- 6.) Living in a world where **Buddha has come**
- 7.) Living in a world where **Buddha has taught**
- 8.) Living where what Buddha has taught **has not been lost** from hearts and minds
- 9.) Living in a world where what Buddha has taught **is being practiced**
- 10.) Living in a world where **there is support of practitioners**

#### **How to get the most out of life:**

- 1.) Small capacity person's approach:

**Death meditation** - get up thinking "I'm going to die today."

- a.) I must die
- b.) No idea when
- c.) At death, nothing helps but my dharma practice

#### **Principles of karma:**

- a.) It is definite (i.e. good produces good and bad produces bad)
- b.) It expands (the results are vastly greater than the seed or causes)
- c.) If you don't do it, you won't get the result
- d.) Once created, karma won't just disappear

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Ten: Object of Meditation - Medium and Great Capacity

##### 2.) Medium capacity person's practice:

- a.) **TAR N DU LO KYE**  
freedom what mind/idea develop

**Develop the wish to achieve freedom.**

- b.) **TAR LAM TENAB**  
freedom path determine what it is

**Figure out how to gain the path to freedom.** You get freedom by focusing on your morality.

##### 3.) Great capacity person's practice:

- a.) **JANG-SEM KYE-TSUL**  
bodhichitta how to

**Develop the wish to want to become enlightened to help all living beings.**

- b.) **CHU - PA CAP - TSUL**  
activities of a bodhisattva learn how to

**Learn how to act like a bodhisattva.**

- 1.) **DO**  
open (non-secret) **Non-secret bodhisattva activities.** Six perfections:  
giving, morality, not getting angry, being happy about  
doing virtue, concentration (shamata), wisdom  
(vipasyana)
- 2.) **NGAK**  
secret (tantra) **Tantric bodhisattva activities**

**The last two perfections** (repeat of the fifth and sixth perfections in their highest form):

1.) **Shamata:** (Quietude) That single-mindedness which is imbued with the exceptional bliss of practiced ease due to deep single-pointed meditation on its object.

2.) **Vipashyana:** (Insight) That wisdom which is full of exceptional bliss of practiced ease by power of the analysis of its object, and which is founded upon quietude (shamata).

**Both insight and quietude look at the same thing: the things that are and the way things are.** Both are shamata; the only difference is whether or not they are analyzing the object. One is analytical (**vipashyana**), and the other is non-analytical (**shamata**).

When you get focused on the object perfectly, the mind is perfectly fit to do its work. Based upon that, the psychic winds upon which the mind rides are all put into perfect order (because your mind is in perfect order). Based on that you start to feel bliss in your body, and because of that you feel happiness and mental bliss.

**These four steps are what "exceptional bliss of practiced ease" means:**

- 1.) Your **mind concentrates**, therefore
- 2.) the **winds straighten out**. This causes
- 3.) the **body to feel bliss**, which causes
- 4.) you **to feel happy mentally**.

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Ten, continued

When you meditate on the Lam Rim, you are doing single-pointed concentration. You focus on one object at a time. Similarly, with the image of a Buddha; you focus on one part at a time to see the whole image.

Shamata is the fixation on the object, and vipashyana is the analysis of the object which sits on the shamata. **Vipashyana's analysis is of the dependent origination or emptiness (positive or negative states of existence) of the object, using the tool of shamata.** Vipashyana always incorporates analysis of the object's emptiness or dependent origination. Both shamata and vipashyana are focused single-pointedly on their object. Vipashyana incorporates emptiness/dependent origination analysis and shamata doesn't.

Meditation isn't something you do someday in retreat; it's something which you do every day. Otherwise you will not see successful results.

#### Three types of morality:

- 1.) **Restraining self from bad deeds** (not breaking the three kinds of vows)
- 2.) **Collecting goodness**
- 3.) **Morality for the sake of all sentient beings** (This is the other two moralities done with the motivation to help others.)

## CLASS NOTES

### Course III: Applied Meditation

#### Class Eleven: Course Review

##### How to meditate on lam rim:

You meditate on lam rim by memorizing each section for a few days and "burning it in" so that you know it backwards, forwards, in mixed order, etc. First do **shar-gom** (review meditation). After that, take a section at a time and do **che-gom** (analytical meditation).

##### Tantra:

In order to practice, you must:

- \* make your mind a worthy vessel by studying and **knowing lam rim**, as a **minimum** to have permission for an empowerment.
- \* You must have taken **all four empowerments** within the initiation.
- \* You must **keep all pledges and vows you commit to**. (A pledge is something you promise to do. A vow is something you promise not to do.)
- \* You must keep your vows and pledges pure in order for meditation upon the two levels (generation and completion stages) to work.

Tantra is a secret practice because it will not work and you won't see any result if you don't keep your pledges and vows.

The worst thing that might occur in tantra is that nothing happens after taking initiation and practicing. Then you think it doesn't work, and you give up because you haven't had instruction to know how to practice properly in order to succeed. If you are practicing properly, then you should have more happiness relatively quickly.

**There aren't some sentient beings out there somewhere else for you to practice toward. It's the people around you at work, family, etc. who will be the basis of your practice. Begin with small things like making them tea, etc. and then progress toward greater things.**