



# Mirror to Your Life

Commentary on Dharmaraksita's  
Wheel of Sharp Weapons

by  
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## Editor's Note

Trembling in amazement and horror... it felt like an electric current was running through one's veins. That's what reading the verses of the Wheel of Sharp Weapons does to you. Combine that with Geshe Tenzin Zopa's mastery at clarifying the verses and integrating real life examples into them and you find yourself in the raw - stripped of all hypocrisy, denial and excuse, with nowhere to hide. Such is the potent clarity of "Mirror to Your Life", Geshela's commentary on this extraordinary text by Dharmaraksita.

If you want an answer to the "Why Me?" question, this book holds all you need to know. "Can I free myself from misery?" this book says Yes.

During the classes where these teachings were given, LDC students presented summaries of the teachings for the benefit of those who missed the previous class or needed their understanding refreshed. Geshela invited those students to offer their "takeaway lessons" arising from their doing the summaries, to be part of this book and these appear at the back of this volume.

In celebration of the Guru-Buddhas who live amongst us to pull us out of the snake-pit of ordinary existence and with deep gratitude & undying devotion to Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche and our Geshe Tenzin Zopa, all efforts in producing this book are dedicated to our Gurus' long lives, excellent health and fulfilled wishes.

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# Wheel of Sharp Weapons

(alt. “ The Wheel Weapon Mind Training”)

*by Dharmarakṣita*

*Commentary by Geshe Tenzin Zopa*

I want to start by saying that the Wheel of Sharp Weapons text contains the best form of consultation-advice. It is more worthwhile coming to classes to study these teachings, than seeking divinations from me. The most appropriate and reliable answers are to be found in the Wheel of Sharp Weapons. Whatever experiences - good or bad; whether facing happiness or hardship; whether encountering positive or negative experiences – these are all due to one’s karma. As long as we are unable to overcome delusions which give rise to misery, even if we go to fortune tellers, high lamas or buy costly prescriptions, these will only offer temporary relief and are not the ultimate solutions. Without dealing with one’s karma and striking at the root causes of suffering, problems will never end.

During the 1<sup>st</sup> Turning of the Wheel at Sarnath, the Buddha taught the 4 Noble Truths which are the fundamental teachings for liberation from samsaric suffering.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Turning of the Wheel at Rajgir, Buddha taught the Mahayana teachings to those disciples who aspired to cultivate the bodhicitta and the 6 Perfections to attain enlightenment for the sake of all beings. At the same time, the Buddha revealed the Tantric teachings at Amravati.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Turning of the Wheel, Buddha clarified the teachings on the emptiness view held by the Cittamatrīn School.

The Wheel of Sharp Weapons contains the combined teachings of Mahāyānic

sutra, where the graduated path to enlightenment (Lam Rim) is integrated with the teachings on mind-training (Lojong), bodhicitta, the practice of the 6 Perfections and with particular emphasis on karma.

This teaching strikes at the heart of the real trouble maker, which is ignorance . It holds up a mirror to us to demonstrate how we are the creator of all our sufferings and problems (and our happiness too). Without understanding this basic point, there is no way to stop creating the same karma that produces the full range of troubles and sufferings to us. Through learning that specific results are caused by specific actions, we begin to understand the reasons for our experiences and what we need to do if we want the unhappiness and dissatisfaction to stop.

Dharmaraksita was one of the kind Gurus of Lama Atisha (who is the root teacher of Lam Rim and mind-training teachings). Lama Atisha in turn passed them onto his spiritual son Dromtonpa. Both were instrumental in setting up the great Kadampa tradition. Je Tsongkhapa with his two disciples Gyaltsab Je and Khedrup Je contributed to the extensive spread and preservation of this Kadampa tradition. The new Kadampa tradition founded by Je Tsongkhapa which was based on the core mind-training teachings of the old Kadampa and combined it with the teachings from the Graduated Path to Enlightenment.

Lama Atisha had about 150 great Gurus. He received these teachings of the Wheel of Sharp Weapons from Dharmaraksita (who resided in central India) and his other Gurus included Maitriyoga (the wandering yogi) and Lama Serlingpa from whom Atisha received extensive bodhicitta teachings. One day, Lama Atisha was at the stupa in Bodhgaya in deep contemplation, reflecting on what would be the swiftest method to attain enlightenment. Two Tara statues nearby manifested chatting between themselves and arising from that conversation, he heard them say that bodhicitta was the swiftest way to enlightenment and the greatest practitioner of bodhicitta was Lama Serlingpa, who then lived in Sumatra. Despite immense hardship

on his journey to Sumatra, Lama Atisha was able to meet Lama Serlingpa and receive the bodhicitta teachings from him. Although Lama Atisha was of the Madhyamika Prasangika highest school of philosophy and Lama Serlingpa was of the lower Cittamatra school, each time Lama Atisha reflected on bodhicitta, he would remember Lama Serlingpa, who moved him deeply with his profound knowledge and practice of bodhicitta.

There are several interpretations to the words, “Wheel of Sharp Weapons”. One meaning refers to the antidote of wisdom realising emptiness, which enables us to destroy and eradicate the ego-mind, the self grasping mind which is the source of much suffering. The other interpretation is an analogy which shows how the committing and ripening of karma due to ignorance, recurs like a wheel. Until we eradicate the ego-mind and purify ignorance, we remain locked in the wheel and continuously return to this samsaric world to experience suffering.

### “Homage to the Three Jewels”

This text opens with a verse paying homage to the Triple Gem. It shows that this teaching is from the category of the Sutra (Discourse) teachings of the Tripitaka. The Tripitaka refers to the 3 baskets of the Buddha’s teachings namely Sutra (philosophical discourse); Vinaya (code of moral conduct) and Abiddhamma (Buddhist metaphysics).

### “I bow down to the Great Wrathful One Yamantaka”

Why bow down to Yamantaka, who is the wrathful emanation of Manjushri, embodiment of the Buddha’s Wisdom? The reason is that the root cause of suffering is ignorance, leading us to encounter “Yama” (the Lord of death) or in other words, having to remain chained to the circle of suffering and death. “Taka” means antidote. So Yamantaka refers to the antidote to death



and suffering, which in turn arise due to ignorance. This antidote is actually the wisdom realising emptiness. Yamantaka takes on a wrathful image to counter Yama, itself a scary image of death. Thus this teaching is principally to eradicate ignorance. Yamantaka has 9 faces, 34 arms and 16 legs with a buffalo's head (similar to Yama's appearance). Since Yamantaka is to subdue Yama, he adopts a similar wrathful aspect. Each hand holds different implements. Every implement is symbolic of the antidotes to eliminate the ignorant mind.

V I

*When the peacocks roam the jungle of virulent poison,  
The flocks take no delight in gardens of medicinal plants,  
no matter how beautiful they may be,  
for peacocks thrive on the essence of virulent poison.*

I

བཙན་དཀ་ནགས་སུ་མ་བྱ་བྱ་བ་ན།  
སྤྲོ་གྱི་ལྷ་མ་ར་ལེགས་པར་མཛོས་གྱུར་ཀྱང་།  
མ་བྱའི་ཚོགས་རྣམས་དགའ་བར་མི་འགྱུར་གྱི།  
བཙན་དཀ་བཙུང་གིས་མ་བྱ་འཚོ་བ་ལྟར།

When peacocks go into beautiful jungles, they take no delight in the pretty objects there but instead seek out poisonous plants. Similarly, when Bodhisattvas come into cyclic existence, they do not come into cyclic existence by the force of karma and delusions but instead, willingly return to samsara due to their great mind of bodhicitta to benefit all living beings and in so doing, they encounter all sorts of difficult conditions. Most of us are living lives that are blinded by attachment which create negative causes



for future hardship. However, instead of moving away from attachment, we willingly submit to them, become distracted and more intense in our pursuit of objects of desire. If we were asked to choose between attending a party or a Dharma talk, which would we choose? Naturally, we would choose the party. If someone asked us whether we would prefer to watch a movie or listen to a Dharma discourse, which would we prefer? Sure, the movie. Would you like to have 10 varieties of food or plain tsampa-flour? Without hesitation, the more variety, the better. Even in our relationships, there are cases of married people seeking out multiple partners. This is how our world is. Therefore, Bodhisattvas are like the peacocks who, despite entering a world filled with sense-pleasure and desire-satisfying objects, are not deceived nor distracted by them but instead, guide living beings to aim for the essence, namely ultimate liberation from samsara. The liberation that will enable sentient beings to gain freedom from the suffering that grows out of the poison of delusions.

V 2

*Similarly, when the heroes roam the jungle of cyclic existence,  
They do not become attached to the garden of happiness and prosperity,  
No matter how beautiful it may be, for heroes thrive in the jungle of suffering.*

2

དཔའ་ཐོ་འཁོར་བའི་ནགས་སུ་འཇུག་པ་ན།  
བདེ་སྤྱིད་དཔལ་གྱི་ལྷམ་ར་མངོས་གྱུར་ཁྱད་།  
དཔའ་ཐོ་དག་ནི་ཆགས་པར་མི་འགྱུར་གྱི།  
སྤྲུག་བསྐྱེད་ནགས་སུ་སེམས་དཔའ་འཛོལ་ཡིན།།

V 3

*Therefore, it is due to cowardice that persons avidly pursue their own happiness  
And so come to suffer; and it is due to heroism that bodhisattvas,  
Willingly taking the suffering of others onto themselves,  
Are always happy.*

3

དེ་ཕྱིར་བདེ་སྐྱིད་དང་དུ་ལེན་པ་ཡི།  
སྤར་མའི་དབང་གིས་སྤྱག་ལ་སྐྱེལ་བ་ཡིན།  
སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ་དང་དུ་ལེན་པའི་སེམས་དཔའ་དེ།  
དཔའ་བའི་སྟོབས་ཀྱིས་རྟག་ཏུ་བདེ་བ་ཡིན།།

Bodhisattvas reincarnate and choose rebirth into this samsaric world, to put full effort into engaging in bodhicitta so as to inspire living beings to do the same and be the complete cause to secure their happiness. If we are able to have such a superior motivation, when problems come, we will not feel overwhelmed nor depressed. After all, like the bodhisattvas, we would understand how this samsaric world came about and how it functions and thereby treat those problems as the means for us to practice, to strengthen ourselves and purify past negative karma and afflictions.

Since we are already in this world and in the state of contaminated suffering, why not transform all of this into the path of enlightenment. Transform our difficult situations into conducive conditions for us to cultivate the altruistic mind.

Dharmaraksita, author of this text, encountered many personal hardships. He once met a poor dying man who was advised by the doctor to consume human flesh to get better. Dharmaraksita heard this and immediately

went to this man, cut the flesh from his thigh and offered it to rescue that man. Dharmaraksita experienced great pain on account of this act and it took a long time for this wound to heal, which was due to his past negative karma. Many people tried to help him cure his wound but he was unfazed saying that he was willing to die from the wound because what he did was meaningful. That night, before going to bed, Dharmaraksita generated a strong aspiration to be the cause to free all beings from suffering. During sleep, he had a dream that the Buddha applied a patch of flesh onto his wound and when Dharmaraksita woke up, he was completely healed. It needs to be understood here, that the giving up of organs to others (the way Dharmaraksita did) must be based on one having renunciation, the ability to let go and having bodhicitta. Only then is one allowed to engage in such austere and intensive acts of giving. Bodhisattvas are different from ordinary beings. They have profound renunciation and are willing to sacrifice themselves out of bodhicitta.

Desire is like a jungle of virulent poison. Just touching this type of poison can bring death. One needs to know that desire has that extreme destructive nature. The desire referred to here is the desirous, clinging mind. The antidote is renunciation. How do we practice renunciation? By having contentment. By being delighted with what you have and not having strong urges for temporary satisfaction like eating excessively and indulging in extreme physical thrills like bungy jumping (laughter)! Deaths have occurred during such activities and if one dies in great shock, one risks a rebirth as a preta/hungry ghost. By constantly grasping for more and to adorn ourselves without any sense of renunciation, we will exhaust all past good karma to have possessions. That is why when the karma to experience, let's say, an earthquake ripens, one will not be able to even find a piece of cloth to cover oneself. Similarly, when we break our samaya with the guru, one will encounter difficulties in the guru-disciple relationship such as being frequently misunderstood by the guru and hindrances to our practice.

V 4

*Now here, desire is like a jungle of virulent poison:  
The hero, like the peacock, masters it;  
The coward, like the crow, perishes.*

4

ད་འདིར་འདོད་ཆགས་བཙན་དུག་ནགས་དང་འབྲ།

དཔའ་བོ་མ་བྱ་ལྟ་བུས་འཆུན་པར་འགྱུར།

སྐར་མ་བྱ་རོག་ལྟ་བུའི་སྒོག་ལ་འཆི།།

Do not be like the crow which perishes when it comes into contact with poison. Instead, be like the peacock who is unharmed by poisons. Learn to conquer desires and self-grasping by gaining the wisdom which realises dependent-arising and emptiness. What is this wisdom? The mind which realises that existence as we know it, is based on causes and conditions and illusion-like perceptions which are imputed by our own minds.

V 5:

*How can persons concerned only with their own desires master this poison?  
If they involve themselves in the other afflictions as well  
It will cause them their chance for emancipation,  
Just like the crow.*

5

རང་འདོད་ཅན་གྱིས་དུག་འདི་ག་ན་འཆུན།

ཙུན་མོངས་གཞན་ལ་འང་དེ་བཞིན་སྐར་བ་ན།

བྱ་རོག་ལྟ་བུར་ཐར་པའི་སྒོག་ལ་འབབ།།

Without mastering one's need for desirous objects, there can be no way to transform our troubled samsaric life to the blissful, enlightened existence. There can be no liberation as long as one cultivates the clinging, self-cherishing mind. If we give a free hand to our defilements and indulge in our desires, we will be totally overwhelmed by them and we will be denied the chance to truly benefit ourselves, let alone benefit other beings.

When we are in such an overwhelmed mental state, we will be like the crows who are misled into thinking they can consume poison and withstand the consequences but end up perishing. We think that delusions bring us joy and happiness. In truth, delusions cause us to constantly create negative karma and guarantee us great suffering. Crows who blindly follow the example of peacocks end up dead because crows do not train themselves to handle and deal with poison, like the peacocks do. Therefore we should similarly train in mastering our desire and cultivate the altruistic mind of cherishing others. Just having a shallow contemplation of bodhicitta and then trying to engage in the bodhisattva's method of adopting desire to transform its corrosive power, will bring danger and more negative karma to us. For example, we might think we can practice Yamantaka, the Wrathful One by unleashing our anger and forceful negative actions towards others but this is totally mistaken and will only bring about heaps of negative karma! Likewise with objects of attachment and desire. We think we can control and manage desire-objects whilst we indulge in them but unless we have first gained stable renunciation and bodhicitta, there is every danger that we will get swallowed up by desire and thereby lose all our chances for liberation.

In short, the bodhisattva practices have the power to transform delusions into the Path but until we are well trained in morality and the practices of transformation, we have to follow the Vinaya system i.e. abandoning desirous objects. As for anger, do not even try to think that you can transform that explosive delusion by displaying anger to others as part of your transformation practice!

The bodhisattva's sole motivation is to benefit others. When they engage in actions in relation to desirous objects, it is solely for the happiness of others. However, in our case, when we engage with desirous objects, it is purely for our own interests. Hence, our motivation is completely different and in the end, we only harvest trouble and dissatisfaction. Some bodhisattvas have families and children but they do not live ordinary samsaric lives. They get reborn into this world not due to karma and delusion but come as teachers, Gurus who sometimes get married and produce children. Their activity of producing children involves an element of desire but the overriding purpose is to benefit the Dharma. The child from such an activity brings joy to the world, becomes a preserver of Dharma. However, if an ordinary person, including an ordinary monk (!) wants to do that and indulge in desire, then there is a 99% chance the child produced will be a trouble maker or even a destroyer of Dharma and rest of one's life will be spent in regret and one's marital life will be quarrelsome with endless troubles.

V 6

*Thus the bodhisattva roams like the peacock in the forest of cyclic existence,  
 Converting the afflictions, which are like the jungle of virulent poisons,  
 Into an elixir.  
 Willingly embracing the afflictions, the hero shall conquer the poison.*

6

དེ་ཕྱིར་སེམས་དཔའ་མ་བྱ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡིས།  
 དུག་གི་ནགས་དང་འདྲ་བའི་ཉོན་མོངས་རྣམས།  
 བརྟུང་དུ་སྦྱར་ལ་འཁོར་བའི་ནགས་སུ་འཇུག།  
 དང་དུ་བླངས་ལ་དུག་འདི་གཞོམ་པར་བྱ།།

Bodhisattvas wander in the world of desire like peacocks, who extract the poison, transform it and thus, instead of experiencing death and physical degeneration, the colour of their feathers is enhanced, its beauty glorious and its life extended. Bodhisattvas while living in samsara, remain unaffected by the objects of delusions and are able to transform these into potent medicine, like an elixir to eradicate all the sufferings of samsara. The whole purpose for bodhisattvas to willingly take on delusions, is to confront them and overcome them and guide living beings on this path.

Due to our self cherishing and our self-grasping mind, all our activities, including meditation and doing Dharma activity (!) are solely or largely for self-interest, thinking “I should accumulate merit so that I will have a good life”. This attitude possesses no virtue and merely creates samsaric causes and suffering results. Even if some virtue is created through activities such as making offerings, it will not bring ultimate liberation if we perform such so-called virtue with the self cherishing and self grasping mind. For bodhisattvas, they commit their lives solely to serve beings. One needs to take care of one’s survival but one should do it with bodhicitta motivation. HH Dalai Lama advises those senior monks who give no thought to their personal conditions, “You Lamas, I respect that you have high practices but your body is human, so if you don’t take care of your bodies, you will get diabetes!” In ordinary life, you need to work hard and if you do this with the motivation that “Whatever I earn, let it be the cause of liberating other beings”, then that entire day becomes Dharma virtue. Earning money is not wrong. Earning it for solely worldly purposes is samsaric. Do not waste your efforts and motivate properly instead. Before sleeping, eating, talking or doing any activity, set in your mind the bodhicitta motivation.

In the morning of each day, motivate “Whatever action I do today, let it be the cause of liberating others from samsara”. During the day, remember to check yourself. This is done by assigning one portion of your mind as a guard (this is called introspection) which checks whether what you motivated in the morning is being carried out and again at the end of the day, this introspection



mind checks whether one has remained true to one's motivation. If you discover you have not, then undertake purification practices. If one has lived and acted in accordance with one's motivation, then one must definitely rejoice that one has been able to do so.

V 7

*The ego clinging of the helpless wanderer in cyclic existence is the messenger of the devil.*

*Distance yourself from the savor of selfishness and hedonism,  
And willingly embrace hardship for the sake of others.*

7

དེ་ནི་རང་དབང་མེད་པར་འཁོར་བ་ཡི།

བདག་ཏུ་འཛིན་པ་བདུད་གྱི་ཕོ་ཉ་འདི།

རང་འདོད་སྦྱིད་འདོད་རོ་དང་ཕར་སྐྱེལ་ལ།

གཞན་དོན་དཀའ་སྤྱད་དང་དུ་སྤྲང་བར་བྱ།

The egoistic view that one is independently-existing and is the most important, causes us to endlessly roam in cyclic existence. This mistaken view is the means by which one's delusions are enhanced and negativities made heavier. We are the vessel and carrier of emotional afflictions. Whatever delusions that one is habituated with, one needs to apply the relevant antidotes to purify them. For example, for attachment, apply detachment (see the un-attractive aspects of the object of attachment); for anger, apply patience; for miserliness, apply generosity; for the distracted mind, train one's mind in concentration. When the delusions are weakened, we start to make progress. We need to overcome selfishness and our grasping towards pleasure or hedonism. Having is not the problem, grasping at it is. We think that the purpose of our life is to only hear nice things, taste good food,

receive praises, have silken clothes, have the ability to travel on holidays. This kind of grasping, hedonistic thinking will feed our selfishness and the mistaken view of “I”, thereby chaining us to samsara without any hope for true freedom.

This might sound discouraging and make you feel that everything you have done so far is wrong and negative. No. How we can change all these hedonistic, worldly activities into something worthwhile? Change the motivation! The manner of motivation changes the nature of these activities. Motivate well and with sincerity, thinking “I do this so that I can benefit others”. Adopt the bodhisattva practice of being willing to undertake hardship for the sake of others.

V 8

*May the sufferings of all beings, who, like myself  
Are driven by their karma and their habituation to the afflictions,  
Be heaped upon me  
The hedonist.*

8

ལས་ཀྱིས་བདས་ཤིང་ཉོན་མོངས་གོམས་པ་ཡི།  
རིས་མཐུན་སྦྱིས་དག་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྤྱད་བསྐྱེད་རྣམས།  
སྤྱིད་འདོད་བདག་གི་སྡེད་དུ་སྦྱང་བར་བྱ།

This verse shows us how to change our attitude through tong len (the practice of exchanging of self for others). Whatever pleasant and happy experience which happens in your life, think “May this happy experience be for all sentient beings to enjoy”. Conversely, when problems come to you, rejoice

and think “Ah, now I can really help others by taking on their troubles”. Hold the thought “May all the troubles of living beings ripen upon myself and living beings experience every happiness”. If you find this thought is too unnerving to manage, then at least think, “Whatever hardship I am now experiencing, may it be sufficient to exhaust all the sufferings of living beings so that they can have every happiness”.

V 9

*When I become enmeshed in selfishness,*

*I will offer my own happiness to living beings so as to counteract it.*

*In the same way, should a companion be ungrateful to me,*

*I will be content in knowing that this is in retribution for my own inconstancy.*

9

གཤམ་རྟེ་རང་འདོད་འབྲི་བ་ཞུགས་པའི་ཚེ།

སྒྲོག་ལ་རང་གི་བདེ་སྤྱིད་འགོ་ལ་སྤྱིན།

ཇི་ལྟར་བདག་ལ་འཁོར་གྱིས་ལོག་སྐྱབ་ཚེ།

རང་གི་གཡེང་པས་ལན་ཞེས་སྤྱིང་ཚིམ་བསྐྱེད་༥༥

This is a lesson on how to deal with our selfish mind and how to cope with painful experiences. It is advising us to do the opposite of our usual self-centred acts. For example, when we see lots of food on the table, instead of rushing to eat as much as we can, think instead to mentally offer it to the pretas (hungry ghost realm beings) first. At the restaurant, when your food arrives first (because you ordered the food first) you can offer that away to someone else at the table. Or when attachment to beauty arises, instead of letting clinging take over, mentally visualise that object being deprived of the features of attractiveness. This helps you to have a more realistic, balanced view of the object of attachment.

