



A Simple Mind-Training Instruction Given by Mañjuśrī

H.H. the Sakya Trichen (the 41st Sakya Trizin)



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By the merit of this work, may His Holiness the Sakya Trichen enjoy perfect health and a very long life, and continue to turn the wheel of Dharma.

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Lord Buddha has given an enormous amount of teachings; all are intended to train the mind. There are some sūtras that require a long process of training and practice. Some great masters studied, contemplated, and meditated on these teachings. After meditation, they gained experience. They put their own experiences into words and gave us an overview so that we can practice very easily.

This mind training that I will be teaching was given by Mañjuśrī directly to the great Lama Sakyapa Sachen Kunga Nyingpo. Lama Sakyapa attained great realization through this practice. The verse has only four lines:

If you have attachment to this life, you are not a religious person.

If you have attachment to saṃsāra, you do not have proper renunciation.

If you have attachment to self, you do not have bodhicitta or the enlightened mind.

If grasping arises, you do not have the right view.

If you have attachment to this life, you are not a religious person.

This line explains directly what are the correct ways and what are the wrong ways of practicing the Dharma. The wrong way to practice the Dharma is to have attachment to this life; then, whatever practice one does—study, contemplation, or meditation, even if it is of high meditations—although it appears like Dharma, it is not real Dharma. One is still doing it for the purpose of this life, to gain fame, wealth, disciples, positions, and so on. Thus it is not religious, not real Dharma.

Some people say, “By practicing Dharma, my life has not become successful; my business is not thriving; I cannot accomplish the goals I have set.” It is wrong to say and think like this. Dharma is not for the sake of this life. Dharma is at the least for the sake of future lives and therefore giving up attachment to this life helps us at least not to fall down to the lower realms. We have to maintain good moral conduct so that we will continuously be born in the higher realms.

If you have attachment to saṃsāra, you do not have proper renunciation.

There is always so much suffering in the lower realms—the hell realm, hungry ghost realm, and animal realm. We might think that there is a mixture of happiness and suffering in the higher realms. We might think that sometimes there is happiness and sometimes there is suffering, but this is due to a lack of careful examination of saṃsāra. If we examine carefully, saṃsāra has no happiness; saṃsāra is full of suffering. As such, the higher realms are not worthy of any attachment, either. Thus, we need to renounce all of saṃsāra completely.

For this, we need to know the suffering of saṃsāra and the law of karma. Why are we here in saṃsāra? The fact that we are in saṃsāra is not due to any outside forces but is instead because of our own deeds. It is our own good deeds and bad deeds that determine where we go. If we do good deeds, we will be born in the higher realms. If we do bad deeds, we will fall down in the lower realms. But even if we are born in the higher realms, it is not permanent, and there is suffering in the higher realms, too. Once we are born there, at the end we will fall down into the lower realms. Therefore, the whole of saṃsāra, be it the lower realms or the higher realms, is not worthy of attachment. Hence, we need to renounce it totally.

If you have attachment to self, you do not have bodhicitta or the enlightened mind.

From beginningless time up until now, we have attachment to “self.” We are always thinking to do things for the sake of self; we have self-purpose. Self-purpose is the only matter that we have been taking care of, yet all we have achieved is suffering. This time, we are born as a human being, and we have all the facilities to study and practice the Dharma; therefore, we must give up attachment to the entire saṃsāra, to at least seek nirvāṇa and liberation.

This line also means that this time we must destroy “self-purpose” and devote our time and energy fully for the sake of other sentient beings. To do that, we need genuine loving-kindness and compassion. Without loving-kindness and compassion, one could not give rise to bodhicitta, which is the enlightened mind. In other words, this instruction explains bodhicitta directly. But indirectly, it also explains the cause of bodhicitta, which is loving-kindness and compassion.

If grasping arises, you do not have the view.

As an example, to explain this, birds fly in the sky with two wings. They cannot fly with only one wing. Similarly, we cannot accomplish enlightenment just by one side, either method or

wisdom alone. We need both method and wisdom. Method is loving-kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta, and so on. On the other side, we need wisdom. For instance, to walk on roads, we need both legs and eyes. If we have legs but no eyes, then we cannot see. If we have eyes but no legs, again we cannot walk. Therefore, to walk on roads, we need both eyes and legs. Similarly, to attain enlightenment, we need both method and wisdom. Method refers to the accumulation of merit. Wisdom refers to having the view, the final view.

There are many different schools and philosophies within Buddhism, but the highest one is Mādhyamika, the Middle Way School. It says that the ultimate reality is away from all extremes, such as “existing” and “nonexisting” or “both existing and nonexisting” and “neither existing nor nonexisting.” Because the view of the ultimate reality is away from our perceptions. So this instruction says: if grasping arises, if you grasp it as “existing” or if you grasp it as “nonexisting,” or if you grasp it as “both” or as “neither,” then this is not the proper view. The proper view is away from expression, beyond speech, and beyond thought. To have the proper view, we need solid “concentration.”

This line of instruction also indirectly explains concentration. First one needs to concentrate, so that one’s mind can single-pointedly remain stable. On the basis of that, then one can do

the meditation and eventually one will be able to succeed.

Giving up attachment to this life will at least save us from falling down into the lower realms. Giving up attachment to saṃsāra will save us from falling down into saṃsāra. Loving-kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta will save us from falling down into becoming śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. Eventually, giving up “grasping of the view” will save us from not attaining full enlightenment. If one has attachment to all phenomena, taking the present phenomena as real, taking any sign and entity as real, it is just like craving for a mirage as water, it will not quench one’s thirst. A mirage is not water; it only looks like water. Yet when one goes near a mirage, it disappears.

I learned that some thirsty animals keep running and eventually die due to being exhausted from thirst and running. Likewise, the presence of these seemingly beautiful things in the higher realms will not fulfill our purpose. Therefore, we must give up attachment to grasping and work toward attaining enlightenment. When we attain enlightenment, then immense qualities will be acquired. One can practice many deities, visualizations, recitations, meditations, and even the highest tantric teachings, but having loving-kindness, compassion, enlightened mind, and emptiness view are very, very important to all of these practices. Without loving-kindness, compassion, enlightened mind, and emptiness view, one will not succeed. In a way,

these practices are preliminary practices, but at the same time, they are the utmost life-force of all Dharma practices.

With this I conclude the session here. I would like to wish you all complete success in your spiritual path.

-The End-



■ His Holiness the Sakya Trichen is revered as the forty-first throne holder of the Sakya lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. Born in Tibet in 1945, His Holiness is from the noble Khön family, whose predecessors date to the early days of Tibetan history and established the Sakya order in the eleventh century. In his youth, His Holiness received intensive training in Buddhist philosophy, meditation, and ritual from eminent masters and scholars.

Widely regarded as an emanation of Mañjuśrī, His Holiness is the spiritual guide to many in the next generation of Buddhist teachers and practitioners, and has bestowed Sakya's core teaching cycle known as the Lamdre (the Path with the Result) in both eastern and western countries. His Holiness manifests profound wisdom and compassion, tirelessly working to establish monasteries, nunneries, and educational institutions and to impart the Buddha's teachings to countless students around the world.



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