

# Encouraging Ourselves – Handout

July 6 & 7, 2024 at Kunzang Palchen Ling & Livestreamed

10:30 am – noon & 2:00 – 3:30 pm



The eternal knot (དཔལ་སྐྱེལ) symbolizes interdependence and the endless wisdom and compassion of the Buddhas.

Teaching description: It can be hard to find time to practice. Sometimes we lose touch with our motivation. At these times, it can help to remember why we began practicing in the first place. Setting the right intention, cultivating good habits, and relying on inspiring examples are some ways to encourage ourselves to continue moving in the right direction. We will ruminate on and discuss these topics this weekend.

Outline:

- 1) Setting the right intention
- 2) Cultivating good habits
- 3) Relying on inspiring examples
- 4) Overcoming obstacles

Breakdown:

- 1) Setting the right intention
  - a. Establishing an accurate understanding of our situation and that of all beings
  - b. Giving rise to the wish to help beings = Compassion, Bodhicitta & Meditation
- 2) Cultivating good habits
  - a. Wisely steering oneself in how to think and act

- 3) Relying on inspiring examples
  - a. Garnering wisdom from instructive stories and teachers
- 4) Overcoming obstacles
  - a. Learning how to overcome obstacles to practice

\* \* \*

In brief, whatever course of action one takes, one should I ask, “What is the state of my mind?” Accomplishing others’ purpose through continually being mindful and vigilant is the bodhisattvas’ practice.

(Verse 36, *The Thirty-Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva*)

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### Short Daily Practice

#### **Refuge Prayer**

༄༅། །སངས་རྒྱལ་ཚེས་དང་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་མཚོག་རྣམས་ལ། །

SANG GYE CHÖ DANG TSHOK KYI CHOK NAM LA  
In the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Assembly Most Excellent,

བྱང་ཚུབ་བར་དུ་བདག་ནི་སྐྱབས་སུ་མཚེ། །

JANG CHUP BAR DU DAK NI KYAP SU CHI  
I take refuge until I reach enlightenment.

བདག་གིས་སྤྱིན་སོགས་བགྱིས་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱིས། །

DAK GI JIN SOK GYI PAY SÖ NAM KYI  
By the merit of generosity and other good deeds,

འགྲོ་ལ་ཕན་ཕྱིར་སངས་རྒྱལ་འགྲུབ་པར་ཤོག །

DRO LA PHEN CHIR SANG GYE DRUP PAR SHOK  
May I attain buddhahood for the sake of all beings.

Recite this 3x

## The Four Immeasurables

༄༅། །སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་བདེ་བ་དང་བདེ་བའི་རྒྱ་དང་ལྷན་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག །

SEM CHEN THAM CHE DE WA DANG DE WAY GYU DANG DEN PAR GYUR CHIK  
May all sentient beings gain happiness and the cause of happiness.

སྤྲུག་བསྐྱལ་དང་སྤྲུག་བསྐྱལ་གྱི་རྒྱ་དང་བྲལ་བར་གྱུར་ཅིག །

DUK NGAL DANG DUK NGAL GYI GYU DANG DREL WAR GYUR CHIK  
May they be free from suffering and the cause of suffering.

སྤྲུག་བསྐྱལ་མེད་པའི་བདེ་བ་དམ་པ་དང་མི་འབྲལ་བར་གྱུར་ཅིག །

DUK NGAL ME PAY DE WA DAM PA DANG MI DREL WAR GYUR CHIK  
May they never be separated from the highest bliss, which is devoid of suffering.

ཉེ་རིང་ཚགས་སྤང་གཉིས་དང་བྲལ་བའི་བཏང་སྦྱོམས་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་གནས་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག །

NYEY RING CHAK DANG NYI DANG DREL WAY TANG NYOM CHEN PO LA NE PAR GYUR CHIK  
May they come to rest in the great impartiality, which is free of attachment and aversion.

Recite this 3x

Seven Branch Prayer

ཕྱག་འཚལ་བ་དང་མཚན་ཅིང་བཤགས་པ་དང་། །

CHAK TSEL WA DANG CHÖ CHING SHA PA DANG  
Whatever virtuous actions I have accumulated

རྗེས་སུ་ཡི་རང་བསྐྱལ་ཞིང་གསོལ་བ་ཡི།

JAY SU YEE RANG KÜL SHING SÖL WA DEB  
Through prostrating, offering, confessing,

།དགོ་བ་རྩུང་ཟད་བདག་གིས་ཅི་བསགས་པ། །

GAY WA CHUNG ZAY DAK GEE CHEE SAK PA  
Rejoicing, beseeching and supplicating,

ཐམས་ཅད་རྗེས་སུ་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆེན་པོར་བསྐྱོ། །།

TAM CHAY DZOK PAY JANG CHUB CHIR NGO  
I dedicate them to the full and perfect enlightenment of all beings.