If people are ungrateful to you, even though you have sacrificed so much

for them in the past, as a practitioner one should maintain a steady mind by understanding that our own past karma has now caused the wheel of sharp weapon to ripen on oneself now in the form of this disappointing experience. It is vital to understand (and be glad) that such an experience is in the aspect of bearable suffering and that it is something that one can stop the karma for, as there is no need to repeat mistaken actions, commit new negative karma nor suffer again!

I once gave consultation regarding a very difficult relationship problem of a couple who kept breaking up, getting back together and then breaking up again. My advice to them was first, get their minds into a state of No-love, No-hate; then view the partner as an object of compassion, giving universal unconditional love.

The phrase “My own inconstancy” is referring to the inadequate practice of virtue and efforts to purify negativities and the harms committed by oneself in the past.

V 10

*When my body falls prey to terrible sickness,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for injuring the bodies of living beings.*

*From now on, I shall take all sickness upon myself.*

10

ལྷུས་ལ་མི་བཅོད་ན་ཚ་བྱུང་བའི་ཚེ།

འགྲོ་བའི་ལྷུས་ལ་གནོད་པ་བསྐྱུལ་བ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་ན་ཚ་མ་ལྷུས་རང་ལ་བྱུང་།།

This verse very clearly shows us the causes for the types of sufferings we encounter. Illnesses of the physical body such as physical pain and the decay of one's body which begins from the moment of birth, have definite reasons underlying them. Therefore, we should not get upset when these events happen. Rather, we should immediately understand that this is due to the past karma and think, "Now that I'm sick, it is an excellent awakening for me to know the real cause for my suffering, which is karma". The karma of harming the bodies of other living beings, including eating meat, beating others and hurting pets. Even when we walk, we should be mindful of how we move our hands and legs and turn our heads, as there are all sorts of (form and formless) beings who might be affected by our moving limbs.

There is a story of a business man who had to travel far away on work. During one of the journeys, he disappeared and never returned to the family. Later, the son wanted to follow the footsteps of the father and went into the same business. Having lost her husband and not wanting to lose her son as well, the mother was very concerned and begged the son not to go. Out of frustration, the son gave the mother a kick which struck her head. Later, during his travels, this son came across a big dark mansion without doors and he heard loud screaming voices of pain coming from it. The moment he reached the house, the door opened and due to his karmic condition, he saw many people suffering inside. Some of them had spinning iron wheels stuck onto their heads causing them extreme pain and suffering. He asked the gate keeper why the people inside the house were being punished in this way. The gatekeeper answered that they had kicked their mothers' head and were now experiencing this type of suffering. He suddenly remembered he had done the same thing to his mother and with that thought, he was instantly inside the house with a spinning iron wheel on his head, which caused him unbearable pain. During this time, he generated sincere regret for hurting his mother and realised it was his ignorance that made him do so. He felt genuine regret and compassion for all those beings suffering in that way and the moment he thought this, the spinning iron wheel on his head flew off and his suffering ended. Hell is not some distant place. It can

be here right now, in one moment of great suffering.

The moral of this story is not only about the consequences of negative karma but also about how cherishing others brings about the end to suffering. The practice of taking on the suffering of others is a great purification of negative karma. When we clear our negative karma – in this case, the karma giving rise to sickness - we will meet the right doctor who is able to help and prescribe the exact medicine needed to cure us.

V II

*When my mind falls prey to suffering,*

*It is surely the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for troubling the minds of others.*

*From now on, I shall willingly take all sufferings upon myself.*

II

རང་གི་སེམས་ལ་སྤྱག་བསྐྱལ་བྱུང་བའི་ཚེ།

ངེས་པར་གཞན་གྱི་སེམས་སྤྱད་དྲུགས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱལ་མ་ལྟས་རང་ལ་བྱང་།།

Our mental sufferings, anxieties, depression, insecurity, heavy doubt and fears are all results of negative karma and sadly, can make us commit fresh negative karma. The karmic cause for these heavy mental states is that we have troubled the mind of our Gurus, the enlightened ones, the Arya and ordinary bodhisattvas. “Troubled their minds” means when we commit negative actions, these great beings can see the suffering results that will come to us and thereby feel great pity and concern for us. The worst is

troubling the mind of the Guru because the guru represents the Buddhas of the 10 Directions. The karmic consequence is extremely heavy. There is a connection between the weight of the negative karma and the object to whom we committed the karma upon. Negative karma against the Guru is the most serious, then against Buddhas & bodhisattvas. The 5 karmically potent objects are Guru, Buddha & Bodhisattvas, Dharma, Sangha and parents.

One needs to be careful in relation to one's Guru. Total mindfulness is necessary. Like with my master, the late Geshe Lama Konchog – I had to be very careful to close his room door quietly; to avoid spilling even a drop of drink; walking very quietly. Of course, these things occur because of one's loss of mindfulness which is very disappointing for the guru to observe in his disciple. Although such strictness may appear to one's delusions as a great hardship to bear, the Guru has a reason to train you. If one understands the Guru's intention, namely helping oneself to guard one's mind – then without question, great benefit arises.

V 12

*When I a tormented by extreme hunger and thirst*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for swindling, stealing and acting miserly.*

*From now on, I shall willingly take all hunger and thirst upon myself.*

12

རང་ཉིད་བགེས་སྒྲོམ་དྲག་པོས་གཟིར་བ་ན།

ཁྱམ་དང་རྒྱ་འཕྲོག་སེར་ན་བྱས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་བགེས་སྒྲོམ་མ་ལྟས་རང་ལ་བྱང་།།



When one suffers from great hunger, thirst and shelter, this hardship is created by oneself - not by others or external circumstances – but due to one having committed past acts such as cheating others or stealing from others their food, shelter, livelihood and ideas. Stealing requires actually obtaining the object without the other's permission. The consequence is to meet difficulties in finding the necessities of life and in one's livelihood. If one commits the karma of swindling others, one will be born in the hungry ghost realm which has many sufferings, including that of having visions of experiencing great hunger yet seeing no food anywhere; seeing mirages of lakes of fresh water but when arriving at there, everything turns into thorns and boiling molten iron. Miserliness is another cause for us to experience great obstacles to obtaining food, shelter and necessities. Persistent miserliness, like not sharing when you have ample, will cause a rebirth in the preta realm. Even if one is born in the human realm, it will be difficult to obtain wealth.

And even if one is able to accumulate some wealth, one will be unable to keep it. Similarly, one will have very limited opportunities to gather nutritious food or whatever food is consumed, it becomes detrimental to one's health like inducing diabetes, cancer, cholesterol problems and create such other complications to your health. Other effects of miserliness include these e.g. you might have the money to purchase many clothes but soon you cannot fit into them. Or you might be able to afford a mansion but then you meet a feng shui master who worries you with advice that this house is not suitable. I have noticed in the local community that sometimes, one word from a feng shui master is more powerful than the entire advice given by one's Buddhist Master!

The verse encourages us to do tong len practice – the practice of the exchanging of self for others. One should develop a mindset which always thinks, “May all living beings receive and enjoy my good fortune in having plenty and may I take on all the hardships of lacking food and water in order

to relieve beings from suffering”. Reflect on how some countries experience flooding, yet the people living there have no clean water and thereby suffer and die from thirst. Therefore, whatever you have, be happy and content and always remember that your external conditions and astrology will not determine your situation but rather, your karma.

V 13

*When I am powerless and suffer enslavement,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for despising my inferiors  
and enslaving them.*

*Form now on I shall make slaves of my body and my life for the sake of others.*

13

དབང་མེད་གཞན་གྱིས་འཁོལ་ཞིང་མནར་བའི་ཆོ།

དམན་ལ་སྤང་ཞིང་བྱན་དུ་བཀོལ་བ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་ལྷས་སྲོག་གཞན་གྱི་དོན་དུ་བཀོལ།།

Human nature is such that we all want power. In ordinary life, we always want authority and high position. We are never satisfied. Even in places of spiritual practice, similar situations might exist. Or we might find ourselves suppressed by people. These relate to the feeling about not having authority and respect. The cause of this is due to oneself treating others lower than oneself and mistreating others e.g. maids, colleagues. People sometimes treat their maids and staff more badly than their pets. If you are doing this, put yourself in their shoes. Just because you pay them a salary does not entitle you to treat them as non-human! It is unbelievably negative karma. If you keep up such behaviour, you are creating the karma to encounter exactly the same miserable experience as the maid whom you are now mistreating. As Buddhist practitioners, we should think that everyone is higher than oneself; that only the earth and water are lower than us. If we

always think ourselves superior, this creates the karma to be born in the animal realm as creatures who are beasts of burden. Treating others as slaves and offending others will ensure an enslaved rebirth for ourselves. Even if we secure a human rebirth, one will be in a situation of being badly treated by superiors. Therefore, one should work towards taking care of others and the best service is giving Dharma to others to help them to help themselves.

It is terrible when someone tries to control you. Everyone shuns away from being controlled and seeks freedom instead. To gain freedom, one needs to live in ethics, which is the voluntary self-control based on understanding the faults of negative actions. Therefore, even in a Dharma situation, one cannot act in the manner of wanting control and act in a superior way, as it gives rise to politics which is very poisonous to Dharma. Best way is to offer full service to others. This is the advice of this verse.

Whatever one is experiencing now, ask oneself, “What is the karma, what is the action I committed, what is the cause for this experience and what is the antidote to relieve myself from this trouble?”.

V 14

*When insulting remarks assault my ears,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for my verbal offences of slander and so forth.*

*From now on, I shall condemn my own verbal faults.*

14

མི་སྒྲིལ་ཆོག་རྣམས་རྩ་བར་བྱུང་བ་ན།

ཕྱ་མ་ལ་སོགས་ངག་གི་རྩོངས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་ངག་གི་སྒྲོན་ལ་སྤང་པར་བྱ།

We sometimes find ourselves in a situation that whatever we do, however hard we work and even when we try to benefit others, we only get insults in return. When this happens, we should think twice before hating the person who hurled harsh words at us. Rather, look into oneself and think over what one has done in the past. What was the karmic action committed to give rise to hearing insults heaped upon oneself now? It is due to our own verbal misdeeds like speaking offensive words to others, including slander, circulating negative rumours, speaking ill of others. This is a highly negative practice, so we should avoid it. If you know that there is a group of people gossiping about others, it would be better to avoid joining this group activity because even if you do not actively participate in the gossip, by merely listening, there will be an effect on your mind and you become part of the collective karma of the group. Better to excuse yourself and leave. It is better to offend a small group of people rather than gather this kind of negative karma whose consequences are far-reaching. Otherwise, the result is that in the future, even though you may have done nothing wrong, people will criticise you, insult you, have a poor opinion of you and talk badly about you behind your back. So at Centre, when someone new comes, be kind and helpful. Show them the way to the toilet if they ask. It may sound like a small thing but it is very important. Rejoice at newcomers. Be helpful and considerate. Appreciate old students who still strive at Dharma. Show them respect. If by our offending behaviour, we discourage someone from Dharma, it is the heaviest karma. If one knows about the relationship problems of someone else, it is not our business to talk about it, as that too is a form of negative speech.

The antidote is found in the line which states “From now on, I shall condemn my own verbal faults”. No matter how harsh people are to us, be soft like cotton. Let harsh speech come in one ear and out the other. Try your best to inspire people to practice Dharma. Some friends whom you meet cause you to forget about Dharma and influence you negatively. Be careful and minimise keeping company with such persons.

V 15

*When I am reborn into an impure land,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me, for always cultivating  
impure vision*

*From now on, I shall cultivate only pure vision.*

15

གང་ཡང་མ་དག་ཡུལ་དུ་སྐྱེས་པ་ན།

མ་དག་སྒྲུང་བ་རྟག་པར་བསྐྱོམས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་དག་སྒྲུང་འབའ་ཞིག་བསྐྱོམ་བར་བྱ།

The importance of pure view: One of the fundamentals of tantra is to eliminate impure perception and actualise pure perception. Mantra in Tibetan is ""Yi jop"" . Yi" = mind/perception ; jop"" = protection. The deity yoga practice enables one to do the self-generation of the deity, which creates the cause for enlightenment by visualising oneself as the deity with all the qualities now, even though the actual resultant deity is yet to come. Whatever is perceived now, is to be perceived as pure. In tantric practice, all liquids are nectar; all humans and all beings are dakas and dakinis of the Buddha's entourage; all places are the Buddha's mandala. By maintaining such a view, there is no reason to generate anger towards any living being or be dissatisfied with any place or situation – this is how you protect your mind. We have to practice pure view. Even meeting unpleasant people, regard such a person as a guru sent by Buddha to tame us. When meeting a very attractive person, Buddha sent the person to train me in ethics and not give in to desire. When meeting a jealous person, Buddha sent to train me to attain humility. By doing so, one purifies previous negative karma and creates new karma to connect directly with the Buddhas and actualise Buddhahood. The karma to be born in impure lands and unclean places is due to our practising impure perception, holding negative impure views.

Clothes are to cover and protect one's body. Learn to be contented. As long as the clothes are clean and wearable, do not be grasping and choosy. Otherwise in future life, no more shopping malls and no more new designs!! (Laughter). Adopt similar thinking towards all the possessions we have. Remember, try your best to project purely onto all objects, see them as pure and wonderful.

If someone does something wrong, generate compassion and chant Mani prayer or Vajrasattva mantra to bless such a person's mind. If one does not do this but is quick to criticise others, then one has impure view and this will hurt our chances at happiness in the short and long term.

Asanga meditated on Maitreya for 12 years, hoping to see Maitreya directly but was obstructed due to his impure mind, despite Maitreya being with him in his cave all the time. One day, Asanga saw a bird flying in and out in between two rocks and whose feathers created a groove in the rocks. Asanga was encouraged by this, thinking that if he could persevere, the result of gaining a vision of Maitreya would arise. At another time, he saw a drips of water creating a deep hole in the rock. This encouraged him to continue his efforts and he went back to meditate. Then one day he saw a diseased dog filled with maggots. He wanted to remove the maggots with his fingers but feared he would hurt the maggots. Searching for a solution, he decided to lift the maggots out with his tongue. When he did so, the dog disappeared and before him stood Maitreya. Asanga cried, asking why it took so long for Maitreya to appear and Maitreya explained that he was always with Asanga but Asanga he couldn't see him before due to his previous impure view. To prove this, Maitreya asked Asanga to bring him on his shoulder to the village because only those with pure view could see him. True enough, everyone only saw an old dog on Asanga's shoulder.

Naropa's guru Tilopa: When Naropa went to search for the mahasiddha Tilopa to be his guru, he arrived at a place beside the river, he saw a filthy, coarse, harsh-looking person fishing. He asked him, "Where is Tilopa, my guru?" ". This person said "I'm the one". "How can this be? You are fishing! My guru should be presentable!" exclaimed Naropa. Later, Naropa developed devotion and the moment he expressed that devotion, he saw Tilopa seated in Samadhi. Prior to that, without pure view, he only saw his guru as a filthy fisherman.

Vajrayogini : She took the appearance of an old, diseased woman ravaged by leprosy, sitting beside the river asking people to help to carry her across the river. There was a practitioner who wanted to actualise Vajrayogini but not knowing who this old lady was, was reluctant to help the old lady fearing that he would contract her sickness. This thought delayed his attainment of the Vajrayogini practice due to his impure view.

One rule of tantra practice is that one cannot criticise nor offend women and must always hold them with respect. But likewise, women should also respect the men and not build up the ego when well treated by them or else as per the previous verse, it will create the karma to be a slave.

Having pure view does not mean we do not need to be careful in conventional terms. This is because conventionally, there are people who may cause harm and take advantage of oneself. The point is to always have at the back of our mind and innermost reaches of our heart, pure view.

V 16

*When I am separated from helpful and loving friends,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for luring away others' companions.*

*From now on, I shall not separate others from their companions.*

16

ཕན་ཞིང་མཛེན་བའི་གྲོགས་དང་བྲལ་བའི་ཚེ།

གཞན་གྱི་འཁོར་རྒྱུ་མས་བདག་གིས་ཁ་དྲངས་པས།

ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་གཞན་དག་འཁོར་དང་དབྲལ་མི་བྱ།



Death separates us from our loved ones, our possessions and our own aggregates. Why do we have to go through such separation and yet suffer having to constantly meet the objects of one's anger and ignorance? It is due to the karmic consequence of one's past deeds in causing others to split or caused a situation of great enmity between persons, including stealing the affections of one party and thereby causing harm to another; recklessly causing death; gossiping which divides people or even mentally wanting to cause a schism between people. In this Desire Realm and especially in the human realm, the one aspect which gives rise to the most disasters is in the area of relationships.

In order to remove relationship problems in our lives, we need to ensure that we do not create problems to others' relationships. For those presently facing relationship problems – don't feel depressed. Now that you understand why you are in this situation, be mindful and guard your actions of body, speech and mind and be ethical at all times hereon.

In the area of the Guru-disciple relationship, sometimes the Guru suddenly manifests passing away, causing much sorrow to oneself. At such a time, if instead of recalling and rejoicing in the Guru's practices, one indulges in sorrow, this is due to the past karma of manipulating the Guru-disciple relationship. Therefore, do not discourage disciples in their relations with the Guru; instead, if you know of the good qualities in that Guru, you should encourage them to devote more.

V 17

*When all the Holy One are displeased with me,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for casting them aside and resorting to bad companions.*

*From now on, I shall renounce bad companions.*

དམ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་བདག་ལ་མི་དགའ་ན།  
 དམ་པ་བོར་ནས་གྲོགས་ངན་བསྐྱེན་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་ངན་པའི་གྲོགས་རྣམས་སྤང་པར་བྱ།

The “Holy Ones” refers to Gurus, Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, noble beings and virtuous friends.

Displeased means not being able to receive the benefit and the blessings of prayers. This happens because we have held improper attitudes towards holy beings or conducted ourselves improperly towards them; abandoned holy beings; given up Refuge; failed to uphold the vows we have made; continuously associated with negative companions. The term “negative companions” has two aspects – inner and outer. Inner negative companions are the delusions (anger, attachment, ignorance, pride, jealousy, doubt and mistaken view) – we always keep delusions close to us. We are often happy we have delusions and feel bored without objects of attachment near us. We nurture our delusions, not caring about how they affect us and others. Outer negative companions are the friends who discourage us from Dharma, who entice us into negative actions like taking intoxicants or give us excuses for staying away from Dharma activities. Similarly, taking refuge in worldly gods and spirits is also part of cultivating negative companions.

V 18

*When others sin against me by exaggeration or deprecation,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned against me for reviling the Holy Ones.*

*From now on, I shall not revile others by exaggeration or deprecation.*

སློ་སྐྱུར་གཞན་གྱིས་སྤྲིག་བསོག་བྱུང་བའི་ཚེ།  
 རང་གིས་དམ་པ་རྣམས་ལ་སྦྱང་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 དེ་ནི་གཞན་ལ་སློ་སྐྱུར་སྦྱང་མི་བྱ།

When others harm us through exaggeration or harshly criticise us for small mistakes or disapprove of any good deeds we have done or we find ourselves having to endure suspicion no matter what good intentions we have, we should not retaliate against the accusers but instead acknowledge our past karma of reviling the holy ones – Gurus, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas - criticising them, casting doubt on their actions and motives, exaggerating what we view as their mistakes, imputing wrongly onto the actions of holy ones. Whenever we find ourselves in such unpleasant situations, we should reflect on our past deeds and do the tong len (exchanging self for others) practice and accept this hardship and giving away one's virtues to others.

## V 19

*When my material necessities waste away,  
 It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for scorning others' necessities.  
 From now on, I shall provide for others' necessities.*

## 19

མཁོ་བའི་རྒྱས་ལ་རྒྱུད་ཆོས་བྱུང་བའི་ཚེ།  
 གཞན་གྱི་མཁོ་བ་བྱུང་དུ་བསང་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 དེ་ནི་གཞན་གྱི་མཁོ་བ་བསྐྱབ་པར་བྱ།

Many of us may find that in our lives, no matter how much we earn or invest, we keep losing our wealth. Or we might buy expensive herbal medicines but we forget to consume them until they rot. Or we might buy many clothes and keep them in the cupboard until we can no longer fit into them. Whatever possessions we may gather such as money or houses, before we can fully enjoy them, death comes. In such a situation, all those possessions are wasted on us. This is due to our having belittled the needs of others. The Vinaya teachings advise us to divide what we have into 3 portions – one portion for our own subsistence & daily use and two portions to be offered or dedicated to the Buddha and sentient beings as offerings. This way, even if death comes, our wealth and possessions were meaningfully used and not wasted. When doing up wills, apply your wealth wisely.

Therefore, when we experience deteriorated possessions, business failures or loss of resources, we should analyse and know that the cause is our having scorned others' needs, destroyed the food of others (like being careless about unharvested crops on farmlands) and careless with others' possessions. All these are causes for one to experience poverty and waste. The best way to purify this karma is to provide for others i.e. to be generous.

V 20

*When my mind is unclear and my heart is sad,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for causing others to sin  
[disturbing the minds of others].*

*From now on, I shall renounce contributing to others' minds being disturbed.*

20

སེམས་མི་གསལ་ནིང་སྤྱིང་མི་དགའ་བའི་ཆོ།

སྐྱེ་བོ་གཞན་ལ་སྤྲིག་པ་བསགས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་གཞན་གྱི་སྤྲིག་རྒྱུ་སྤང་བར་བྱ།

We often find that our reception of Dharma teachings and advice is very poor. Our unclear mind leads us to prefer worldly activities over beneficial activities like listening to Dharma. The consequence is that we have endless hardships - to the point of having a sulky face, having depression, paranoia, insanity, Alzheimer's, even seeing spirit forms whilst doing meditation. The cause for this is that we have encouraged others to do negative deeds or we have rejoiced in others' negative deeds. We have taught people to harm others and this includes engaging in harmful sports or hobbies. We put effort into studies that promote only self-interest and those that suppress others. Hereon, one should reject committing negativities and likewise refrain from contributing towards others doing so.

V 21

*When I am deeply troubled over my lack of success,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for hindering the work of the Holy Ones*

*From now on, I shall renounce all hindrance.*

21

བྱ་བ་མ་གྲུབ་སེམས་ཅུ་འབྲུག་པའི་ཆོ།

དམ་པའི་ལས་ལ་བར་ཆད་བྱས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཆོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་བར་ཆད་ཐམས་ཅད་སྦང་བར་བྱ།

The lack of success referred to here could be in relation to worldly work or Dharma work and even take the form of obstacles towards one's efforts at studying Dharma. The underlying cause is one having been obstructive to the work of holy beings, criticising Dharma projects or faulting Gurus, Buddhas and bodhisattvas and those trying to do Dharma work.

V 22

*When my Guru is displeased with me no matter what I do,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for acting duplicitously towards the holy Dharma*

*From now on, I shall reduce my own duplicity towards the Dharma.*

22

གང་ལྟར་བྱས་ཀྱང་སྤྱོད་མ་མ་མཉེས་ཆོ།

དམ་པའི་ཆོས་ལ་ངོ་ཤློག་བྱས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་དན་མཆོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ང་ནི་རྩོས་ལ་ངོ་ཤློག་རང་བཟང་བ།

This verse specifically addresses the actions one has committed in relation to the Guru. When the Guru shows aspect of being displeased or misunderstanding oneself, this is due to one having duplicity towards the Guru and the Triple Gem i.e. outwardly showing oneself to be a pacified, good Dharma practitioner but inwardly, always feeding one's delusions. Outwardly subdued but internally overwhelmed by ego. The advice here is to live one's life according to Guru's Dharma advice. That would be the best.

V 23

*When everyone contradicts me,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for belittling shame and modesty.*

*From now on, I shall avoid rough behaviour.*

23

སྒྲིབ་ཡོངས་ཀྱིས་ཁ་ལོག་བྱུང་བའི་ཆོ།  
 རོ་ཆ་ཁྲེལ་ཡོད་ཁྱད་དུ་བསད་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་མི་བསྐྱུན་པ་ལ་འཛོམ་པར་བྱ།

The cause for this type of frustration is our having belittled shame and modesty. The mind which is concerned about the negative consequences of one's own negative actions is shame; the mind which is concerned about consequences of negative actions in relation to others is modesty. We need to give proper thought to these and not make light of such matters. The antidote is to avoid unethical, coarse behaviour.

V 24

*When there is disagreement as soon as my companions gather  
 It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for peddling my discontent  
 and evil disposition everywhere.  
 From now on, without any ulterior motive, I shall behave well towards all.*

24

འཁོར་རྣམས་འདུས་མ་ཐག་ཏུ་འགས་པའི་ཆོ།  
 སྒྲུག་གཤིས་ངན་པ་སྒྲོགས་སུ་བཅོངས་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་གང་ལའང་མི་གཞི་ལེགས་པར་བྱ།



The companions here refer to family, relatives, friends, colleagues. Quarrels and conflicts are the fruit of one's past ill-will and intention to harm others. Our having no contentment gives rise to troubled relations within the family and one's relationships. If one physically, verbally or mentally desires somebody apart from one's committed partner, the karma is created to experience arguments and misunderstanding in our lives. Homosexuality also a heavy cause to experience conflicts and disagreements.

Audibly chant this verse 24 and mentally live a life with this verse and you will find that, no AIDS, no scary diseases will arise in you. To purify, one should sincerely behave well towards all, have no ulterior motives and be mindful of one body, speech and mind at all times.

V 25

*When all my kin become my enemies,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds for harbouring evil thoughts.*

*From now on, I shall reduce my deceit and guile.*

25

ཉེ་ཚང་ཐམས་ཅད་དགྲ་བོར་ལངས་པའི་ཚེ།

བསམ་པ་ངན་པ་ནང་དུ་བརྩུག་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚན་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་སྤྱག་སྒྲི་གྲུ་ནམ་རྒྱུང་བར་བྱ།

When loved ones and family members go against oneself, it is a very painful experience. This is due to one having negative thoughts like deceit and cunning towards other beings and behaving badly towards them. Having a partial mind i.e. discriminating between friend, enemy and stranger, also produces this result. Your anger towards the enemy, your attachment to

a loved-one and your indifference towards a stranger - these delusions of anger, attachment and ignorance have no arms and legs, yet they enslave us. They joyfully abide in our minds bringing us to ruin and yet we happily allow these delusions to roam freely in our mind and actions. Wake up! Make a strong resolution to abandon this misplaced enthusiasm for delusions.

V 26

*When I am sick with consumption or edema,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for unlawfully and indiscriminately stealing others' wealth.*

*From now on I shall renounce plundering others' wealth.*

26

བད་གཙོང་སྐྱན་དང་དམུ་རྩལ་ན་བའི་ཚོ།

ཁྲིམས་མེད་དཀོར་ལ་བག་མེད་འབགས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་དཀོར་འཕྲོག་ལ་སོགས་སྤང་བར་བྱ།།

When we are sick with chronic disease, much resources and energy needs to be expended to manage the disease, yet much of it is wasted because it seems that nothing is helping. The cause for this wastage of energy and resources is indiscriminately taking without permission offerings made to “others “ who in this verse refers to Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. The remedy is to avoid taking offerings and possessions without permission and do tong len practice thinking that whatever sickness in this world, may it ripen upon me and may all beings gain good health and ultimate happiness. This kind of “taking without permission” karma leaves an imprint on one’s continuum with nasty consequences to come.

V 27

*When my body is suddenly struck my contagious diseases,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for committing acts that corrupted my vows.*

*From now on, I shall renounce non-virtuous acts.*

27

སྒོ་བྱུང་འགོ་ནད་ལྷུས་ལ་ཐེབས་པའི་ཚེ།

དམ་ཚིག་ཉམས་པའི་བྱ་བ་བྱས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་མི་དགའི་ལས་རྣམས་སྦྱང་བར་བྱ།

When one's body is affected by contagious diseases – from minor ills to major contagious diseases – they arise because we have committed negative karma of breaking vows, damaging samaya with the Guru and the like. The external, environmental factors which contribute towards our having diseases are only one factor and condition. The main cause is one's negative karma of breaking vows (which include the vow of not harming others) to experience the disease. When an illness appears in a country, not everyone there will contract the illness. This shows that external conditions do not determine whether one will experience the suffering of that illness.

Corrupting vows and pledges which include worldly obligations like those arising out of relationships, breaking promises made; or acting against lay vows, refuge vows, bodhisattva vows, tantric vows and the like lead to the experience of infectious diseases. We should avoid breaking the basic Buddhist commitment which states that if one cannot help, one must at least not cause harm. When you give up harming others, vows can be restored.

V 28

*When my intellect is blind towards all that is worth knowing*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for claiming as the Dharma what ought to be put aside.*

*From now on, I shall cultivate the wisdom that comes from study, examination and meditation.*

28

ཤེས་བྱ་ཀླན་ལ་སློ་གྲོས་རྩོངས་པའི་ཆོ།  
བཞག་ཏུ་འོས་པ་ཆོས་ལ་བྱས་པ་ཡིས།  
ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
ད་ནི་ཐོས་སོགས་ཤེས་རབ་བསྐྱེམ་པར་བྱ།

When our intellect is weak and dull, it is the fruit of our holding mistaken views, such as rejecting the law of cause and effect (karma), mistakenly claiming something to be Dharma when it is something that should be abandoned; holding the wrong views of a free-thinker; feeling dull during Dharma class and feeling fresh the moment the Dharma class ends (laughter). The remedy is to put effort into studying, contemplation and meditation on Dharma. When listening to Dharma, one should be questioning and analytical. After gaining knowledge from studying, one needs to examine it deeply and then habituate one's mind with what one has learned. Only then will we be able to use it as an aid when faced with troublesome situations.

V 29

*When I am overcome my sleep while practising Dharma*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for piling up obscurations to the holy Dharma.*

*From now on, I shall undergo hardship for the sake of the Dharma.*

ཚུལ་སྤྱད་ཚེ་གཉིད་ཀྱིས་མོན་པའི་ཚེ།  
 དམ་པའི་ཚུལ་སྤྱོད་པ་བསགས་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་ཚུས་ཕྱིར་དཀའ་བ་སྤྱད་པར་བྱ།

Being overcome by sleep while practising Dharma stems from the lack of effort put into studying the Dharma which has been accumulated aeons ago, so we need to remedy that now through the strong application of joyous effort at Dharma study and practice. Whenever we see in texts that refer to the need to “bear hardship for Dharma”, they are referring to the great advantage and need for joyous perseverance in studying and engaging in Dharma.

If on the other hand we already have enthusiasm for reading Dharma texts or in any way engaging in Dharma, this is due to the strong positive imprints we gained from our past.

V 30

*When I delight in the afflictions and am greatly distracted,  
 It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for not meditating upon  
 impermanence and the shortcomings of cyclic existence.  
 From now on I shall increase my dissatisfaction for cyclic existence.*

རྟོན་མོངས་ལ་དགའ་རྣམ་གཡེང་ཆེ་བའི་ཚེ།  
 མི་རྟག་འཁོར་བའི་ཉེས་དམིགས་མ་བསྐྱོམས་པས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་འཁོར་བར་ཡིད་འབྱུང་ཆེ་བར་བྱ།

It is not uncommon for people to get bored with loved ones and go astray due to attachment towards others; or being reluctant to give up worldly pleasures because those seem to bring joy. When this happens, it is because we frequently fail to remember how much suffering arises when the “pleasure” ends, as it inevitably must. Even during the pleasure, trouble can arise! Although one may superficially realise the disadvantages and temporariness of samsaric pleasures, due to failing to meditate well on impermanence and the shortcomings of samsara, we continue to grasp at samsara. There is nothing wrong with enjoyment but we need to act wisely when engaging in it i.e. reflect on impermanence, on what the Dharma advises and then dedicating the enjoyment to others as an act of charity. Only then, will there be some merit coming from ordinary enjoyment. However, to do anything as a pure Dharma practice, as a minimum, one has to have clear understanding of impermanence. Two forceful meditations in Lam Rim are on the topics of death & impermanence and the precious human rebirth.

V 31

*When things get worse no matter what I do,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for disparaging moral causality and dependent origination.*

*From now on, I shall strive to accumulate merit.*

31

ཅི་ཙུག་བྱས་ཀྱང་མར་འགྱོར་ཤོར་བའི་ཆོ།  
 ལས་དང་རྒྱ་འབྲས་བྱད་དུ་བསད་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་གསོག་ལ་འབད་པར་བྱ།།

Everyone would have experienced this dilemma at some time of their life i.e. where things constantly go wrong, even though we try our best e.g. we fail in our jobs or lose our jobs or meet countless obstacles. This is due to one disregarding law of karma and failing to generate compassion from becoming aware that all beings in samsara suffer this way. When we do not reflect on karma and the sufferings of all living beings, we are unable to develop conventional bodhicitta. Compounding this is our not understanding the true nature of things i.e. that all things lack of inherent existence, which then prevents us from developing ultimate bodhicitta.

V 32

*When all the religious rites that I perform go awry*  
*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for looking to the dark*  
*quarter for help.*  
*Form now on, I shall turn away from the dark quarter.*

32

རིམ་གྱོ་བྱས་ཚད་ལོག་པར་སོང་བའི་ཆོ།  
 ནག་པོའི་ཕྱོགས་ལ་རེ་སྒྲོས་བྱས་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་ནག་པོའི་ཕྱོགས་ལས་བསྐྱོག་པར་བྱ།།

Whenever our prayers and pujas do not produce the desired effect, it is due to our having abandoned our Refuge in the Triple Gem in the past and instead taken refuge in the “dark quarter” i.e. sought help from spirits, nagas, worldly-protectors. One first needs to understand what taking Refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha means and then from the depth of our hearts and not in a shallow manner, live our lives with real Refuge towards the Triple Gem and not merely recite words of refuge.

We ought to cultivate strong faith, Refuge and have a strong commitment towards the objects of refuge. Most of the time, we are easily influenced by what others say about the ability of worldly gods to grant our wishes. We are easily affected by astrology and feng shui. The day we think that good things are the blessings of the Buddhas and one’s negative experiences are due to one’s karma, our refuge will be perfect.

It is important to know the difference between taking refuge and paying respect or making offerings. For example, the matter of naga pujas. Taking refuge in nagas and offering naga-pujas are totally different – taking refuge means seeking guidance for one’s spiritual development up to enlightenment. As Buddhist, whilst we may offer respect to all beings, our refuge should lie only in the Triple Gem; offering naga puja is done because we are actually healing them with compassion and one of the results is to receive help from the nagas.

V 33

*When my prayers to the Three Jewels go unanswered,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for not believing in Buddhahood.*

*From now on, I shall rely on the Three Jewels alone.*



དགོན་མཚོག་གསུམ་ལ་གསོལ་བ་མ་ཐེབས་ཆོ།  
 སངས་རྒྱུ་པ་ལ་ཡིད་ཆེས་མ་བྱས་པས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 དེ་ནི་དགོན་མཚོག་ཁོ་ན་བསྟེན་པར་བྱ།

This is not due to the Triple Gem not granting us blessings. The blessings are constant and given to all living beings. However, there needs to be a receptacle to receive blessings, as is needed to receive rain. Hence, if we do not create the cause to receive the blessings given, their effect will not be felt. This arises due to our not having proper refuge and not believing in Buddhahood. The remedy is to cut off our reliance on worldly gods, spirits, external objects for spiritual attainments. Again, it is important to understand that the object of respect and object of refuge are different. It is alright to have respect for all beings but to treat them as an object of refuge means to rely on them for one's enlightenment. For this, we need to understand well, who are worthy to be the objects of refuge and they are Buddha, Dharma and Sangha due to the qualities each possess.

V 34

*When conceptual construction rises up as pollution, demons and evil spirits  
 It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for sinning against the gods  
 and mantras.*

*From now on I shall crush all conceptual construction.*

རྣམ་རྟོག་གི་བ་དང་གདོན་དུ་ལངས་པའི་ཚོ།  
 ལྷ་དང་སྒྲགས་ལ་སྒྲིག་པ་བསགས་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་རྣམ་རྟོག་ཐམས་ཅད་གཞོམ་པར་བྱ།།

The terms “pollution, demons and evil spirits” refer to our conceptual constructions which are born out of the negative mind. Problems of all kinds arise when one gives delusions the freedom to control our lives and we disregard the Buddha’s advice. “Mantra” refers to the overall practices mind protection which include all the teachings of the Buddha, including thought-transformation, transforming impure view to pure view; treating all enemies as one’s Guru to train oneself to become a better person.

When one is in a place which gives one an uneasy, scary feeling, one should not give in to fear but instead think that “The Guru-Buddha is manifesting this to train me in courage”. In this manner, any fear can be overcome. The principle remedy is to abandon impure thoughts and hold pure view; deconstruct improper conduct and construct pure ethics.

V 35

*When I wander far from home like a helpless person  
 It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for driving spiritual teachers  
 and others from their homes  
 From now on, I shall not expel anyone from their home.*

35

དབང་མེད་མི་ལྟར་བྱེས་སུ་འབྱམས་པའི་ཚོ།  
 བླ་མ་ལ་སོགས་གནས་ནས་བསྐྱད་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་གང་ཡང་ཡུལ་ནས་དབྱུང་མི་བྱ།

When one dwells in unstable conditions, it is due to splitting guru-disciple relations, driving Teachers from their homes, becoming a hindrance to providing protection to others.

V 36

*When calamities occur like frost and hail*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for not properly guarding my vows and moral conduct*

*From now on, I shall keep my vows and moral conduct pure.*

36

སད་སེར་ལ་སོགས་མི་འདོད་བྱུང་བའི་ཚོ།  
 དམ་ཚིག་རྩལ་བྱིམས་རྩལ་བཞིན་མ་བསྐྱངས་བས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་དམ་ཚིག་ལ་སོགས་གཙང་བར་བྱ།

When global disasters happen, it is due to people not properly guarding vows and ethics. To overcome natural disasters, it is particularly effective to practice the Mahayana 8 Precepts due to the enormous amount of merit that is accumulated on account of it. So if travelling to a place where this danger is imminent, undertake the 8 Precepts practice beforehand.

V 37

*When I a greedy person lose my wealth*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me*

*For not giving charity or making offerings to the Three Jewels*

*From now on I will zealously make offerings and give charity.*

37

འདོད་པ་ཆེ་ལ་འབྱོར་པས་འཕོངས་པའི་ཆོ།

སྤྱན་དང་དགོན་མཆོག་མཆོད་པ་མ་བགྱིས་པས།

ལས་ངན་མཚན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་མཆོད་སྤྱན་དག་ལ་བརྩོན་པར་བྱ།

When I lose my wealth, it is directly due to not making charity to beings and not making offerings to the Triple Gem. We put so much effort into earning a living, gaining wealth and we do extensive planning to accumulate possessions. Yet these do not always produce the results we seek and not only do we not see success, we sometimes have to endure loss. And even when we are able to garner wealth for a time, our ability to retain it is weak and our wealth-earning trend ceases or dissipates due to unforeseen circumstances. We establish businesses but they end in failure; we gather great amounts of possessions but in the end, they get spoilt or get destroyed; we gather food and daily necessities but those perish before we can fully use them. Such experiences are not due to external factors. The cause for these is karma - one's failure to do charity which now ripens upon us as failure-results in this very life. The negative karma of being miserly, stingy, selfish and calculative, brings about the degeneration of wealth. The solution to overcome this problem is to practice generosity and charity – in relation to Buddhas & Bodhisattvas and in relation to sentient beings.

What substances should be used in making charity?

In relation to the Triple Gem, the offerings can be physical offerings of body, speech and mind but the best offering is following the advice of Buddha, living in accordance with the Dharma. Such acts of offering will result in happiness, wealth and all necessities like medicine, foods being plentiful.

In relation to sentient beings, giving can be of three kinds – physical possessions like food, shelter or opportunities like giving jobs; giving of protection and best of all is the giving of Dharma which contains teachings on the different antidotes to defilements which are fruitful causes of suffering. Printing Dharma books which contain the instructions to liberation and enlightenment; teaching or advising on what is to be practiced and what is to be abandoned is also another way of giving Dharma to sentient beings.

V 38

*When my companions mistreat me for being ugly,  
It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me  
For venting my rage by erecting ugly images.  
From now on I shall erect images of gods and be slow to anger.*

38

སྐྱེ་གཟུགས་ངན་ཏེ་འཁོར་གྱིས་བརྟན་པའི་ཚོ།  
སྐྱེ་གཟུགས་ངན་བཞེངས་ཁོང་ཁྲོས་དགུགས་པ་ཡིས།  
ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
ད་ནི་ལྷ་བཞེངས་ངང་རྒྱུད་ཅིང་བར་བྲ།།

In daily life, we encounter so many difficulties. Added to that, we might have self-esteem issues like we might think we are not good-looking enough, judging by the number of times we look into the mirror each day and if we spot one pimple or one strand of white hair, our whole world collapses (laughter). We have anxiety about getting old, becoming less attractive,

getting sick. Relationships present their own problems too. For example, when love is first expressed between the husband and wife, one only sees beauty in each other. After spending time together, the degree of admiration declines. Gradually, one may no longer find the partner attractive and instead seeks the company of others. The partner then suffers from being compared to others. Soon, each party starts to lose interest in each other and even develop resentment towards each other, using harsh words. Each one feels mistreated on account of this. Each one starts to see only the ugliness of the other. This is because there was no pure, unconditional love but desirous attachment which is likely to lead couples into divorce.

A person may be conventionally beautiful, yet no one wants to come close to that person but instead always misunderstands that person. This not the fault of others but due to one having acted out anger towards others and thinking poorly of others; or being verbally abusive and critical. The solution is to look at the positive points of others and praise them , although one needs to do this honestly because one's outer expressions should be consistent with one's inner thoughts! Never be cunning nor mislead others or cause harm to them. Cultivate loving kindness, practice patience and gain control over one's anger. Erecting images of holy beings like the Buddha purifies unattractiveness and actualises one's beauty of body, speech and mind. One of the most powerful practices to beautify oneself internally and externally is to practice patience, to see the advantages of restraint and the disadvantages of anger. Beauty is not dependent on the world's viewpoint or others' opinion.

V 39

*When lust and hate are stirred up no matter what I do*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me*

*For hardening my malevolent evil mind.*

*Obstinacy, from now on I shall totally extirpate you.*

གང་ལྟར་བྱས་ཀྱང་ཆགས་སྤང་ལ་བྱུགས་པའི་ཆོ།  
 མ་རྩུངས་རྒྱུད་དན་རེངས་སུ་བརྩུག་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་དན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་རེངས་ཁྱེད་དྲུང་ནས་དབྱུང་བར་བྱ།

Even though one engages in virtuous deeds or spiritual cultivation, one finds that attachment or anger continuously arises in oneself. No matter how compassionate one generally feels towards others, yet anger also arises easily. This happens due to the past karma of cultivating the wish to harm others and indulging in delusions, without trying to apply the antidotes. Mindfulness cultivation is important and through it, we should avoid harmful thought and action.

## V 40

*When none of my practices reach their goal,  
 It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me  
 For internalising a pernicious view.  
 From now on whatever I do shall be solely for the sake of others.*

## 40

སྒྲུབ་པ་གང་བྱས་དམིགས་སུ་མ་སོང་ཆོ།  
 ལྟ་བ་དན་པ་ཁོག་རྩ་བྱུགས་པ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་དན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་ཅི་བྱེད་གཞན་དོན་ཉིད་དུ་བྱ།

Here, it discusses the situation where the more Dharma activities one engages in, the more disturbed one becomes and with no obvious increase in one's virtuous behaviour. Although this might sound strange, it does happen and this is due to cultivating wrong view, negative view, not living in awareness of the law of cause and effect, having a strong self-cherishing mind and self-grasping mind. The remedy is to work on transforming one's mind by shifting the focus from one's own needs alone and instead act and dedicate for the benefit of others.

V 41

*When I cannot control my own mind even though I engage in religious activities,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me*

*For concentrating on my own aggrandisement in the present life.*

*For now on I shall concentrate on the desire for liberation.*

41

དག་སྒྲུབ་བྱས་ཀྱང་རང་རྒྱུད་མ་ཐུལ་ཆོ།

ཆོ་འདིའི་ཆེ་ཐབས་དང་དུ་སྒྲུབས་པ་ཡིས།

ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།

ད་ནི་ཐར་པ་འདོད་ལ་བསྒྲིམ་པར་བྱ།།

This pitiful situation arises due to our being obsessed with worldly activities, like working solely for one's own well-being or being overly focused on gaining wealth, position and reputation. All our activities are totally self centred and this becomes the obstacle to our developing mastery over our mind to direct it towards virtue. Of course, one needs to earn a living and gain the respect of others in order to do one's work well but we need to keep in mind that one of the main purposes for all our activities is the attainment of freedom from samsara, not intensifying of samsara!



V 42

*When I despair as soon as I have sat down and reflected,  
It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me  
For shamelessly flitting about from one new friend of high status to another.  
From now on I shall be serious about my friendships with everyone.*

42

འདུག་མ་ཐག་ལ་བརྟགས་ཤིང་འགྲོད་པའི་ཆོ།  
སྤྱེལ་མེད་གསར་འགྲོགས་མཐོ་ཁ་འགྲིམས་པ་ཡིས།  
ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
ད་ནི་གང་ལ་འང་འགྲོགས་ལྷགས་གཟབ་པར་བྱ།

When we attempt to do retreat or sit down to meditate or reflect on virtuous thoughts, instead of gaining clear and concentrated understandings of Dharma, we find all sorts of disturbing distractions coming to one's mind. Or just as we start reading a Dharma text, a social event will suddenly pop up to cause distraction. This is due to our never practising any part of the Dharma teachings received; not practising contentment; neglecting others; engaging in "Guru-hunting" i.e. chasing after many Gurus, yet never cultivating the teachings received from any of them.

Contentment is about being aware of the positive aspects of the things we already have. It brings about a mind that is able to develop stable concentration and clarity. Practising equanimity and not having a partial mind towards, friend, enemy and stranger similarly aids in the attainment of a clear mind.

V 43

*When I am deceived by others' cunning, it is the weapon of  
my own evil deeds turned upon me  
For increasing my selfishness, pride and insatiable greed.  
From now on I shall markedly reduce all of them.*

43

གཞན་གྱི་སྒྱུ་ལྟོས་རང་ཉིད་བསྐྱུས་པའི་ཚེ།  
རང་འདོད་དང་རྒྱལ་ལྷོགས་འདོད་ཆེས་པ་ཡིས།  
ལས་ངན་མཚན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
ད་ནི་གང་ལའང་མངོན་མཚན་རྒྱུད་བར་བྱ།

Due to not following the Dharma and the instructions of one's Guru and instead, blindly looking for other Gurus purely because of a teacher's high title and fame, results in the spiritual deception of oneself. With this kind of mindset, one will discover that one cannot serve any Guru properly and that eventually, you will have serious doubts about the Guru which in turn harms your faith. Again, you have deceived yourself. Strong dissatisfaction, nurturing unhappy thoughts or bringing legal action onto others out of greed for wealth and using all forms of cunning which harms self and others, will bring waterfalls of suffering to oneself. From now on, recognise the faults of these negative qualities and reduce them with a view to eliminating them completely. One needs to have awareness and guard one's three doors of body, speech and mind, in order not to be dominated by them and apply the 4 Opponent Powers of purification frequently.

V 44

*When I am side tracked by attachment or aversion whilst studying or teaching,  
It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me  
For not considering my own devilish thoughts.  
From now on I shall examine these impediments and abandon them.*

ཉན་བཤད་ཆགས་སྤང་གཡོས་སུ་སོང་བའི་ཆོ།  
 བདུད་ཀྱི་སྐྱོན་ན་མས་སྦྱིང་ལ་མ་བསམས་པས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་འགལ་སྐྱེན་བརྟགས་ནས་སྤང་བར་བྱ།

This troubling situation is not uncommon. There are people who find that the more Dharma they study, the more untamed they become. This is because in the past one has used Dharma to defend one's negative emotions; not being mindful of one's faults and blaming others; not being mindful of observing one's vows. One needs to be absolutely clear about what is to be adopted and what is to be abandoned.

*When all the good I have done turns out badly,  
 It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for repaying kindness with  
 ingratitude.  
 From now on I shall very respectfully kindness.*

བཟང་བྱས་ཐམས་ཅད་ངན་དུ་སོང་བའི་ཆོ།  
 དྲིན་ལན་ཐམས་ཅད་འོག་པར་བཅལ་བ་ཡིས།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་དྲིན་ལན་སྤྱི་ཐོས་སྤང་བར་བྱ།

It may seem discouraging to face a situation where despite putting effort into one's spiritual or worldly pursuits, the results turn out badly. What needs to be understood here is that this is not the fault of others nor external factors but due to karma committed by oneself. If whatever good you do, such as providing others with medicine, food and shelter, even engaging in Dharma projects, yet the result is always negative, this is due to one not repaying the kindness of others in the past; due to one not remembering all beings as having been one's mother; due to not remembering their efforts and sacrifices for us and our failing to repay their kindness; due to not knowing the Mahayana teachings nor being diligent in practising the Mahayana teachings that one has learned; mistreat some sentient beings because you dislike some of them or regard them as enemies. In those cases, you fail to recall their kindness to you and instead of repaying the kindness, you harm or destroy them. In truth, due to all living beings having been one's mother countless times through countless lives, one has the full responsibility to repay the kindness of all living beings without exception. Yet, one defends partiality and offends many beings and inflict harm on them. Naturally, all negative consequences arise. From now on, one should be very alert and mindful to be respectful to sentient beings to repay their kindness. Just like this- life's mother, much effort and karma has been incurred to protect us from harm, enabling us to have whatever good things we now have. Without delay, one needs to cultivate an attitude of cherishing others, filled with compassion and a mind of wanting to help to others unconditionally, without expectation of return.

V 46

*In short, when calamities befall me,*

*It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me*

*Like a smith killed by his own sword.*

*From now on, I shall be heedful of my own sinful actions.*

མདོར་ན་མི་འདོད་ཐོག་ཏུ་བབ་པ་ན་མས།  
 མགར་བ་རང་གི་རལ་གྱིས་བསད་པ་ལྟར།  
 ལས་ངན་མཚོན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
 ད་ནི་སྤྲིག་པའི་ལས་ལ་བག་ཡོད་བྱ།

When external calamities (natural disasters) and one's physical degeneration and aging arise, it is due to one's karma. This is solely due to one's past actions, like a blacksmith who is killed by the sword he makes. When one faces troubles, there is no need to complain. The pain and suffering emotions will only intensify if one gets agitated. Instead, cultivate the understanding of karma. There is no point in repeatedly lamenting that one is sick. Better to remember death and impermanence (and inspire oneself to use one's life meaningfully) rather than lament on being sick. Repeatedly thinking of sickness can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. This kind of repeated negative thinking affects everyone. Look at children's toys – the world is already focused on fighting, yet we perpetuate this by exposing our children to toy-weapons. No wonder the world today is filled with conflicts and wars. That's why tantra or mantra is so useful. It is all about mind-protection and abandoning impure perceptions and having pure view. Tantra provides the potential for enlightenment in one-lifetime because it aims at overcoming impure perceptions. Let's say anti-cancer food – it is better to think of it as nectar food that enables one to live longer to benefit others, rather than think of it as an "anti-cancer" food. However, remember always the impact of karma when reflecting on one's illnesses. If karma had no role, then with advancement in nutrition and medicine, there should be no reason for the numerous types of cancers and diseases that are emerging. Therefore fundamentally, we must take care of karma.

V 47

*When I experience suffering in the wretched states of existence,  
It is the weapon of my evil deeds turned upon me  
Like a fletcher killed by his own arrow.  
From now on, I shall be heedful of my own sinful actions.*

47

ངན་སྲིད་རྣམས་སྲུ་སྲུག་བསྐྱེད་པ་ཡང་།  
མདའ་མཁན་རང་གི་མདའ་ཡིས་བསད་པ་ལྟར།  
ལས་ངན་མཚན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
ད་ནི་སྤྲིག་པའི་ལས་ལ་བག་ཡོད་བྱ།

When we are born in places or situations which present many difficulties and challenges, we need to know that this is due to our engaging in harmful actions and inspiring others to do so. From now on, one should eradicate all the negative actions and avoid influencing others to doing negative actions.

V 48

*When the suffering of the householder befalls me  
It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me  
Like parents killed by their cherished son.  
From now on, it is right for me to leave worldly life forever.*

48

སྤྲིམ་གྱི་སྲུག་བསྐྱེད་ཐོག་ཏུ་བབ་པ་ཡང་།  
བསྐྱེད་ས་པའི་བྱ་ཚས་པ་མ་བསད་པ་ལྟར།  
ལས་ངན་མཚན་ཆ་རང་ལ་འཁོར་བ་ཡིན།  
ད་ནི་རྟག་པར་རབ་ཏུ་འབྱུང་བར་རིགས།

The “householder” refers to a lay person who lives life with the 8 worldly concerns, has the mental attitude of working mainly for this-life’s purposes and the fulfilment of the self-centred interests.

Suffering here refers to the various types of hardships of ordinary life, such as facing intense competition in business deals; facing politics in the office; having challenges with loved ones; being anxious about one’s livelihood or one’s reputation being damaged and having enemies and being anxious about safety, status etc. Let us look at an average person’s life starting from childhood - some children have wonderful parents, whilst some children are born into extremely abusive families. Then when the child goes to school, there is the suffering in the form of exams and the pressure to get good grades which affects not only the child but the parents too; when the child grows up and interacts with others, relationship problems are soon encountered; then job-hunting problems; gradually old age difficulties emerge and one soon discovers how little one has benefited others. One realises how selfish one has been throughout one’s life and even if one wanted to do some good at that stage, how little time is left, as death is already at the door.

When death occurs and the dissolutions of the elements begin, it brings much fear and hallucinations which carry great confusion and suffering with them. Only one’s understanding of Dharma, one’s mind-transformation practices and positive imprints, can help us overcome such fear and confusion. The verse says that such suffering is not caused by any external circumstance but due to one’s past karmic imprints, when we committed actions of body, speech and mind. One has worked one’s whole life just to take care of our present body in a self-centred way, in a self-absorbed, ego-centred way. Therefore, when we age and death comes, it is as if one were a parent killed by his own son – the body is like the son, which betrays the parent (oneself) when death arrives.

The remedy for this tragedy is to leave the worldly-life forever i.e. renounce samsara. Renunciation does not mean becoming a monk or nun but rather,

giving up being solely concerned with this-life matters (worldly attitude) ; giving up the self-centred, self-cherishing attitude and replace it with cherishing others. Live a life with less ego and less grasping. If we find that things are going wrong with business, relationships or one's status, don't panic. These have to separate from us at some stage anyway and certainly at death. It is the grasping that causes pain and suffering. Renounce the grasping mind. Generate compassion towards oneself. After all, one also deserves happiness and since grasping is the source of misery and suffering, renounce it! Renunciation is thus an expression of compassion towards oneself.

V 49

*Since that's the way it is,*

*I seize the enemy. I seize the thief who ambushed and deceived me,*

*The hypocrite who deceived me, disguised as myself.*

*Aha! It is ego clinging without a doubt.*

49

དེ་ལྟར་ལགས་པས་དག་པོ་བདག་གིས་ཟིན།

འཇབས་ནས་བསྐྱས་པའི་ཚུལ་རྒྱན་བདག་གིས་ཟིན།

རང་དུ་བརྟུས་ནས་བསྐྱས་པའི་ཐོག་པོ་ནི།

ཨོ་མ་བདག་འཛིན་འདི་ཡིན་ཐེ་ཚོམ་མེད།

Since the reality of oneself and every single aspect of existence is in the nature of impermanence, as well as in the nature of emptiness/dependent arising, there's no permanent, independently-existing suffering. Therefore everything can change for the better by our creating the positive causes for this to happen. The "thief" of happiness is the wrong view of permanence and inherent-existence and one's ignorance of karma and how it functions.



We need to capture and banish this thief. This wrong-view mind deceives oneself and causes one to waste one's entire life. The self-cherishing mind that believes in inherent existence is the trickster who deceives us. For example, when we get angry because the “ I “ feels threatened we think we are protecting oneself by displaying anger. If we search for this “I “, we will not be able to find it. Yet we cling to the “ I “ and this ego-clinging “ I “ is the real enemy. We need to understand the “ merely-labelled I “. That merely-labelled I exists but not inherently, not independently of our mind's imputations. Therefore, its cause of unhappiness (and happiness) lies not in external factors but in relation to our minds.

V 50

*Now, O Yamantaka, raise the weapon of action and spin it furiously over your head three times.*

*Spread far apart your feet, which are the Two Truths, open wide your eyes of method and wisdom*

*And bear your fangs of the four powers and pierce the enemy!*

50

ད་ནི་ལས་གྱི་མཚན་ཆ་ཀླད་ལ་འཕྱར།

ཁྲོས་པའི་རྩྭ་ལ་གྱིས་ལན་གསུམ་ཀླད་ལ་བསྐྱོར།

བདེན་གཉིས་ཞབས་བགྱད་ཐབས་ཤེས་སྟུན་མིག་གདངས།

སྟོབས་བཞིའི་མཆེ་བ་གཅིགས་ལ་དབྱ་ལ་བསྟུན།

Manjushri is deity of wisdom. Yamantaka is the wrathful aspect of Manjushri and is the 10 direction Buddhas' antidote to the interpretive and definitive existence of the egoistic mind. The interpretative self-cherishing mind is the one that experiences death (Yama); the definitive (actual) self cherishing mind is the self-clinging attitude. The interpretative Yamantaka is the antidote to death; the definitive Yamantaka (which will overcome the

egoistic mind) is the unification of the great bliss and emptiness. Once one can achieve these two aspects of Yamantaka, one can free oneself from samsara.

Due to negative emotions, even if one wishes to overcome delusions with Dharma, one finds hindrances to do so. That is why the verse contains a call to Yamantaka, requesting for blessings to eliminate the two aspects of the egoistic mind. “Raise the weapon of action” refers to the 4 types of actions – pacifying, increasing controlling, wrathful – the request is for Yamantaka to use whichever method that is best suited to help oneself eliminate one’s egoistic mind. “Three times “ illustrates the need for intense action. The two feet of Yamantaka represent the Two Truths – conventional truth (how things dependently arise) and ultimate truth (the absence of inherent existence). The verse continues to request Yamantaka to grant us realisations into the method, namely bodhicitta; and wisdom, namely wisdom realising selflessness.

V 51

*Oh king of spells, who torments the enemy, summon the vow breaker who is destroying me and others, that savage called “Ego-Clinging the Enchanter “, who brandishing the weapon of action runs uncontrollably through the jungle of cyclic existence.*

51

དགྲ་པོ་གཟིར་བའི་རིག་སྒྲགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཡང་།  
འཁོར་བའི་ནགས་སུ་རང་དབང་མ་མཆིས་པར།  
ལས་ཀྱི་མཚོན་ཆ་ཐོགས་ནས་རྒྱག་པ་ཡི།  
བདག་འཛིན་འགོང་པོ་ཞེས་པའི་གདུག་རྩལ་ཅན།  
རང་གཞན་ཕུང་དུ་འརྒྱག་པའི་དམ་ཉམས་ཁག།

Yamantaka is the most forceful opponent to the egotistical mind, the anger mind, which in turn, is linked to the desirous-attachment mind, which in turn, arises from ignorance. In order to purify the object of negation (i.e. ignorance, the root delusion), one first needs to recognise the object of negation and the negativities we commit on account of it. Thus, the verse asks us to call up the vow breaker, the one who destroys ethics i.e. the self-cherishing, self-grasping mind, to be dealt with by Yamantaka (which is antidote to self-egoistic mind). The ego clinging mind is a cruel mind that is uncontrollable. We need to check closely how our ego clinging operates. For instance, even when we do charity or Dharma, there is the danger of ego-clinging being active in our minds at that time. The ego clinging which swings the weapon of action (i.e. karma) through actions of body, speech or mind, causes us to remain circling in the 6 realms of samsara, unable to renounce the self-clinging, unable to be free from suffering. Thus one needs to learn about the object of negation and then apply the antidote.

V 52

*Call him, call him, wrathful Yamantaka! Beat him, beat him, pierce the heart of the enemy, Ego! Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

52

ཁག་ཅིག་ཁག་ཅིག་ཁྱོ་བོ་གཤིན་རྗེ་གཤེད།  
 ཁྱོ་བོ་ཁྱོ་བོ་ཁྱོ་བོ་དག་བདག་སྤྱིང་ལ་བསྐྱུན།  
 ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་མྱ་ར་ཡ།

The words “Call him, call him” signifies one’s sincerity in supplicating Yamantaka for assistance. “Beat him, beat him “ means to strongly eliminate the ego now; the ego which is dedicated to misleading us. Apply the specific antidote directly to the ego-mind which has created an ego-clinging kingdom and appointed anger, attachment, pride, jealousy as its Ministers and through this means, rules the “kingdom of the mind of mistaken views”. The combined force of these delusions is difficult to penetrate. The only way to destroy this false construction is to learn about the faults of the self-ego mind and the misery it conjures. Take firm action to recognise the self-ego mind as the destroyer of happiness, chain it with method and wisdom, constantly be mindful of the two truths and pierce the heart of one’s self-centred ego mind and thereby eliminate it totally.

V 53

*Hum! Hum! O great tutelary deity, produce your miraculous apparitions!  
Dza!Dza! Bind the enemy tightly! Phat! Phat! I beseech you to release me from  
all fetters! Shig! Shig! I beseech you to cut the knots of clinging!*

53

ཧྲཱིྃ ཧྲཱིྃ ཡི་དམ་ཆེན་པོ་རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་སྐྱེད།

ཇུམ་ ཇུམ་ དག་པོ་འདི་ནི་དམ་ལ་ཐོགས།

ཕཎ་ཕཎ་ཆིང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་བསྐྱལ་དུ་གསོལ།

བཞིག་བཞིག་འཛིན་པའི་མདུད་པ་བཅད་དུ་གསོལ།

HUNG is the seed syllable of the wisdom mind of Manjushri/Yamantaka. Every person has the inner, clear light mind. Yamantaka’s clear light mind is in the form of a syllable. HUNG refers to wisdom realising emptiness. In the Mahayanic teachings and practice of the Highest Yoga Tantra, HUNG

refers to the unification of the clear light and great bliss practices. In Sutra terms, it is unification of wisdom realising emptiness and bodhicitta. The tutelary deity here is Yamantaka; the miraculous apparitions refers to the 4 actions as mentioned above. “Dza dza” calls for the power to help one to recognise the enemies of death and self grasping and to never release them from the bonds of wisdom and compassion. “Phat phat” and “shig shig” are to destroy the egoistic mind, beseeching Yamantaka to release one from delusions and cut the knot of the ego clinging mind.

V 54

*Approach great tutelary deity Yamantaka. I beseech you at this very moment to rip to shreds this leather sack of actions and the 5 poisonous afflictions that mire me in the mud of worldly action.*

54

ཕྱི་ཕྱི་ཡི་དམ་ཁྱོ་བོ་གཤིན་ཇེ་འི་གཤེད།  
 འཁོར་བའི་ལས་ཀྱི་འདམ་ཇུ་བ་སྒྱུར་བ་ཡི།  
 ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་དུག་ལྡེའི་རྒྱལ་པ་འདི།  
 ད་ལྟ་ཉིད་དུ་ཤག་ཤག་དབྱེ་དུ་གསོལ།།

“Approach “ means to take refuge under Yamantaka. The 5 poisonous afflictions refer to:

- Longing for sensual objects (which distract us, which make us attached to this life and cause us to forget about our ultimate goal of enlightenment);

- Harmful intention, taking advantage of others
- Sleep and laziness. Regarding sleep - we tend to numb our minds without generating any form of positive motivation before bedtime. We should think before going to bed, “ I rest in order to have the energy to benefit sentient beings” . We can then visualise one’s bed as a lotus upon which there is a warm sun disc, with a soothing moon disc above it, which is the mandala of the Buddhas, where one’s pillow is the lap of the Buddha or one’s deity and visualise oneself as the beloved child of the Buddha or of Chenresig. We can use such deity practice of self-generation to visualise oneself residing in the mandala. It is very beneficial to visualise this way. Regarding laziness – in Dharma terms, anything we do which is not Dharma or motivated at least by renunciation (better still by bodhicitta or emptiness), constitutes “laziness”. No doubt one needs to work to survive. However, one should do it with 100 % Dharma motivation. If we only “try “ to live our lives in accordance with Dharma, then our faith and conviction would correspondingly be less than 100%, hence, the good results derived from it will be similarly reduced.
- Agitation and guilt, produce much negative karma.
- Doubt means one has no wisdom about what is to be adopted and what is to be abandoned and hence constant accumulation of negative karma. What is to be abandoned is whatever comes to our mind that arises from or is associated with any of the delusions.

These afflictions trap us in the mud-pit of worldly-action.

V 55

*Although it has brought me much suffering in the three wretched states of existence, not knowing enough to fear it, I rush to its cause. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy Ego!*

རན་སོང་གསུམ་དུ་སྤྱག་ལ་བསྐྱལ་གྱུར་གྱི་ཡོང་།  
 བྱེད་མི་ཤེས་པར་རྒྱུ་ལ་རྒྱུག་པ་ཡི།  
 ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྤྱར་ཡ།།

The 3 wretched states of existence are the Desire Realm, Form and Formless realms, which have the 3 sufferings, namely the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change and pervasive suffering. One should reflect that one goes through these Realms because one does not have enough wisdom to renounce the sufferings of samsara. This in turn is due to not knowing the 1st of the 4 Noble Truths – the Truth of Suffering. Instead, we rush to create the causes of suffering, namely delusion and karma (which is the 2nd Noble Truth).

Why do we keep repeating our experience of the first 2 Noble Truths of Suffering and Cause of Suffering and never progress to the last 2 Noble Truths of Cessation and Path? It is because of the self-ego clinging (of the wrong view of seeing everything as permanent and independently-existing). Just the thought that one will not die in the next moment, itself is the ego-clinging mind grasping at the “I “. Even buying insurance shows an ego clinging mind, unless one bought insurance with the motivation that one needs to be able take care of oneself when ill so as to be able to continue serving Dharma and others; or to benefit others should death occur.

One’s great fear of separating from the body generates intense anxiety. If we give in to such attachment to one’s body, the actual separation of body and mind/consciousness at the time of death could generate so much distress such as to cause one to be born as a hungry ghost realm being.

V 56

*Although my desire for comfort is great, I don't accumulate its causes. Although my tolerance for suffering is small, my desire and greed are great. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy Ego!*

56

སྐྱིད་འདོད་ཆེ་ལ་དེ་གྱུ་ཚྱགས་མི་གསོག  
སྤྱལ་སྤྱན་རྒྱུང་ལ་འདོད་ནག་རྩམ་སེམས་ཆེ།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེཆེམས།  
དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྤྱ་ར་ཡ།

We have an innate urge for happiness but our creation of the necessary positive causes for such a result, is limited. This verse is asking us to be realistic. If we want the happiness we crave for, we need to create the appropriate cause for this. We cannot bear even small sufferings, yet we constantly create causes for great suffering. Our actions and expectations are totally upside down. This is due to the ego clinging mind.

Verse 57

*Although that which I desire is near at hand, my effort to achieve it is small. Although my projects are many, none of them are completed. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false constructions! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Self!*

57

འདོད་ཐག་ཉེ་ལ་སྤྱལ་ལ་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་རྒྱུང་།  
བྱ་བྱེད་མང་ལ་གང་ཡང་མཐར་མི་འབྲུལ།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེཆེམས།  
དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྤྱ་ར་ཡ།



We do encounter circumstances where despite our putting much effort into preparatory works for a project, the project turns out badly or is unsuccessful or we study hard but still fail in exams. The results we dearly wish for come almost within one's grasp but suddenly fails to materialise. This is because the causes created by oneself for success was small.

" Effort " refers to creating the right cause or having the merit and wisdom to actualise them. Once again the culprit which prevents this is the ego-clinging mind.

V 58

*Although I have many new friendships, my modesty and friendships are of short duration. Although I freeloard off of others, I eagerly pursue those who pilfer. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

58

གསར་འགོགས་ཆེ་ལ་བྲེལ་གཞུང་ཕྱི་ཐག་རྒྱུད་།

སྟོང་འདུན་ཆེ་ལ་རྒྱ་འཕྲོག་འཛོལ་འགོ་རེས།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྒྲིང་ལ་སྒྲུ་ར་ཡ།།

Although I have many new friends, they are not sustainable nor preserved in a positive way. Somehow, the relationships we enter into cannot last and turn sour. The cause for this is ego-clinging which acted in a way that although we seemingly did things for others, in truth it was to serve one's self-interest. If two persons are truly friends, they would be accommodative to each other because the other person's happiness is more important than one's own. By thinking this way, one easily finds peaceful and happiness within oneself.

V 59

*Although I am skilled at flattery and asking for things indirectly, my despair is great. Although I assiduously amass things, miserliness binds me. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

59

ཁ་གསལ་ག་གཞོགས་སྒྲོང་མཁས་ལ་ཞེ་ལྷུག་ཆེ།  
བསྐྱ་བསོག་རེམ་ལ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་སེར་ནས་བཅིངས།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།

Although one may have impressive skills and may be able to convince many people to support one's efforts but eventually, the trust or wealth earlier gained cannot be sustained and is finally lost. There is a reason for this. And why is it that whilst one is able to effectively gather possessions, one has to suffer one's wealth or possessions being taken away or stolen? The cause is miserliness. The advice is to take care of karma in respect of giving and taking or else one will face disaster. Miserliness is the main cause to one losing wealth, which in turn comes from self-centred ego mind.

V 60

*Although whatever I had done has been insignificant, I am swollen with pride. Although I have no reputation, my hunger for it is great. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

ཀུན་ལ་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུད་ལ་སྤྲུག་ཡུལ་ཆེ།  
 རང་ལ་བྱེར་ཁ་མེད་ལ་རུམ་པོ་ཆེ།  
 སྤང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྦྲ་ར་ཡ།།

Whatever beneficial actions we have done in relation to others, such as our cultivation of the 6 Perfections and even though we might think we have served Dharma so much, in truth there is still much to do. The reason why one should take on the responsibility upon oneself alone to be the liberator of sentient beings is because there are sentient beings who have a particular karmic affinity with oneself and relies on oneself to become a Buddha in order for them to gain liberation. There are numberless beings whose enlightenment is dependent on us. The longer we delay attaining enlightenment, the longer those beings have to suffer in samsara. Therefore, if we delay our enlightenment by even one lifetime, they need to suffer that much longer. Further, those sentient beings have been our kind mothers for countless lives and we need to repay their kindness by attaining enlightenment for their sake. Therefore, no matter what meritorious deeds we do, it will not be enough until every moment of our lives is spent on cultivating and acting in bodhicitta.

There are people who have done very little to benefit others, yet demand credit for small deeds performed. This is purely due to the presence of a strong ego mind. Until one gives up the ego mind, all of one's actions, even though apparently virtuous, will be mixed with delusions and therefore tainted.

V 61

*Although my preceptors are many, my ability to keep my vows is small. Although my disciples are many, I give little time to help and look after them. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

61

སློབ་དཔོན་མང་ལ་དམ་ཚིག་ལྟར་ཤེད་ཅུང་།  
སློབ་མ་མང་ལ་ཕན་འདོགས་སྐྱོང་རན་ཅུང་།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།

Even though we have many Gurus and take many initiations, we have not practiced the Dharma that we have learned. We constantly seek variety, going here and there to hunt for more spiritual teachers but in the end, only confusion arises, which results in our criticising the Dharma, criticising our teachers. There are those great mahasiddhas who practiced just one Guru—one disciple, one teaching, enlightenment in one lifetime and all attained realisations through dedicated practice and devotion. Of course, it does not mean that one should have only one Guru. One can have many Gurus, like Lama Atisha who had about 150 Gurus but he was able to put equal effort to totally devote to each of them. He was able to merge all the teachings of his many Gurus into a core practice and upheld his vows and samaya towards each of his Gurus perfectly – in such a case, there is benefit to have many teachers. Keeping pure samaya and vows is the most important. Gurus also should never motivate to have many students just for the sake of having a great number of students. The motivation should be to benefit students equally and thoroughly through Dharma, irrespective of whether there is only one student or a thousand. “Giving little time to help and look after them” is not about having meals together or going on holiday together. It is

about giving Dharma, teaching the complete path to students – the teacher should have the unbroken lineage of teachings and experiential wisdom and compassion to guide and bless the students. Failure to do this arises due to the self egoistic mind, the self centred mind which is overwhelmed by the mistaken perception of permanence and the independent existence of self.

V 62

*Although my promises are many, my practical assistance is minimal. Although my fame is great, if it were examined, the gods and demons would put me to shame. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

62

ཁས་བྲུངས་ཆེ་ལ་ཕན་པའི་ཉམས་ལན་རྒྱུད་།

སྒྲུབ་པ་ཆེ་ལ་བརྟགས་ན་ལྷ་འདྲེས་བྱེལ་།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས་།

དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།།

Just receiving vows is not enough. We have to make them part of our lives. We need the understanding that Buddhadharma is not created by god or Buddha. It is a roadmap to ultimate liberation and methods are to be infused into our daily lives. The purpose of learning Dharma is not about gaining wealth or happiness in this life but to attain ultimate happiness. If we do not wish to be reborn into the suffering realms, then we have to practice vows. “Although my fame is great” refers to how we talk about our job qualifications or job experience in an arrogant manner, thinking highly of ourselves. Yet when we take a close look at our virtues, we find them so fragile and shallow that even the gods and demons would laugh at us. One practice to overcome pride is to consider oneself as the lowest and if our

ego can't handle being the "lowest" , then think that only the earth is lower than us.

V 63

*Although my learning is scant, my penchant for empty verbiage is great. Although the extent of my religious instruction is slight,, I pretend to understand everything. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

63

ཐོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱ་ལ་སྤྱོད་སྒྲིག་བྱས་ཆེ།  
ལྷུང་ཀྱི་རྒྱ་ལ་མི་རྟོགས་དགུ་ལ་རྟོགས།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དགུ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྤྱོད་རྒྱ་ཡ།

For most of us, our scriptural knowledge is not profound. Not to mention one's experiential knowledge or realizations of the Dharma, which is likely to be even less. However, even if one has some level of realisation or worldly knowledge, it is always wise to remain humble and not display one's limited abilities.

V 64

*Although my companions and underlings are numerous, not one is dependable. Although I have many masters, not one is a reliable protector. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

64

འཁོར་གཡོག་མང་ལ་འཁར་མཁན་སུ་ཡང་མེད།  
 དཔོན་པོ་མང་ལ་རྒྱབ་རྟེན་མགོན་དང་བྲལ།  
 ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།།

Even though we have many Dharma or worldly companions, one may find that no one is reliable nor trustworthy. This experience is due to one's past negative karma of harbouring thoughts of cheating or harming others but appearing to be verbally soft and gentle. If we create this kind of karma, the consequence will be our experience of people not trusting us and abandoning us when we need them. This kind of troublesome situation comes about due to one's egoistic, self-centred mind in the first place.

V 65

*Although I have high status, my merit is less than an evil spirit's. Although I am a great religious teacher, my passions are grosser than the demons. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

65

གོ་ས་མཐོ་ལ་ཡོན་ཏན་འདྲེ་བས་རྒྱུད།  
 སྒྲ་མ་ཆེ་ལ་ཆགས་སྤྲེང་བདུད་ལས་རྩུབ།  
 ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།།

This verse contains a warning that if we cause distraction to the practice or preservation of Dharma, our merit will decline and be less than an evil spirit's. When we have leisure time, we should use it for Dharma reflection or retreat, rather than only using it only for holidays and worldly pursuits. Even though we may be serious religious practitioners, if instead of caring for others and use whatever we have to be of benefit of others, we waste away our opportunity to be beneficial, then we are no better than demons. It is important to have a pure heart – never do anything with body, speech or mind to harm others. If one can do something to benefit others, do it without delay; otherwise, it would be better to remain still like a clear glass of water, as that is the nature of mind. This basic practice is more important than chanting mantra – this is real lam rim and the real lojong.

V 66

*Although my view is lofty, my behaviour is worse than a dog's. Although my good qualities are many, their basis is carried off by the wind. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

66

ལྟ་བ་མཐོ་ལ་སྤྱོད་པ་བྱི་ལས་ངན།

ཡོན་ཏན་མང་ལ་གཞི་མ་རྒྱུང་ལ་ཤོར།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྩོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་ལྷ་ར་ཡ།

Buddhadharma is divided into the View (dependent arising/emptiness) and Character (compassion). There are 4 schools of philosophy which discuss emptiness. All assert dependent arising and emptiness however their analysis with regards to the term “dependent arising” and “emptiness” differ.



Lower schools (Vaibashika and Sautrantika) assert true existence. Cittamatra assert the Mahayanic view lack of inherent existence but it still asserts true existence (it regards these 2 as separate and have different interpretations of the terms). Madhyamika-Sautrantika school mocks Cittamatra for asserting true existence because there is no difference between true existence and inherent existence. Prasangika-Madhyamika asserts that true existence and inherent existence is synonymous and that self and phenomena lack inherent existence.

For some of us, we call ourselves Mahayanic Buddhist practitioners who practice bodhicitta and emptiness but we behave in a manner more gross than people who never studied Dharma. When this happens, we have failed to be a true follower of the Mahayana. For instance, if we are rich but are very stingy, we fail to be truly rich. This is illustrated by the line “behaviour worse than a dog”. If we have many talents but have no ethics and are overwhelmed by delusions and by the “I”, then the basis of our qualities are fragile which can be “carried off by the wind”.

V 67

*All desires enter into me and I blame all my quarrels on others for no reason  
Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer! False construction! Mortally  
strike at the heart of the butcher the enemy, Ego!*

67

ཞེ་འདོད་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་གི་ཕྱགས་སུ་བྱགས།  
གྲོགས་སྒྲོར་ཐམས་ཅད་དོན་མེད་གཞན་ལ་བྱེད།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།།

We never admit our faults and blame others instead. This happens in families, communities, Dharma centres, everywhere. Because of the attachment to one's ego, we are quick to blame others. Instead, understand that unhappiness and conflicts arises from one's own mind's activity and mental projections. We need to reflect upon ourselves.

V 68

*Although I have put on the saffron robe, I appeal to evil spirits for protection*

*Although I have taken religious vows, my behaviour is demonic*

*Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer! False construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher the enemy, Ego!*

68

དུར་སྤྱིག་གྲོན་ནས་སྤྱད་སྤྱོད་འདྲེ་ལ་ཞུ།

སྤྱོམ་པ་སྤངས་ནས་སྤྱོད་ལམ་བདུད་དང་བསྐྱུན།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྩོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྤྱ་ར་ཡ།

Although monks and nuns take ordination vows, instead of totally taking refuge to Buddha, Dharma, some Sangha members still seek protection from worldly spirits. This act can cause one to break a vow. One should uphold vows purely and especially the vow to bring benefit to others.

V69

*Although the gods give me happiness, I worship evil spirits*

*Although the Dharma guides me, I deceive the Three Jewels*

*Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer! False construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher the enemy, Ego!*

བདེ་སྤྱིད་ལྷ་ཡིས་བྱིན་ནས་སྤྱག་འདྲེ་མཆོད།  
 འདྲེན་པ་ཆོས་ཀྱིས་བྱས་ནས་དགོན་མཆོག་བསྐྱུ།  
 ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།།

Although we know that the objects of refuge lead us to the ultimate happiness of enlightenment, we continue to worship spirits and worldly gods and supplicate them for more wealth . This verse reprimands us for doing so. Similarly, we pray to Tara to help us or to grant us our wishes, without ever thinking of the qualities of Shakyamuni Buddha. If we do this, we place ourselves in a situation of not being able to receive blessings from either Tara or the Buddha not because they are not constantly conferring blessings but because we have not created the causal-receptacle to receive them. HH Dalai Lama says, without Shakyamuni Buddha we would not have Buddhadharma today. It is the same thing with the Nalanda Pandits - people hardly know who they are or their great works in clarifying the Buddhadharma and hardly mention their names anymore.

Whatever practice we do and whatever aspect of the Buddha we rely on, Shakyamuni Buddha should be our main object of respect. We claim to be Buddhists, yet we forget about the Buddha, what the Dharma teaches us and forget about the law of karma and by doing so, we deceive the Triple Gem.

V 70

*Although I have always resorted to secluded places*

*I am carried away by distraction*

*Although I request instruction in the holy Dharma*

*And the religious sciences, I cherish divination and shamanism*

*Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer! False construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher the enemy, Ego!*

70

རྟམ་རྟམ་དགོན་པར་བསྐྱད་ནས་གཡང་བས་བྱེད།

དམ་ཚེས་གཙུག་ལག་ཞུས་ནས་མོ་བོན་སྐྱོང་།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།།

We frequently scout for a conducive place to do retreat and Dharma practice, yet when we get there, we are distracted by the beauty of the place or by the insects there! In truth, wherever we are can be a conducive place, as long as we can confront the ego mind. If we do not gain some measure of control over our mind, then wherever we are, the danger of distraction rises to challenge us. Some of us go to monasteries to get conducive conditions to do retreat but when we get there, we are totally distracted by the monks and their activities. We want to see this and that; go to every nook and corner, thereby making our cultivation impossible. We already know what is to be adopted and what is to be abandoned. We have learned how to do our daily religious practices and have been guided up to set up our altars. Yet in the end, we still ask for divination. No matter how auspicious the divination is, if the karma to experience problems is there, until that karma is purified, one will still experience the problems. We go to temples to seek divinations and base our decisions & choices on that. Our trust in Dharma is incomplete, hence the benefit from Dharma will likewise be incomplete.

Last year, I did a divination for a couple. The husband used to practice Dharma but the wife became very intense her pursuit of Dharma and sought advice on the practices to do. My divination showed that it was beneficial for the wife to do a Nyung Nay retreat. So the wife participated in a Nyung Nay retreat and the husband became very angry about her spending time away from the home. He boarded a 1 ½ hour flight to see me to complain and demanded to know what I was teaching her. He demanded to know whether people were forced to come for teachings, leaving families and staying at the Centres. I told him I teach loving-kindness. He eventually quietened down and started to explain how his wife “abandoned” the family. Eventually he realised that it was all a matter of his wife’s choice to do retreat.

Some people rely on shamanism and use spirits to prophesize the future. As a Buddhist practitioner, one should not rely on such methods.

Q : Do you mean one shouldn’t ask for divinations at all?

Ans: Divinations are not really necessary for Dharma practice and if one listens to the Buddha’s teaching, contemplate on them and apply them in one’s daily life, the results would be positive and far more effective. There is no need to go to temple-mediums and the like. Dharma has all the solutions. Divinations have some benefit in situations, like for example, for first timers who want a quick indication of sorts and one then uses the divination as a means to then advise the person and encourage the person to engage in Dharma study.

The root cause of all the obstacles we face in life is our inability to tame our minds. Why? Because we have the mistaken view of the “I “. We fail to see that the “I” which appears to us is merely a mental construction, imputed onto our aggregates. The self-grasping mind wrongly believes that the I is inherently existing, independently existing, un-associated with mental perceptions. This mistaken view is manifested in many different aspects

of our mental faculty – for example, it is the basis of anger or agitation when we view the “I” being harmed. It is in truth the concept of “I” that is being harmed. Further, we have this view of permanent existence and of an existence of self, without thinking about it being dependent on causes and conditions. The egoistic “I” becomes very obvious when one displays anger, as well as when we are attached to something. When we encounter with object of attachment, desire immediately arises, this is also due to ego. When others are successful or are praised, we feel jealousy which is similarly a manifestation of ego. When others have opportunities to practice Dharma and you don’t, instead of rejoicing for them, you feel envious and disturbed, this is again ego at work. Even in laziness, ego is present because Dharma is the antidote to ego & delusions and laziness wants to protect the status quo and hence produces no inspiration for us to engage in Dharma. Sometimes, we find it extremely difficult to understand the Buddha’s teachings. Why? Because our minds are dark and cloudy through the influence of ego, which resists change and transformation. When we talk about ego, we need to think in terms of all the afflictive emotions – anger, attachment, pride, jealousy and the like who prop up ego.

V71

*Forsaking the moral path to liberation, I cling to my home. Pouring my happiness into the water, I run after suffering. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

71

ཚུལ་བྲིམས་ཐར་ལམ་བོར་ནས་ཡ་བྲིམ་འཛིན།

བདེ་སྤྱིད་ཚུལ་པོ་ནས་སྤྱག་ལ་སྤྱེག།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྩོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་མྱ་ར་ཡ།།

The Buddha's teachings are like a mirror reflecting to us exactly how we behave. Instead of striving for liberation and freedom from samsara, we cling to our possessions, fame, name, friends and enemies. This is like pouring our happiness into water to dilute it, ruining our own happiness. Whatever samsaric joy we experience spells the exhaustion of past good karma; and all samsaric gains born out of desirous attachment is nothing more than accumulating negative karma. When death finally arrives, one's entire happiness will be finished, throwing one into the lowest realm. Therefore, unless we gain awareness of our mind, ego and how ego makes us commit negative karma, we are constantly chasing after suffering! Whilst we are working to meet our conventional needs, we should ensure we also achieve our ultimate needs – lasting happiness. For this, we need to continue to look after our mind and place our motivation correctly at all times. We must not base anything we do on the grasping, self-egoistic mind. Since we want happiness and not suffering, we need to be aware of what type of causes produce what kind of results.

V72

*Turning away from the gateway to liberation, I wander in remote places. Despite acquiring the precious jewel of a human body, I wind up in hell. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Motally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

72

ཐར་པའི་འཕྲུག་རྒྱུ་ལོ་ནས་ས་མཐའ་འགྲིམ།

མི་ལུས་རིན་ཆེན་རྟེན་ནས་དཔྱལ་ཁམས་སྐྱབ།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྦྱིང་ལ་སྤྲ་ར་ཡ།

Running away from the gateway to liberation refers to our habit of delaying or turning away from renunciation due to being dominated by our grasping to samsara. In this way, we totally give up the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha; we disappoint the Guru Buddha who came into this world to help us renounce samsaric suffering. We do the opposite. Instead of renouncing samsara, we renounce liberation and strive for samsaric gain! We need to dismantle our delusions and negative emotions.

V73

*Putting aside the particulars of spiritual development, I engage in business.  
Leaving my guru's school, I idle about the town. Roar and thunder on the head  
of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher,  
the enemy, Ego!*

73

ཆོས་ཀྱི་འགྲུར་བྱུང་བཞག་ནས་ཚོང་ཁེ་སྤྱོད།  
སྤྲ་མའི་ཆོས་གྲྭ་བཞག་ནས་གོང་ཡུལ་འགྲོམ།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྤྲ་རྩ་ཡ།

Here, “Putting aside the particulars of spiritual development” refers to practising the Buddha’s teachings in their entirety. If we are honest, we will see that instead of putting effort into engaging in the teachings, we idle our time away in music, night life, drinking, going around town. This is a wasteful decision – we should choose the school of the Buddha rather than party our lives away.



V74

*Abandoning my own livelihood, I plunder others' property. Forsaking my parents' food, I rob others of sustenance. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

74

རང་གི་འཚོ་བ་བཞག་ནས་འདུ་སྐྱོ་འཕྲོག་

རང་གི་ཕ་ཟས་བཞག་ནས་གཞན་ལ་རྒྱ།

ཕུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དགྲ་བདག་གཞེད་མའི་སྡིང་ལ་མྱ་ར་ཡ།

This verse cautions against taking advantage of others out of self-interest and laziness e.g. if one has the ability to work to support ourselves and instead of doing so, one prefers to live off the charity-proceeds in order to feed oneself, then one is “taking advantage”. It is also referring to the Sangha who ought to live in the monastery with the total renunciation of samsara and use their time to cultivate Dharma and not just treat it as an easy way of getting food and shelter. We should never take advantage of others. In terms of lay-life, if a child does not study hard nor try to find a job only solely because the child wants to continue to live off his/her parents, again this is due to the ego and self-cherishing mind which will result in the accumulation of negative karma every single moment.

V75

*Aha! Although my endurance of meditation is small, my recognition is sharp. Though I have not realised even the beginning of the path, I ran around to no purpose. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

ཨེ་མ་སྒྲོམ་སྒྲན་རྒྱུང་ལ་མཛོན་ཤེས་རྒྱ།  
 ལམ་སྒྲུ་མ་ཟེན་དོན་མེད་རྒྱུང་པ་མཐུགས།  
 བྱུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྒྲུ་ར་ཡ།།

Our effort and enthusiasm for meditation is limited but the urge to possess supernatural powers is great. We might wonder how it is that whilst we have been practising for many years, we have no attainments, let alone miraculous powers. Look at our attitude towards practice and how little effort we put in! Besides, gaining supernatural powers is a wrong motivation for practising Dharma and is a clear example of being tricked by the egoistic mind. The purpose of learning Dharma is to subdue our delusions and develop qualities such as humility, kindness, patience and responsibility towards others' welfare. Sometimes, we feel tired of engaging in Dharma practice because there seems to be no sign of any progress e.g. when we fall sick, we cannot turn our pain into bliss. If we think this way, our quest for Dharma is shallow. When we only ask for blessings from a Lama, it could be due to one's laziness in doing practice. In Tibet there are many people who when they have injuries or wounds, seek a Lama's blessings rather than the doctor's medicine.

One has not even reached the point of being able to generate renunciation, which is the beginning of the Path, yet we mislead ourselves into thinking we know enough or act as if we have attained the entire stages of the path. In order to benefit others, one needs to cultivate and gain spiritual maturity and humility and only in this way, when people listen to your sharing of Dharma, will it bring benefit to them. Otherwise, their listening to Dharma from a person who is teaching out of ego will result in the pollution of Dharma, i.e. it will create more delusion in the mind of the listener.

So when it comes to Dharma, we need to forgo temporary purposes and goals. We need to focus on the ultimate purpose of attaining enlightenment for the sake of all living beings. If we become impatient, it is due to the self-egoistic mind and then we turn out worse than those who never practiced Dharma. This is very important advice. We should gain control over our ego, our self grasping and self-cherishing. If we cannot handle our minds, then we are in the condition of water turning into flames – if this is the case, how will the fire be put out? If Dharma practice becomes the activation of delusion, we can never free ourselves from suffering. Like the saying “Doctors are the worst patients”, we should not be like that. Lawyers may be able to give advice to others but when they are in trouble, they don’t know what to do and so on. Hence, we need to apply the Dharma we have learned and remember verse 75.

V76

*When someone gives me useful advice, my hostile takes that person for an enemy.  
When someone deceives me, I repay that heartless one with kindness. Roar and  
thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the  
heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

76

ཕན་པར་བསྐྱབ་ན་སྤང་སེམས་དག་ཏུ་འཛིན།  
མགོ་སྒྲོར་བསྐྱབ་ན་སྤིང་མེད་དྲིན་དུ་གཞོ།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤིང་ལ་སྤྲ་ར་ཡ།

How many people take Shakyamuni Buddha's advice? How many people appreciate and practice his teachings? How many people allow their ego and strong clinging to their own views to guide them, even when advice is given? There was a nun from a remote Himalayan nunnery who had never travelled out of Nepal but was heavily influenced by a group of visiting Europeans, whom she knew very little about. Although an intelligent and capable nun, she was adamant about immediately wanted to go to Europe, as the group was going to help her do so. I was concerned about the affect of the group on her and gave her cautionary advice but she took it badly and regarded me as opposing her and the group as her kind sponsor. She thus left and went to Europe but later faced great difficulties and realised the ulterior motives of the group and hence, returned. Not realising the value of advice is due to ego.

V77

*I tell my intimate friends' secrets to their enemies. I shamelessly take advantage of my acquaintances. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

77

ནང་མིར་བརྟེན་ན་སྦྱིང་གཏམ་དགྲ་ལ་འཆད།།

ཐེབས་པར་འགྲོགས་ན་བྲེལ་མེད་སྒྲོ་སྦྱིང་རྒྱ།

ཕུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྦྱིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།།

If for small gain or due to some differences, Dharma brothers and sisters manipulate each other, it is very heavy karma whose consequences will be rebirth into hell. If there are conflicts between students and reveal the conflict to the Teacher or others, then even the listener will have carry some of the karma. We are all in Rinpoche's mandala. If we see good qualities in

a Dharma brother or sister, then we should speak of them; if not, then it is best to be quiet. Hence in Buddhist practice, many hours of silent practice is encouraged. Look at our Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche – as his practice, he does not speak for first part of the morning just like in Nyung Nay practice, where there is no speech which includes no SMS nor writing, unless a life and death situation requires speech. Just practising mindfulness and engaging in practice. If we comment on any mistakes of one person to another, is already ego at work. The exception is that if one is a monastery-disciplinarian, then one is allowed to point to others' mistakes. Otherwise, one is not to comment on any wrong deeds of others, as we are not in a position to do so. We might find this difficult to do but we must try. Otherwise, it is just more laziness and ego.

We correct the teacher for not knowing this and that but this is because we do not see guru as omniscient. In the early years, I would go to my master in silence and was generally quiet. People used to tell me I was not sociable and thus I put effort into talking more and it came to a stage where I couldn't stop talking (laughter) and now I realise that less-talk is more beneficial. It is not at all a bad thing to try to talk less and focus more on virtue.

V78

*My frustration is intense and my thoughts are coarser than everyone else's. I'm hard to get along with and I continually provoke others' bad character. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

78

གོ་ལོང་དམ་ལ་རྣམ་རྟོག་སྤྱོད་བས་རགས།  
 འགྲོགས་པར་དཀའ་ལ་གཤིས་ངན་རྒྱུ་དུ་སློང་།  
 ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དབྱ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤིང་ལ་སྤྲོ་ར་ཡ།

Sometimes, the more retreat we do, the more impatient we become. By practising Dharma, the more open we should become and not more narrow-minded. When your mind is narrow and closed, your chakras are constricted and tight and this affects the nervous system and blood circulation. Then when small issues arise, they bring about intense frustration and anger arises easily. Therefore, when something goes wrong, relax. Tomorrow, it might go right. If someone hurts you, let one night pass and the situation may recover but if we immediately react, a fight can occur. If we forget about these simple things, we can never perfect our Dharma practice.

We should remain open. We as Buddhists should not convert people into Buddhism but just share our views with them and they be allowed to make their own choices. We should represent Buddha and illustrate the open mindedness of the Buddha and the Dharma. If we have to go to a church, are we still able to see the Buddha in the image of Jesus or not? It is about the mind. The more frustration one has is a sign of failure of Dharma practice because one gets more intense and more difficult to get along with. People will think us difficult, arrogant and narrow minded. There will no space in our heart. As a Buddhist practitioner, when people look at you, they ought to feel the world at peace and feel fully protected. And when they talk to you, they should feel inspired. If we cannot do this, it's due to one's Ego.

V79

*When someone seeks my assistance, I ignore him and secretly cause him harm.  
When someone agrees with me, I won't concur but seek quarrels even at a distance.  
Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction!  
Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

79

བཅོལ་ན་མི་ཉན་ལྟོག་ན་གཞོད་པ་སྒྲེལ།  
བསྐྱུན་ན་མི་འདུད་རྒྱུད་ན་ཚོད་པ་འཚོལ།  
ཕུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་ལྷ་ར་ཡ།

When someone asks for help, if we cannot help, then as a minimum, we cannot cause them harm. If we commit harm, it happens is due to the ego and the ignorant mind and the assured result will be suffering.

V80

*I do not appreciate advice and I'm always difficult to be with. Many things offend me and my clinging is always strong. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

80

བཀའ་བློ་མི་བདེ་རྟག་པར་འགྲོགས་པར་དཀའ།

ཕྱག་ཐུག་མང་ལ་རྟག་རྒྱ་འཛིན་པ་དམ།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།

We should be open to listen to others. We may not adopt the suggestion being made but we can at least listen. For example, let's say we attend a Mahayana teaching but find that the speaker only talks about the Hinayana teachings. This causes us to leave the discourse feeling annoyed. This should not be the case. We should instead regard this as additional information to enhance one's Mahayana training. One ought to have a respect for others' opinions and one's opinion as secondary. Then after listening well and assessing carefully, we can then adopt whichever is more beneficial.

V81

*I exalt myself above the high and low and consider holy people to be my enemies. Because my lust is great, I energetically pursue young people. Roar and thunder*

*on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

81

མཐོ་དམན་ཆེ་ཞིང་དམ་པ་དག་ཅུ་འཛིན།  
འདོད་ཆགས་ཆེ་བས་གཞོན་ནུ་དང་དུ་ལེན།  
ཕུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྦྱིང་ལ་སྦྱ་ར་ཡ།།

This verse points out the fault where in order to pursue status and recognition for ourselves when encountering seniors, one tries to show the seniors having mistakes in order to get respect for oneself. This is due to attachment of wanting respect for oneself and is a negative act.

V82

*Because my friendships are of short duration, I cast aside former acquaintances.  
Because my new friends are many, I lay before them empty promises of enjoyment.  
Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

82

ཕྱི་ཐག་ཐུང་བས་སྦྱར་འགྲོགས་རྒྱུད་དུ་འཕེན།  
གསར་འགྲོགས་ཆེ་བས་ཀླན་ལ་ཁ་བྱོད་འདིངས།  
ཕུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྦྱིང་ལ་སྦྱ་ར་ཡ།།



In a lay community, when people find companions or husbands and wives, they tend to forget about parents. If we are a Buddhist family, our parents are superior. In a Dharma society, if we bring in new students but forget about old students and not offer them respect and instead offend them, this is not right. Although seniors should not aim for respect, juniors should remember to offer it. If we don't do this, then this is due to our egoistic mind. Conversely, taking advantage of newcomers for personal gain and enjoyment is also a total mistake. All need to equally respect each other. Seniors cannot offend newcomers and newcomers also cannot ignore the effort of seniors. We need to practice equanimity.

When one listens to a Dharma discourse, there are various purposes for doing so. Whilst gaining knowledge is one purpose, another important purpose is to receive blessings because teachings involve the oral transmission of the Buddhadharma, which is derived from the Buddha right up to the teacher from whom one is receiving the discourse. Attending Dharma classes or talks is not like attending a business conference or academic learning. The purpose of attending a dharma discourse is not to obtain mere scholarship, name, fame nor food for thought but to actualise liberation.

Dharma is particularly interesting in that realisations come into our mind stream when we have the right attitude, right purpose and right motivation to receive the teachings as blessings to one's mental continuum in order to transform the mind.

The unbroken lineage of the transmission of teachings is therefore immensely significant. Even if one does not fully understand the discourse and thus unable to gather extra Dharma knowledge but due to having the right motivation for listening to the teachings, one will still receive great benefit. Further, although in conventional terms, one's wisdom may appear limited, due to the blessings from the oral transmission, one gains the benefit of subduing one's mind. For these various reasons, it is always beneficial to complete the Dharma discourse, to receive the complete transmission. Thus

attending Dharma teachings without break is crucial. Occasional attendance will bring some benefit but does not confer the full benefit . Sometimes, one might think that the Dharma talk or classes are on a familiar topic that one already knows about or can read up on it, so why go to class? Why battle through the hassle of traffic? The answer is the blessing that one gets from the oral transmission of the teachings that one receives from the living teacher, who received it from his living teacher before that and all the way, traceable back to the Buddha.

One should thus learn how to commit to studying the Dharma the way the 17 Nalanda Pandits did. The Indian pandits , the Chinese pandits, the Tibetan pandits were all single pointed in their determination to gain firm Dharma understanding. Take for example, the great Tibetan translator Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo, just to learn the Sanskrit language to be able to translate the Sanskrit into Tibetan language in those days gone by involved enormous hardship and effort. In ancient Tibet, they believed that learning the sacred Dharma requires effort and thus instead of using horses, they used their own aggregates (they walked long distances to places of Dharma learning) to receive Dharma and they placed importance to receiving Dharma fully. One needs much merit and prayer to complete a Dharma discourse. Similarly, one needs much merit and prayer to habituate with the entire aspects of Dharma. This is why we recite the prayers like Heart Sutra and Lion-face Dakini prayers in order to remove the many obstacles that affect us in learning and practising Dharma.

The Buddha had to overcome many maras on his way towards enlightenment. One of these maras is a being called “the son of the desire god realm” who has the power to enter into one’s mind stream to distract one from engaging into Dharma and spur one onto engaging in non-virtue e.g. choosing non-Dharma actions or heavy sleepiness! This is not the fundamental nature of one’s mind but is an example of being controlled by negative influences. Hence we need much merit and prayer to suppress interferers and obstacles to the study and practice of Dharma. As taught in Lam Rim, life is fragile. As it

is, there is no time to fully practice Dharma. We need a strong commitment to Dharma for us to overcome these demons/distractions, which the blessings of the teachings can help with.

The 2nd motivation to listen to Dharma is to acquire the method to bring about mental transformation. However, if by learning Dharma, one does not apply the teachings and does not change, then it is a wasted effort.

The 3rd motivation is to gain more Dharma knowledge which plants positive imprints in our mindstream but this is the last purpose.

There are no new words to be learned from the Buddhadharma. It is not the words but the meanings of the teachings that is important. Even if one listens to Lam Rim 10 times, it's not enough. Each listening increases one's understanding and wisdom.

V 83

*Having no precognition, I eagerly resort to lying and deprecation. Having no compassion, I snatch away the confidence from others' hearts. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

83

མངོན་ཤེས་མེད་པས་རྩོན་སྦྱར་དང་དུ་ལེན།

སྤྱིང་རྩེ་མེད་པས་སློ་གཏང་སྤྱིང་ལ་འབྲབ།།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྦྱ་ར་ཡ།།

Our outer and inner aspects should be consistent and harmonious with each other. Speaking Dharma to others, whilst nurturing delusions and holding ill-will in our hearts is a serious contradiction. If we do not put effort to gain proper knowledge of the Dharma, if we not attain the wisdom to discriminate between what is Dharma and what is a worldly concern and yet constantly talk about Dharma and act in a very religious manner, it is merely deceiving others. If we use words of compassion and yet never practice it, this will never last because it is not fundamentally true to us and our inner faults will soon be exposed. This is certainly one of the ways in which people will lose trust and faith in you. Others' confidence in oneself will disappear and instead, anger and criticism towards you will increase, which in turn causes them to create negative karma (which is attributable to you and thus you too accumulate negative karma).

V84

*Having studied little, I wildly guess about everything. Since my religious education is slight, I have wrong views about everything. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

84

ཐོས་པ་རྒྱུད་བས་ཀྱན་ལ་སྤྲོད་ཆོད་བྱེད།  
 ལྷུང་རྒྱུད་བས་ཡོངས་ལ་ལོག་ལྟ་སྤྱོད།  
 ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྤྲོད་པ་ཡ།

Due to the egoistic self centred mind and laziness, we tend to have a very shallow understanding of Dharma. We might preach the Dharma to others yet present it only for one's own convenience and suited to fulfill the needs of one's egoistic mind. This is the warning advice given to those who share

Dharma and teach Dharma. In order to share the Dharma, it is necessary for us to have advanced study and not just superficial study but in-depth study with profound humility and respect for the teachings. Not only that, it is best if we have knowledge of entire Buddha's 84,000 teachings and ideally, study of the 5 Treatises of Buddhadharma which contain these 84,000 teachings. In order to be a responsible teacher, to fulfil the role of a Dharma teacher, one should lead the listener right up to enlightenment. For this, one needs to know the teachings from the Small Scope up to the Great Scope, including Tantra.

What are the 5 treatises? (1) Logic and reasoning (2) Vinaya (3) Middle Way (Madhyamika), (4) Abidhammakosha (Buddhist metaphysics) and (5) Prajnaparamita (Perfection of Wisdom). These 5 treatises are the works of the 17 Indian Pandits - all 400 volumes of work are condensed into these 5 treatises. If one wants to study thoroughly, it takes 15-20 years. That is the curriculum of Geshes. Everyday, you only cover one paragraph, requiring memorisation, study and debate. Hence it is a cause of rejoicing that such there are still people who willingly spend 15-20 years from morning to night, focusing on these studies. One is not even encouraged to have too many robes in order not to spend too much time washing many robes or having showers! Having less money also means that one's life has less distraction. Sometimes, in the monastery, we would use the light from a stick of incense to read the individual words from the text – this is very beneficial as it makes you focus as one doesn't want to burn the text but it also makes one able to retain the memory of it better. The idea is that even if all light goes out, we can still see the words. Preservation of the Dharma happens through study and through realisations. The purpose of learning Dharma is beyond this one lifetime's benefit. It is to help us way beyond that. When we consider the preciousness of the human rebirth and fragility of life, we literally spoil and waste this human rebirth if we do not use it to study and apply the Dharma and instead merely live our lives caring for the self-centred mind.

In "new age Dharma", I heard there seems to be more of an emphasis on

learning and practising Dharma for the benefits of this-life and within the context of this life (!!), rather than on next life time. This in itself already contradicts the Refuge teachings, so there would be no way to become pure Buddhists if we approach dharma study and practice in this manner. I really question this approach. Although it is recognised that culture can affect the presentation of the Dharma, we should follow the Nalanda tradition in respect of abiding by the fundamental teachings of the Buddha.

V85

*Habituated to attachment and aversion, I revile everyone opposed to me.  
Habituated to envy, I slander and deprecate others. Roar and thunder on the head  
of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher,  
the enemy, Ego!*

85

ཆགས་སྤང་གོམས་པས་གཞན་ཕྱོགས་ཡོངས་ལ་སྒྲོད།

ཕྱག་དོག་གོམས་པས་གཞན་ལ་སྒྲོ་སྒྲུར་འདེབས།

ཕུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།

Due to the root cause of the self egoistic mind (ignorance), we indulge in and over-familiarise ourselves with attachment, anger and indifference. Accordingly, we constantly label the people we meet into 3 types of beings – friend, enemy and stranger. Having done this labelling with a partial mind, it then causes us to respond to them in ways influenced by attachment, anger and ignorance and all this adds up to committing heaps of negative karma. Due to having such biased attitudes, we think we are protecting ourselves from an enemy or helping a friend and being neutral to a stranger. We think it is making one's life safer and more comfortable. In truth, we

are totally deceiving ourselves. We are only promoting the self-ego mind which will eventually destroy us and every bit of happiness we have. Be mindful of what is exactly happening inside of ourselves. Whenever there is a feeling of attachment, check whether this is real care, compassion and unconditional love or whether there is an element of self-interest and the self-egoistic mind of attachment. If the feeling is introduced by or merely mixed with attachment, immediately avoid it because it is harmful to ourselves by causing us to create negative karma and suffering results. It is also self-deception. This does not mean one should not love our family or close-ones but we should love unconditionally, with honesty and being mindful of delusions operating in our minds at the same time. This kind of pure love brings much merit and good karma.

If someone does something bad and hurtful, you try to avoid that person and regard that person as an object of aversion, you actually doing this for the purpose of self centred security. If one is avoiding other person so that the other person doesn't commit more negative karma, then it might be alright to avoid such a person. However, if avoiding the other person due to being hurt and wanting to ignore that person, it is negative karma.

V86

*Never studying, I despise the vast teaching. Never relying on a guru, I revile religious instruction. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

85

ཆགས་སྤང་གོམས་པས་གཞན་ཕྱོགས་ཡོངས་ལ་སྤོད།

ཕྱག་དོག་གོམས་པས་གཞན་ལ་སྤོ་སྐྱར་འདེབས།

ཕུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤིང་ལ་སྦྱར་པ།

Some people are very clever at extracting Dharma information from things seen on TV, without proper study under a qualified teacher and then start to give Dharma teachings. Even if the book or TV program refers to authentic Dharma material, it is not enough to just read the books and watch TV because the activation of the inner-transformation process can only happen when we receive the direct, unbroken oral transmission of the teachings from Buddha, right up to your teacher and then to you. This is the method of getting the real Dharma, practiced by the Tibetan masters for centuries. Nowadays, one hardly hear of the Indian pandits but if you really refer to the life stories of the Indian pandits, you will see that they were more intensive into their guruyoga practice (reliance on the Guru) than anyone else i.e. they totally relied on their gurus. The Tibetan masters who likewise adopted this practice were such that their knowledge never degenerated.

This point is often misunderstood by other schools of Buddhism who mistakenly think that Guru Devotion or guruyoga is just Lamaism, something the Tibetan Lamas created, making the Guru higher than the Buddha. This is erroneous thinking. The whole point is to receive blessings from the unbroken Buddha's lineage through one's Guru. If one is a Dharma teacher, it is crucial to receive the oral instructions of the Teachers. In particular, the oral instructions concerning initiations and Commentaries. If I wish to give such instructions to a student, I would need the permission of my Guru before I can do so. Only then one is permitted to reveal the transmission one has received from the Guru to the next generation of students.

I truly wish in LDC that one day its own members can teach every aspect of Dharma. One of the prerequisites is for the student to have received at least one time, the teachings from a Teacher with an unbroken lineage. That way whenever you proceed to teach that, whether you speak with perfect words or not, the blessing from the teachings and the lineage are still transmitted to the listener. When you listen to a qualified teacher given teachings of an unbroken lineage, you get the blessings, the transmission, the understanding, the experiential instructions of the Teacher. There is



immense benefit derived from this. You never know, one day I will approach you to take over one of my lojong class. It is important for people to know about the purpose of receiving teachings. One of the reasons for decreasing numbers in classes is because of interferers and demons. We don't know why we are attending oral transmissions of teachings. We think that we have heard the teachings from audio teachings and that's enough. It's not. Make sure you attend to get the blessings of the teachings. Coming to class is not just about making friends but to gain Dharma to transform one's life for the better and to conquer the ego mind.

There's one former abbot – a very senior Lama – Gen Donyo-la who always enjoyed drinking butter tea with lots of butter and the tea had to be super black. Everyone was concerned about his blood pressure but due to karma and living his entire life in Dharma, he had no health problems at all. He advised that one should have cherishing towards your monastery/organisation without self-grasping, without ego mind.

V87

*Instead of explaining the scriptures, I falsely set up my own system. Not having mastered pure vision, I curse and yell. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

87

སྡེ་སྣོད་མི་འཆད་རང་བཟོ་རྒྱུ་དུ་སྒྲིག།  
 དག་སྣང་མ་འབྱུངས་ལབ་ཚད་འབར་ཤ་སྒྲ།  
 ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
 དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྦྱིང་ལ་སྒྲ་ར་ཡ།

This verse is especially to caution teachers against setting up their own system - and that is exactly what I just did – going off and telling other stories!! (Laughter). That’s why some Lamas strictly stick to the scriptural verses.

V88

*Without condemning sacrilegious activities, I launch numerous criticisms against all the Buddha’s words. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

88

ཆོས་མིན་ལས་ལ་སྒྲོད་པར་མི་བྱེད་པར།

ལེགས་བཤད་ཡོངས་ལ་སྤྱན་འབྲིན་སྒྲུ་ཚོགས་གཏོང་།

ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།

དག་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྤྱིང་ལ་སྒྲུ་ར་ཡ།

I will give an example from this verse. Some people, without having knowledge of the significance of the symbols and implements of tantric deities, proceed to criticise the entire Buddhadharma and criticise the Buddha for teaching about embracing consorts. Buddhist Tantra is rich in symbolism and not to be taken literally. Even in the Buddhadharma, there are teachings which need to be understood in a symbolic way. For instance, there is a famous quote from the Buddha which states, “Father and mother are objects to be killed”. There was a reason for the Buddha to say this – the real meaning is that “father” refers to ignorance, the root of all suffering and “mother” here refers to delusions like attachment and anger. So the meaning of the verse is that delusions are to be eliminated.

V89

*Having no shame about things I should be ashamed of, I am perversely ashamed of the Dharma, which is not something shameful. Roar and thunder on the head*

*of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher,  
the enemy, Ego!*

89

ངོ་ཚའི་གནས་ལ་ངོ་ཚར་མི་འཛིན་པར།  
ངོ་མི་ཚ་ལ་ངོ་ཚའི་ཚོས་ལོག་འཛིན།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྦྱིང་ལ་སྦྱར་པ་ཡ།

Some of us are shy about being Buddhists. We dare not tell our family or friends that we recite prayers or believe in practising mind-training and compassion. Some people dare not even tell their friends that they come to a Dharma Centre because they feel uneasy about letting others know that they are interested in the spiritual path or that they have consulted a monk but these same people have no problem in broadcasting that they regularly go to the Pub!

V90

*No matter what I do, it is never done right; everything I do is inappropriate. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!*

90

བྱས་ན་རུང་བ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མི་བྱེད་པར།  
མི་རིགས་བྱ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་བྱེད་པ་ཡིས།  
ཡུང་བྱེད་རྟོག་པའི་མགོ་ལ་ཆེམས་སེ་ཆེམས།  
དགྲ་བདག་གཤེད་མའི་སྦྱིང་ལ་སྦྱར་པ་ཡ།

There are times when one does good deeds like making charity, somehow things go wrong. Whatever “right” actions we carry out, somehow the results are negative. This is where we do not have the karmic conditions to complete positive karma, whilst having many conditions to complete negative karma. Mindfulness in all our actions of body, speech and mind in performing positive deeds are crucial.

V91

*Aha! You whose strength is that of the ultimate body of the Sugata who conquers the demon of the egoistic view, you wielder of the staff, the weapon of the wisdom of selflessness, turn it over your head three times without hesitation!*

91

ཨེ་མ་བདག་ལྷ་འི་འགོང་པོ་འཛམ་མཐེང་པའི།

བདེ་གཤེགས་ཚུལ་གྱི་སྐྱེ་མངའ་མཐུ་སྟོབས་ཅན།

བདག་མེད་ཡེ་ཤེས་མཚན་ཆ་དབྱུག་ཐོ་ཅན།

ཐེ་ཚཱ་མེད་པར་གྲུང་ལ་ལན་གསུམ་བསྒྲོར།

Having discovered the root cause of all the faults in us, which is the self-egoistic mind, we request Yamantaka, who has the indestructible vajra body, who has gone beyond , who has conquered the wrong view of inherent existence, the holder of the staff which represents the wisdom of selflessness, to bless us, to help us overcome our delusions. “Turn it over your head three times” – this means to eliminate (1) ego centricity (2) self cherishing attitude (3) impure mental and physical conditions. These 3 things are aspects of the self grasping ego.

V92

*I pray you, kill the enemy with your fierce wrath! I pray you, subdue my evil thinking with your great wisdom! I pray you, protect me from my evil actions with your great compassion! I pray you, destroy this Ego once and for all.*

92

རམ་སྐབས་ཆེན་པོས་དག་འདི་བསྐྱལ་དུ་གསོལ།  
ཤེས་རབ་ཆེན་པོས་རྟོག་ངན་གཞོམ་དུ་གསོལ།  
སྤྱིང་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོས་ལས་ལས་བསྐྱབ་དུ་གསོལ།  
ངེས་པར་བདག་ནི་བརྒྱུག་པར་མཛད་དུ་གསོལ།།

This is the prayer to Yamantaka to help us eliminate our ego, our negative emotions. We beseech him to use his compassion to constantly remind us not to commit non-virtue.

V93

*However much suffering those in cyclic existence may endure, I pray you, heap it surely upon ego-clinging! However many of the five poisonous afflictions anyone may experience, I pray you, heap them surely upon this ego-clinging, which richly deserves them!*

93

འཁོར་བ་པ་ལ་དུུ་ཁ་ཅི་མཆིས་པ།  
བདག་འཛིན་འདི་ལ་ངེས་པར་སྤྱང་དུ་གསོལ།  
གང་ལ་ཉོན་མོངས་དུག་ལྡེ་ཅི་མཆིས་པ།  
རིགས་མཐུན་འདི་ལ་ངེས་པར་སྤྱང་དུ་གསོལ།།

All the 6 realm beings, including oneself, are completely dominated by suffering and the causes of suffering. The verse therefore supplicates Yamantaka to wield his power and wisdom to fill one's mind with wisdom until there is no space for the self-egoistic mind to dwell.

Do this meditation – visualise Yamantaka in the sambhogakaya aspect i.e. as Yamantaka in wrathful form and supplicate him to help you. Through the rays of the 5 colour lights, followed by nectar (like light-honey colour) entering through your crown, it purifies all delusions in relation to one's physical form; when it flows down to the throat, it purifies all delusions in relation to speech; when it flows to the heart, it purifies all delusions in relation to mind and emotions. As you do this visualisation, picture all your delusions disappearing. Then create a wisdom vajra-fence around the whole body, like an aura and in between the vajras, are smaller vajras which fill the spaces, such that nothing can go out and nothing can penetrate. Every cell of one's body being filled with these protective vajras which overcome the mara of ordinary death; which overcome delusions; which overcome the mara of the son of god who has the power to distract the minds of beings with worldly concerns or samsaric attractions. One can also do this visualisation to help oneself and others to eliminate the 5 afflictive emotions, which are:

- longing for sensual objects (which are in the nature of temporary samsaric pleasure);
- harmful intention (harming self and others e.g. not taking care of health, suicide, having ill- will towards others);
- sleeping and sloth because they are forms of mental laxity and dullness (for this, one should try to obtain conducive conditions that will cause distraction to one's practice, although it is not easy to find such places). Like the Tsum Project which supports a sizeable Sangha community. Why not have them nearer the city? Because conditions up in the Himalayan mountains are more conducive for practice;
- agitation and guilt
- doubt

The visualisation of light and nectar flowing from our crown down the central channel within us to purify the delusions of body, speech and mind are to eliminate the stubborn, egoistic mind which thus requires meditation in relation to the forceful, wrathful Yamantaka.

V94

*Although through reasoning I have identified without a doubt all the roots of evil, if you judge that I am still abetting them, I pray you to destroy the holder himself!*

94

འདི་ལྟར་ཉེས་པའི་རྩ་བ་མ་ལུས་པ།

ཐེ་ཚོམ་མེད་པར་རིག་པས་ངོས་ཟིན་ཀྱང་།

ད་དྲུང་འདི་ཡི་ཁ་འཛོལ་གཤགས་འདེབས་ན།

འཛོལ་མཁན་དེ་ཉིད་བརྒྱུག་པར་མཛད་དུ་གསོལ།།

As a climax to this text, the verse then boldly declares that if after studying the Wheel of Sharp Weapons and having discovered our delusions, one still serves one's self-egoistic mind, then one prays to Yamantaka to “destroy the holder himself” – this doesn't mean destroy oneself i.e. the person but rather is a desperate prayer for Yamantaka to handle the task of destroy the self- egoistic mind once and for all.

V95

*Now drive all blame onto one thing! I shall cultivate gratitude toward all beings, take into my mind what others abhor and turn over the roots of my virtue to all beings.*

95

ད་ནི་ལེ་ལན་ཐམས་ཅད་གཅིག་ལ་བདེ།  
 སྐྱེ་བོ་ཡོངས་ལ་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེ་བར་བསྐྱོམ།  
 གཞན་གྱི་མི་འདོད་རང་གི་རྒྱུ་ལ་སྤང་།  
 བདག་གི་དགོ་ཅུ་འགོ་བ་ཡོངས་ལ་བསྒྲོ།

Here, the practice of tong len is raised. Until today and since beginningless lifetimes, one has always blamed others. One blames MSG, preservatives, pollution, governments, enemies, troublesome times. The real blame should be on one's mistaken view of the "I", the wrong view of personal identity i.e. one's mistaken belief in inherent existence. This false view causes us to act in ways harmful to ourselves and to others. We can start eradicating this view by giving up self-cherishing and cherish others. Take the Buddha as an example. Why is it that Buddha became the Buddha and why is it that I continue to suffer? Because Buddha cherished others and I cherish only myself.

V96

*Just as the pattern of colours in a peacock's feather is due to poison, may the afflictions be transformed into the aids to enlightenment by taking on the physical verbal and mental deeds of other living beings past present and future.*

96

དེ་ལྟར་འགོ་བ་གཞན་གྱི་སྒོ་གསུམ་གྱིས།  
 དུས་གསུམ་བགྱིས་པ་བདག་གིས་སྤངས་པ་ཡིས།  
 མ་བྱ་དུག་གིས་མདོངས་དང་ལྷན་པ་ལྟར།  
 ཉོན་མོངས་བྱང་རྒྱུ་གྲོགས་སུ་འབྱུང་བར་ཤོག།



The more poison the peacock consumes, the more luminous its feathers become. For us in samsara, we are surrounded by “poison”, by the negative factors which trigger our delusions and negative emotions. Instead of succumbing to the poison and perishing, let us instead transform the adverse situations we face, into the path of liberation. The more suffering we experience, the more renunciation we should generate and the deeper the compassion we should generate; the faster we approach our death, the more persevering we should be in accumulating merit. The more hardship we have to go through, the greater our spiritual strength should become through our applying mind-training methods to deal with these problems. Whatever harm one receives in relation to other sentient beings e.g physical harm, verbal abuse or mental wrong imputations, we need to take as part of the practice to subdue one’s own angry reactions or reactions of attachment, pride etc which only increase our suffering. This way, we transform one’s own mind. What is the benefit to practising this way? We will not be affected by negative emotional states, we will never have suffering and always feel stable and happy. We will not suffer when things go wrong in our life.

V97

*I give the roots o my virtue to living beings so they may be cured, as a poisoned crow is healed by medicine. I dedicate my life to the liberation of all beings so they may quickly achieve the buddhahood of the Sugata!*

97

བདག་གི་དག་ཅུ་འགོ་ལ་སྤྱིན་པ་ཡིས།  
 འུ་རོག་དུག་ཐོས་སྤྲོན་གྱིས་སོས་པ་ལྟར།  
 སྤྱི་བོ་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་ཐར་པའི་སྲོག་བཟུང་ནས།  
 བདེ་གཤེགས་སངས་རྒྱས་སྤྱད་དུ་ཐོབ་པར་ཤོག།

What is the purpose of dedicating merits and doing “tong len” practice (exchanging of self for others through meditation)? These act as a conditions for them to eliminate suffering. Through the act of dedication and tong len practice, it is like delivering medicine to a sick person. Unlike peacocks, crows cannot tolerate poison; similarly, many beings cannot or do not know how to practice mind training. They are completely lost when facing problems. Thus, such beings need our prayers and dedications as positive conditions for them to help themselves. If a crow acts like a peacock and tries to consume poison, it will suffer. Similarly, many of us are never satisfied with our wealth and commit all sorts of risky acts to gain wealth but if we do not have the karma to hold such wealth, we will get into trouble like the crow. Hence, we should dedicate our lives towards the liberation of others.

V98

*Until I and those who have been my parents have attained enlightenment in the Highest Realm, may we support each other with a single thought, even when wandering about in the six states of existence owing to our actions.*

98

ནམ་ཞིག་བདག་དང་ཕ་མར་གྱུར་པ་རྣམས།

འོག་མིན་གནས་སུ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་མ་ཐོབ་པར།

འགོ་བ་དུག་རྒྱུ་ལས་ཀྱིས་འབྱུངས་ན་ཡང་།

ཕན་རྒྱུན་གཅིག་སེམས་གཅིག་གིས་འཛིན་པར་ཤོག།

The previous verse referred to one of the methods to develop bodhicitta, namely tong len or exchanging of self for others. This verse 98 refers to the second method of developing bodhicitta, namely that known as the “6 cause and 1 effect” practice, which starts by reflecting on how all beings have been one’s kind mother through countless lives, then wishing to repay that kindness, leading up to the stage of generating unconditional

love, great compassion and the altruistic intention to free all beings from suffering and lead them to enlightenment by oneself alone. We need to uphold the aspiration that until every living being achieves enlightenment, one will never give up practising bodhicitta and that even though one may not be enlightened yet and is still tied to karma and delusion at the present time, one should never abandon bodhicitta but speak of it often to remind oneself to act and live in accordance with it.

V99

*When I enter the three wretched states of existence for the sake of even one living being, may I save him or her from the suffering of that wretched destiny without compromising a great being's way of life.*

99

དེ་ཆོ་འགྲོ་བ་གཅིག་གི་དོན་དུ་ཡང་།

ངན་སོང་གསུམ་དུ་བདག་གིས་ཡོངས་ཞུགས་ནས།

སེམས་དཔའ་ཆེན་པོའི་སྨོད་པ་མ་ཉམས་པར།

ངན་སོང་སྐྱག་བསྐྱལ་བདག་གིས་དྲོངས་པར་ཤོག།

If one has the ability to help even one living being through Dharma, one should do it without hesitation. Even if one cannot rescue all beings and eliminate the sufferings of all beings, we should not give up bodhicitta. Even when doubtful of ourselves in terms of being able to fully manage one's own sufferings, we should without delay, do our utmost to help others with such a bodhicitta motivation.

V100

*At that very instant, the guards of hell will realise that I am a guru and their weapons will turn into a rain of flowers. May peace flourish unharmed!*

100

དེ་མ་ཐག་ཏུ་དཔྱལ་བའི་བསྐྱེད་མ་རྣམས།  
 བདག་ལ་སྤྲོ་མའི་འདུ་ཤེས་སྒྲེས་གྱུར་ནས།  
 མཚོན་ཆ་དག་ཀྱང་མེ་ཏོག་ཆར་དུ་གྱུར།  
 གཞོད་པ་མེད་པར་ཞི་བདེ་འཕེལ་བར་ཤོག།

“At that very instant” refers to when one enters the 3 unfortunate realms of existence by the force of compassion and bodhicitta for the sake of liberating even one sentient being. If one gets reborn in the lower realms with such a bodhicitta intention, even the hell guards will be subdued and regard you as their Guru and all harms will dissolve into peace. As you can see, even in hell, there is the opportunity to attain peace and virtue due to the strength of the bodhicitta motivation. It should be understood that hell guards are hallucinated images of a deluded mind.

V101

*Even those in wretched states of existence shall obtain superknowledge and mantras, assume the bodies of gods and men and generate bodhicitta. In return for my kindness, may they repay me with Dharma practice! Taking me as their guru, may they properly attend me!*

101

དན་སོང་བ་ཡང་མཛོན་ཤེས་གཟུངས་ཐོབ་ནས།  
 ལྷ་མིའི་ལུས་སྤངས་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་དེ།  
 བདག་གི་དྲིན་ལན་ཚོས་ཀྱིས་གཙོ་བར་ཤོག།  
 བདག་ལ་སྤྲོ་མར་བཟུང་ནས་བསྐྱེད་པར་ཤོག།

Lower realm beings also can obtain the wisdom that understands the absence of inherent existence (emptiness) and be able to gain the transformation of mind through the presence of compassion and bodhicitta. Those bodhisattvas who gain rebirth into the 6 realms do so not through negative karma and delusions but through their bodhicitta-inspiration. Hence their kindness is immeasurable. The enlightened Buddhas and Arya Bodhisattvas have the courage to return to samsara, to this filthy wretched state and manifest in forms like us and subject themselves to the same conditions as us. Their courage is immeasurable. To repay their kindness cannot be fulfilled by offering them wish-fulfilling jewels. The only offering of value that we can give them is to repay their kindness with our Dharma practice – adopting the 3 practices of putting effort to study the Dharma, contemplating the Dharma to understand it thoroughly and then putting effort to habituate/meditate on that understanding in order to transform one's mind into a virtuous mind. This can happen when we take the Buddhas and those great bodhisattvas as Guru and carry out these 3 practices. How to devote to the Guru? To surrender the egoistic mind, the self-cherishing mind to the total control of the Guru, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Then one will never be separated from the path that will enable us to attain realisations and enlightenment.

V102

*Then, may all the beings in the higher realms also deeply meditate on selflessness, just as I do, cultivating the non conceptual meditative absorption on the identity of existence and peace. May they recognise this identity!*

102

དེ་ཆེ་མཐོ་རིས་འགོ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱང་།

བདག་དང་མཚུངས་པར་བདག་མེད་རབ་བསྐྱོམས་ནས།

སྲིད་དང་ཞི་བ་རྣམ་པར་མི་རྟོག་པར།

མཉམ་པ་ཉིད་དུ་ཉིང་འཛིན་བསྐྱོམས་པར་ཤོག།

མཉམ་པ་ཉིད་དུ་རང་ངོ་འཕྲོད་པར་ཤོག།།

The sole antidote to the self-grasping attitude is selflessness. Therefore, here, one expresses the heartfelt prayer to have the merit to gain the realisation of selflessness. In order to actualise enlightenment, one needs to meditate and gain realisations on the selflessness of person and the selflessness of phenomena (which includes the aggregates), to realise the emptiness of nirvana and of enlightenment itself.

Up till this point, the verses have focused on conventional bodhicitta. From hereon, the emphasis is on ultimate bodhicitta.

V103

*Having done so I will crush the enemy. Having done so, I will crush conceptual construction. After cultivating selflessness through non conceptual wisdom, how can I not obtain the causes and effects of the form body?*

103

དེ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན་དག་འདི་ཚམས་པར་འགྱུར།

དེ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན་རྣམ་རྟོག་ཚམས་འགྱུར་ཏེ།

མི་རྟོག་ཡེ་ཤེས་བདག་མེད་བསྐྱེད་འགྱུར་ཏེ།

གཟུགས་སྐྱུ་རྒྱ་འབྲས་ཅི་སྟེ་ཐོབ་མི་འགྱུར།།

Having meditated on conventional bodhicitta, one will crush the enemy of self-cherishing. From hereon, one proceeds to crush conceptual construction and this means meditating on emptiness which will eliminate the mistaken belief in inherent existence. If we put great effort into the study and meditation on emptiness (selflessness of self and selflessness of phenomena) together with the practice of bodhicitta, it is certain that one will eventually obtain the Buddha's form body – nirmanakaya and samboghakaya body. When gaining realisations on selflessness, they will arise in this sequence – first

we will gain realisations into the gross selflessness of the person, then the subtle selflessness of the person, then the gross selflessness of phenomena and then the subtle selflessness of phenomena.

- Realising the gross selflessness of person means overcoming the belief that a person is independently existing, self-supporting or substantially existing.
- Realising the subtle selflessness of person means gaining realisation into the absence of the true existence of the person.
- Realising the gross selflessness phenomena means realising that the gross object that one perceives is composed of causes & conditions, parts and mental labels; this is where one is able to see non-duality i.e. no difference between subject and object.
- Realising the subtle selflessness of phenomena means realising that the aggregates are empty of inherent and true existence.

When we understand the above, we will be able to crush conceptual construction. If we remain unclear about this, our spiritual life will remain clouded and superstitious i.e. based on false views. The 17 Indian Pandits did not blindly believe the Buddha's words. In full compliance with the Buddha's instructions to always investigate thoroughly before accepting anything as truth, the Pandits put effort into investigating these points until they were totally clear about the selflessness/emptiness teachings and the entire Buddhadharma and implemented the methods to determine whether they could obtain the results of practice or not. When they did attain realisations, they composed their Commentaries to guide later generations of practitioners, who likewise should reflect well, investigate and practice. Similarly, we should not simply pick up what we think is the easiest book to read on a Dharma topic and blindly believe without carrying out such analysis.

V104

*Now hear this! Everything is dependently co-arisen.*

*Being dependently co-arisen, they are not independent.*

*Changing this way and that, they are false appearances and illusions;*

*They are images that appear like a whirling firebrand.*

IO4

ཀ་ཡི་དེ་དག་ཐམས་ཅད་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་ཡིན།

རྟེན་འབྲེལ་རྟོགས་པ་རང་རྟུགས་མེད་པ་ཡིན།

ཕར་བསྐྱར་རྒྱུར་བསྐྱར་བརྟན་སྒྲུ་སྒྲུ་མ་ཡིན།

མགལ་མེ་བཞིན་དུ་སྒྲར་བའི་གཟུགས་བརྟན་ཡིན།།

The purpose of studying Dharma to gain omniscience to benefit all living beings. In order to actualise this, we have to actualise both kinds of bodhicitta and attain the direct realisation of emptiness i.e. the lack of inherent existence. To understand the teachings on emptiness, one needs to understand dependent-arising. Emptiness is nothing other than dependent arising. Nothing exists independently, whether conventionally and ultimately - because all things are a dependent-arising . The self and all phenomena are a dependent arising because they are dependent on causes & conditions; on parts and particles and our mental imputations those parts. Additionally, they are in the nature of change.

Nirvana exists because samsara exists and is something that can be abandoned. All appearances are like illusions; all phenomena appearing to us exist due to perceptions and projections onto a base. If there is no perception, there is no object ; no good and bad; no subject and no object. Phenomena therefore arises dependently on one's mind. Contaminated aggregates are impure because sentient beings perceive them as impure.

In conclusion, all appearances are not illusions but are like-illusions, like in a dream. In a nightmare, we experience fear, yet when we wake up, the perception of the situation giving rise to the fear, disappears. This is the



presentation of the Madhyamika–Prasangika view. If one were like the Buddha, one would not have any impure views because the Buddha’s mental projections are always pure. Example, let’s say there is a cup of liquid on the table and 3 different beings, namely, a human, a Buddha and a preta, look at the liquid inside the cup. The human will see the liquid as water, the Buddha will see it as nectar and the preta will see it as blood & pus respectively. They are all looking at the same liquid, yet the respective appearances are different, which illustrates that appearances/phenomena/everything is dependent on mind and perceptions. Even if 10 people witness one situation, each one will have slight variances to what they have perceived. From the objects side, nothing may be happening but from perceiver’s side, the appearance is “real”. There is no substantially true existence of any experience or phenomena. They are all dependent on the perceiver. Things we see from a distance might look different when we go closer to the object. The object is the same object but one’s perception of it changed and therefore the “reality” of the object changed.

V105

*Like the plantain tree, life has no inner core. Like a bubble, a lifetime has no inner core. Like a must, it dissipates upon close examination. Like a mirage, it is beautiful from afar. Like a reflection in a mirror, it seems as if it were really true. Like clouds and fog, it seems as if it were really stable.*

105

ཀུ་ཤིང་བཞིན་དུ་སྒྲིག་ལ་སྤྱིང་པོ་མེད།།

ལྷ་བ་བཞིན་དུ་ཆོལ་སྤྱིང་པོ་མེད།།

ཁག་སྒྲ་བཞིན་དུ་བརྟུང་ནས་འཛིག་པ་ཡིན།

སྒྲིག་རྒྱ་བཞིན་དུ་རྒྱང་ནས་མཛོས་པ་ཡིན།

མེ་ལོང་གཟུགས་བརྟན་ལྷ་བྱར་བདེན་བདེན་འདྲ།

སྤྱིན་དང་ན་བུན་བཞིན་དུ་སྤྱོད་སྤྱོད་འདྲ།།

The objects of one's grasping , which includes one's life, is like a plaintain (banana) tree which is hollow inside. This is because one's body, possessions and life has no permanent "soul" which can remain forever. They are illusion-like and will come to state of termination because it has that nature of impermanence. Like the mountain mist – which in the Himalayas looks solid and concrete - but when one tries to catch it, one cannot find it. Therefore, upon close examination, there is not a single substance that independently exists. Due to our mistaken belief in perceptions being "solid" and "independently existing", we develop a grasping mind and partial attitudes towards people, giving rise to the friend, the enemy and the stranger. We develop grasping onto objects and experiences. It is this mistake that will deny us liberation and enlightenment. We should examine the nature of our partial attitudes and the objects of our grasping. We will then be able to see that life is like a mirage. Or like a mirror – our face is not actually inside the mirror, even though it appears that way. The mind which believes in inherent existence is the mind that has failed to analyse reality. Due to one having lived countless lives, holding such a mistaken view about independent, inherent existence, it is not easy to eradicate this strong belief. That is why we need to put great effort and consistency in meditating on dependent arising and emptiness. To attain liberation from samsara and then to gain full enlightenment, one needs to realise emptiness.

V 106

*This butcher, the enemy Ego, is just the same. It seems as if it really exists but it has never really existed. It seems as if it is really true but it has never been really true anywhere. It seems as if it is vividly appearing but it is beyond the realm of affirmation or denial.*

106

དག་བདག་གཤེད་མ་འདི་ནི་དེ་བཞིན་དུ།  
 ཡོད་ཡོད་འདྲ་སྟེ་ནམ་ཡང་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།  
 བདེན་བདེན་འདྲ་སྟེ་གང་དུ་འང་བདེན་མ་ཆོང་།  
 སྤང་སྤང་འདྲ་སྟེ་སྤྲོ་སྤྲོ་ཡུལ་ལས་འདས།།

This wrong grasping at inherent existence creates the deluded concept of self-identity, of the solid “I” , is termed the butcher because it kills our changes for ultimate freedom and happiness (which are also not inherently-existing). Those too are illusion-like. The “dependently-existing I” which has potential to be a Buddha is real; the “inherently-existing I” (i.e. the I that is not dependent on mind) is not real. The “inherently existing I” is a total mistaken view, a mere hallucination, yet it is able to act like a King, creating his own Cabinet to rule the entire country of the human-aggregates and dominate our entire lives! One urgently needs to put concentrated effort to analysing how the “I” really exists. We need to be able to differentiate between these two, i.e. the dependently existing I and the independently existing I. The false self seems as if it really exists but actually, it is not the case at all. When we search every single corner of our consciousness, our aggregates and outer phenomena, we cannot find that thing called the independently existing, the truly existent I. The concept of the “false I” however is persistent and often seems smarter than our wisdom!

V107

*And as for the wheel of actions, it is just the same: though it lacks an inherent nature, yet it appears, like the reflection of the moon in water. Actions and their consequences are a variegated multitude of falsehoods. Even though they are just appearances, I urge you to embrace virtue and avoid sin.*

107

དེ་ལ་ལས་གྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་གང་ཞིག་ཡོད།  
 འདི་ནི་དེ་ལྟར་རང་བཞིན་མེད་ན་ཡང་།  
 ལུ་ལོར་གང་དུ་སྒྲུབ་པའི་གཞུགས་བརྟན་ཤར།  
 ལས་འབྲས་འདི་ནི་བརྟན་པ་སྤྱོད་ཆོག་པ་བྲག།  
 ལྷན་བ་ཅམ་དུ་སྒྲུབ་དོར་བྱའོ་ཨང་།

Similarly, although we see karma operating at a conventional level, in truth, karma also lacks inherent existence and is empty. It appears like the reflection of the moon on the water. Although empty, its effects can be seen. Due to mental perceptions, which are influenced by the mental imprints in our mind arising from our actions of body, speech and mind, we will perceive a variety of phenomena and experiences. Therefore, it is very necessary to continue performing virtue as doing so creates the dependent-arising of positive, happy results being projected by mind. Conversely, if we commit non-virtue, our mind will project suffering results.

V108

*When in a dream a pit fire blazes, we are terrified by the heat, although it is without substance. In the same way, although the hell realms and such are without substance, we fear the smelter's fire and other tortures. As that is so, we should forsake all evil actions.*

108

མི་ལམ་ཡུལ་དུ་བསྐྱལ་བའི་མེ་འབར་ཆོ།  
 རང་བཞིན་མེད་ཀྱང་ཆ་བས་འཛིགས་སྒྲག་ལྟར།  
 དཔྱལ་ཁམས་སོགས་ལ་རང་བཞིན་མེད་ན་ཡང་།  
 བཙོ་བསྐྱེགས་ལ་སོགས་འཛིགས་པས་སྤང་བར་བྱ།།

How karmic consequences torture us is exactly in the same way that a vivid nightmare tortures us. Let's say we have a nightmare about being burned in a huge, raging fire. Although there is no physical fire burning in one's bedroom at that time, in the dream we still experience the intense suffering and fear of being burned. At that time, the experience of being burned alive is "real" and the suffering equally real. In the same way, during our waking hours, the karmic consequence of actions we have done in the past, will also cause us to have perceptions which produce "real" experiences e.g. if we have past

good karmic imprints from virtuous actions, we will have happy, rewarding perceptions/experiences; if we have past negative karmic imprints, we will have perceptions of difficulties and hardships coming our way.

So if any one thinks “ If a person and actions are empty of inherent existence, why should there be any results to worry about?” – the results are experienced the way we experience a dream i.e. if we commit negative acts which create negative imprints into our consciousness, the results we perceive will be totally real and fearful and generate much suffering. All this is due our mental imprints projecting onto everything we encounter during dreams, as well as during daytime/waking hours. When the negative karmic imprint meets the necessary conditions, results will be experienced. Thus we must eliminate all negative imprints in our minds. This ought to convince us of the importance of purifying negative karma. Do virtue, avoid non-virtue and when facing difficulties, including heavy illnesses, hold pure view.

V109

*In a feverish delirium we may feel as if we are wandering around suffocating in a deep cave, even though there is no darkness at all. In the same way, even though the ignorance and the like are without substance, we should get rid of our delusions through the three wisdoms.*

109

ཚད་པས་འབྲུལ་ཆེ་མུན་ནག་ཡོད་མེད་ཀྱང་།

གཏིང་རིང་ཡུག་རྒྱ་ཁྱུ་ཞིང་འཛུབ་པ་ལྟར།

མ་རིག་སོགས་ལ་རང་བཞིན་མེད་ན་ཡང་།

ཤེས་རབ་གསུམ་གྱིས་འབྲུལ་པ་བསལ་བར་བྱ།

Due to disturbances in our health, we might feel moody, dark and low, as if there is no brightness anywhere at all. Our mind shuts down and only negative things emerge. Although darkness and low feeling has no real substance in themselves, they appear. It is like when one has jaundice and looks at a white-snow covered mountain, the snow looks yellow. It is not the case, but appears to us in that way. Therefore, we need to understand the powerful role that our mind and its mental perceptions play. We need to deconstruct all negative factors that influence our mind. The root delusion of ignorance likewise has no real substance and we should adopt the 3 aspects of cultivation, namely, learning the right Path, contemplating on it and meditating on it.

V110

*When a musician plays a melody on a lute, the sounds lacks inherent nature, if we analyse it. But when the sweet sounds emerge, their unanalysed aggregate eases the anguish in people's hearts.*

110

རོལ་མོ་མཁན་གྱིས་དབྱེས་པའི་སྒྲུབ་སྒྲུབ་ཏེ།  
 དཔྱད་ན་སྒྲུབ་པའི་རང་བཞིན་མ་མཆིས་མོད།  
 མ་དཔྱད་ཚོགས་པའི་སྒྲན་པའི་སྒྲུབ་བྱུང་ནས།  
 སྒྲུབ་པའི་སེམས་ཀྱི་གདུང་བ་སེལ་བ་ལྟར།།

Virtuous actions bring happiness to our lives. For the music-enthusiast, melody is able to ease anguish within us. It is worthwhile for us to create and compose the causes and conditions of virtue. After all, even if there is a musician, without the instrument and melody, nothing happens. So we need to combine the creation of causes and the gathering of conditions. Hence the importance of the prayer which states, “May we become the

complete cause for the happiness of others “ and we then do the best we can to help others.

#### VIII

*When we analyse all causes and effects, they lack inherent nature as either identical or different. Yet phenomena vividly appear to arise and perish, and we experience pleasure and suffering as if they really existed. Even though they are just appearances, I urge you to embrace virtue and avoid sin.*

#### III

ལས་དང་རྒྱ་འབྲས་ཡོངས་སུ་དབྱེད་པ་ན།  
གཅིག་དང་ཐ་དད་རང་བཞིན་མེད་ན་ཡང་།  
སྒྲིང་སྒྲིང་ལྟ་བུར་ཚོས་ལ་སྐྱེ་འཇིག་བྱེད།  
ཡོད་ཡང་ལྟ་བུར་བདེ་སྤྱད་སྒྲིང་ཚོགས་སྤྱོད་།  
སྒྲིང་བ་ཅམ་དུ་སྤྱང་དོར་བྱའོ་ཨང་།།

Causes and effects lack inherent nature and are merely-labelled. The state of merely-labelled is therefore one of lack inherent existence. The base (example, whatever we perceive as an object, person, experience or phenomena) also lacks inherent existence. Due to the dependent arising of cause and effect, part and particles and mental projections, we experience pleasure and suffering. Right and wrong exists dependently. Though not existing inherently or independently, their results are still experienced. Therefore we cannot be lax about ethics!

V112

*When drop of water fill a jar, the first drop does not fill it, nor the last, nor each drop individually. Yet the dependently arisen aggregate fills the jar.*

II2

ཕྱི་མེད་ལ་ཕྱི་མེད་ལ་ཕྱི་མེད་ལ་ན།

ཕྱི་མེད་དང་ཕྱི་མེད་ལ་ཕྱི་མེད་ལ།

ཐ་མ་ལ་ཐ་མ་ལ་ཐ་མ་ལ་ཐ་མ་ལ།

རྟོག་འབྲེལ་ཚོགས་པས་བྱམ་པ་གང་བ་ལྟར།

V113

*Similarly, when someone experiences their reward of pleasure or pain, it is due neither to the first moment of the cause nor to the last moment and so on. Yet the dependently arisen aggregate makes us experience pleasure or pain. Even though they are just appearances, I urge you to embrace virtue and avoid sin.*

II3

བདེ་སྤྱད་འབྲས་བྱ་གང་གིས་སྤྱོད་བ་ན།

ཕྱི་མེད་ཕྱི་མེད་དང་ཕྱི་མེད་ལ་ཕྱི་མེད་ལ།

ཐ་མ་ལ་ཐ་མ་ལ་ཐ་མ་ལ་ཐ་མ་ལ།

རྟོག་འབྲེལ་ཚོགས་པས་བདེ་སྤྱད་སྤྱོད་བར་འགྱུར།

སྤྱོད་བ་ཅམ་དུ་སྤྱོད་དོར་བྱའོ་ཨང་།



Complete causes and conditions are required to bring about enlightenment. Similarly, renunciation alone will not bring enlightenment but must be combined with bodhicitta and wisdom realising emptiness.

V114

*Aha! The appearance that delights our mind, though independent when unanalysed, definitely lacks an inner core. However, the fact that phenomena appear as if they exist is profound and difficult for the full-witted to understand.*

II4

ཨེ་མ་མ་བརྟགས་གཅིག་ཕྱར་ཉམས་དགའ་བའི།

སྒྲ་བ་འདི་ལ་སྒྲིང་པོ་མ་མཆིས་མོད།།

འོན་ཀྱང་ཡོད་པ་ལྟ་བུར་སྒྲ་བ་ཡི།

ཆོས་འདི་ཟབ་ཏེ་དམན་པས་མཐོང་བར་དགའ།།

Whatever comes to our 5 senses, if we are not mindful to apply our knowledge about dependent arising, we will perceive whatever our 5 senses encounters as if they exist independently “out-there” (e.g. smooth cloth; harmful enemy; easy work). If we closely analyse, we will see that all these lack inherent existence and have come about due to the dependent-relationship between the “object” and the mind perceiving it. This is a profound teaching of the Buddha and requires consistent meditation upon. One cannot expect one’s realisation of dependent arising / emptiness to happen within one short contemplation.

V115

*Now, when you are absorbed in meditative equipoise on this, what is there really to a mere appearance? How can either existence or non existence exist? How can anyone anywhere assert “it is” or “it is not”?*

115

ད་ནི་འདི་ལ་མཉམ་པར་འཇོག་པ་ན།

ངེས་པར་སྣང་བ་ཙམ་ཡང་ཅི་ཞིག་ཡོད།

ཡོད་པ་ཅི་ཡོད་མེད་པ་འང་ཅི་ཞིག་ཡོད།

ཡིན་མིན་དམ་བཅའ་གང་དུ་འང་ཅི་ཞིག་ཡོད།།

When one thoroughly contemplates on emptiness, one will discover what reality is. One will understand how everything (self and phenomena) that appears, is in fact, merely-labelled. How do these two aspects i.e. existence and non-existence co-exist? When one is able to understand these two and how they co-exist, then one understands emptiness. Think about the teachings on the previous verses.

When reflecting on how things exist, one needs to avoid the two extremes, namely nihilism (that nothing exists at all) and substantial existence (that things exist independently). By understanding dependent arising, one will avoid nihilism; by understanding how every lacks inherent existence, one will avoid the extreme of believing that things substantially/independently exist. Things exist dependently but not inherently.

V116

*Subject and object lack ultimate reality. If your mind remains in its innate nature, uncontrived and shining, free from all discrimination and conceptual proliferation, you will become a great being.*

116

ཡུལ་དང་ཡུལ་ཅན་ཆོས་ཉིད་མ་མཆིས་ཤིང་།  
 སྒྲང་དོར་ཀླན་བྲལ་སྒྲིམ་དང་བྲལ་བ་ཡི།  
 གཉུག་མའི་ངང་དུ་སྒོ་གྲོས་མ་བཅོས་པར།  
 ལྷན་ནེ་གནས་ན་སྒྲེས་བྱ་ཆེན་པོར་འགྱུར།།

On the day when one is able to spontaneously abandon the two faults of believing in nihilism and substantial existence, when we directly understand dependent arising and the absence of inherent existence (emptiness) and see that there is no duality between subject and object, the mind will be luminous, light and joyful. The mind will perfectly comprehend that whilst things are illusion-like, one can still experience happiness and beauty, one will become a great Being.

V117

*Thus by practising the conventional and ultimate bodhicitta and thereby uninterruptedly carrying the two accumulations through to completion, may I perfectly realise the two aims.*

117

དེ་ལྟར་ཀླན་རྫོབ་བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་དང་ནི།  
 དོན་དམ་བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་ལ་སྦྱད་པ་ཡིས།  
 ཆོག་མ་གཉིས་བར་ཆད་མེད་པར་མཐར་ཕྱིན་ནས།  
 དོན་གཉིས་ཕུན་སུམ་ཆོག་མ་པ་ཐོབ་པར་ཤོག།།

By practising both conventional and ultimate bodhicitta, every action of ours will generate the uninterrupted accumulation of merit and wisdom right up to Buddhahood. Therefore, one should always raise the prayer, “May I realise the 2 aims of attaining these 2 bodhicittas (conventional and ultimate bodhicitta) and the Buddha’s two aspects of enlightenment, the Buddha’s form body and wisdom body”.

The End

Takeaway lessons  
from  
the Wheel of Sharp Weapons

*from LDC class summary leaders*

Verse 55

Although it has brought me much suffering in the three wretched states of existence, not knowing enough to fear it, I rush to its cause. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy Ego!

*This reminded me of one stage of my career which troubled me deeply. I had a senior position as Senior Executive Secretary to the No: 2 at a large local conglomerate and I felt proud thinking that with this, my career could only rise upwards. However, circumstances at the company changed and I was seconded to a subsidiary company, working for a lower ranking officer instead. At that time, I felt ashamed. But had I known about impermanence, suffering and how all things change, I would not have felt as badly as I did and would have recovered quicker!*

*From: Wong Eng Inn*

\* \* \* \* \*

Verse 60

Although whatever I had done has been insignificant, I am swollen with pride. Although I have no reputation, my hunger for it is great. Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!

*Our self egoistic mind is so deeply embedded in our minds and for such a long time that its tenacious grip is hard to break. Yet,*

*daunting as it is, this book is convincing it persuading us not to spare any compassion for this deceitful, self centred mind. Basically, it's best to keep quiet and zealously guard every action of our Body, Speech and Mind from being manipulated by the egoistic mind, if we don't want all our merits ruined.*

*From: YK Low*

\* \* \* \* \*

Verse 36

When calamities occur like frost and hail  
It is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for not  
properly guarding my vows and moral conduct  
From now on, I shall keep my vows and moral conduct pure.

*We find it difficult to rid ourselves of afflictions of the mind. Instead, we feel delighted and excited with objects of attachment and get distracted by objects of desire, hatred and ignorance. This text reflects back to us our lack of understanding of the impermanent nature of these attachments, distractions, self. Just as a prisoner desperately wants to get out of prison, we should resolve to let go of cyclic existence.*

*From: Suzie Tan*

\* \* \* \* \*

*This book made it plain that the road to liberation and enlightenment requires great effort. What's needed? Courage when dealing with difficult situations; practicing bodhicitta; engaging in mindfulness and introspection; purifying our negative actions ; having full conviction in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha ; having the discipline to keep all vows, ethics and behaviour in check – lots to do!*

*From: Olivia Wong*

\* \* \* \* \*

*The lessons in this book explains the causes of the common problems we face in our lives. We are made aware that we are living in a “jungle of virulent poisons” and need to recognise the poisons, so that instead of being drawn to them, we know how to abandon them by practicing renunciation and contentment. Over-indulgence or excess poses the risk of exhaustion of our good karma. This makes us want to simplify our mindset and lifestyles.*

*From: Felicia Chong*

\* \* \* \* \*



Verse 6

“Thus the bodhisattva roams like the peacock in the forest of cyclic existence, converting the afflictions, which are like a jungle of virulent poisons, into an elixir. Willingly embracing the afflictions, the hero shall conquer the poison.”

*The rat race that we are in, the never-ending chase for the next promotion, the next big project, the next lucrative contract, the next bigger property, the next nicer car, losing the next kg ....can be chalked up to the desirous, self-cherishing, egoistic mind that fortifies the self-grasping mind - “What is this all about?”.*

*However, the book encourages us that with a small change of mindset and re-setting of one’s motivation, it is possible to have a bit more joy when going to work on Saturday at the end of a long week, a bit more cool when dealing with a screaming client or working to the wee hours to meet an impossible deadline. This is how the Wheel of Sharp Weapons has run my deluded self over.....*

*From: Leong Kwok Yan*

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Verse 18

When others commit fault against me with exaggeration or

deprecation, it is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for reviling the holy ones. From now on I shall not revile others by exaggeration or deprecation.

*The chilling reality of this verse is that we must be mindful of our actions of our body, speech and mind in relation to our neighbors/people around us. All the more so when we cannot tell who are arya beings and holy realized beings and who are not!*

*From: Alan Chan*

\* \* \* \* \*

*What have I learned from the Wheel of Sharp Weapons? I think the phrase used by Geshela, “What to adopt and what to abandon” is what I would keep.*

*It’s now clear that what I have adopted in my past would definitely be my anger, attachment and ignorance and what I obviously abandoned were patience, detachment and wisdom, which explains why I am here today, still circling in messy samsara.*

*From now onwards, I must work on adopting a reversal of the above habits. OM AH HUM.*

*From: Yen*

\* \* \* \* \*

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# How To Treat Dharma Books

All Dharma books should be treated with respect – kept off the floor and places where people sit or walk and should not be stepped over. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separated from other mundane materials. Other objects, including statues and stupas, should not be placed on top of dharma books and materials. Licking the fingers to turn pages is considered negative and will create negative karma.

If it is necessary to dispose of written dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash.

When offering dharma texts to the fire, first recite the mantra OM AH HUNG, then visualize the letters of the texts to be burned absorbing into the syllable AH and the AH absorbing into you, transmitting their wisdom to your mind stream. After that, as you continue to recite OM AH HUNG, you can offer the texts to the fire.

Photos or images of holy beings, deities and other holy objects should not be burned and instead placed with respect in stupas or other high clean places so that they do not end up on the ground.

As a minimum, place this book on a clean shelf with a mind of respect

- thank you!



Geshe Tenzin Zopa holds a doctorate in Buddhist Philosophy from Sera Jey Monastic University in South India and is a master in Tibetan Buddhist rituals. He is currently the Resident Teacher at Losang Dragpa Buddhist Society, Malaysia and was for a long time, the Director of the Tsum Valley Project (in the Himalayan region), which provides Buddhist study and practice facilities and accommodation for the community in the Valley. Geshe Tenzin Zopa is the principal and focal point

of the award winning film titled “Unmistaken Child” which chronicles the search for the reincarnation of his great master.

Geshe Tenzin Zopa has a contemporary style of teaching which he combines with the ancient wisdom derived from his years of philosophical studies and debate, thereby benefitting everyone who has met or heard him teach. Geshe Tenzin Zopa is the face of a dynamic and socially engaged Buddhism in the 21st century.

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