Recite this 3x

The Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind (སྒོ་ཚོག་རྣམ་བཞི)

དེ་ཡི་དང་པོ་ལ་དལ་འབྱོར་རྙེད་པར་དཀའ་བ་ལ་བསམ་ཏེ།

*The first of these is contemplation of the difficulty of acquisition of leisure and resources:*

གྲུ་མ་གྲུ་རྩུག་སྤུལ་ལའོར་བའི་འདམ། །དལ་འབྱོར་ཐོབ་ཀྱང་མི་ཚེ་སྤོང་བཟད་གུར།

KYE MA KYE HU DUK NGAL KOR WAY DAM DAL JOR TOP KYANG MI TSE TONG SAY GYUR  
Oh! In this swamp of suffering, samsara, even if I acquire leisure and resources my life is wasted.

ད་ནི་འཇིགས་ཤིང་ལས་ལ་འགྱོད་བ་སྐྱེས། །དོན་མེད་མི་གཏང་སྒོ་གསུམ་དགོ་ལ་བསྐྱེལ།

DA NI JIK SHING LAY LA GYÖ PA KYE TÖN ME MI TANG GO SUM GE LA KUL  
Terrified, I now regret my actions. I will not let this go to waste! I will employ my three gates in virtue!

*Second, repeated contemplation of impermanence:*

འཇིག་རྟེན་ཚོས་ཉིད་སྣང་ཡང་སྐྱུ་མའི་དཔེ། །སྐྱད་ཅིག་ཅམ་ཡང་རྟག་པ་མེད་བཞིན་ལ།

JIK TEN CHÖ NYI NANG YANG GYU MAY PAY KAY CHIK TSAM YANG TAK PA ME SHIN LA  
This world's nature is appearance like a magical illusion. There is not even a moment's permanence.

རང་བཞིན་རྟག་པར་འཇོན་འདི་བྱིས་པའི་སྒོ། །འདི་ལས་ལྷོག་ཕྱིར་སྒོ་ཁ་ལིང་གིས་ལོག།

RANG SHIN TAK PAR DZIN DI JI PAY LO DI LAY DOK CHIR LO KA LING GI LOK  
This fixation on it as permanent is infantile. I will completely turn my mind away from this.

གསུམ་པ་རྒྱ་འབྲས་བསྐྱུ་བ་མེད་པ་ལ་ཡིད་ཚེས་བཞིན་བས།

*Third, with trust in the infallible results of actions:*

དི་ལྟར་དཔྱད་ཀྱང་རྒྱ་དང་འབྲས་བུ་ལས། །དཀར་ནག་བརྗེ་ཐབས་དཔེ་ཅུམ་མ་རྙེད་ཀྱང།

JI TAR CHAY KYANG GYU DANG DRAY BU LAY KAR NAK JAY TAP PAY TSAM MA NYAY KYANG  
However much you look, you will never find even a single case of the results of virtuous and negative actions

ད་དུང་སྐྱིད་མེད་འདམ་རྗེབ་འདི་ལ་ཞེན། །བསྐྱུ་མེད་ལས་ལ་བསམ་གཞིག་ཡང་ཡང་བྱ།

DA DUNG NYING MAY DAM DZAP DI LA SHEN LU MAY LAY LA SAM SHIK YANG YANG JA  
being interchanged. In spite of that, I still crave this pointless swamp! I will repeatedly contemplate the infallibility of actions.

ཁའི་པ་འཁོར་བའི་སྐྱུ་སྐྱུ་ལ་བསམ་ཏེ།

*Fourth, contemplate the suffering of samsara:*

གནས་སྐྱབས་སྣང་ཞིང་ཞེན་ལ་ཆགས་འདིར་འཁོར། །བསྐྱུ་བྱིད་ཡིན་ཀྱང་རང་ལ་ཡིད་ཆེས་མེད།

NAY KAP NANG SHING SHEN LA CHAK DIR KOR LU DRI YIN KYANG RANG LA YI CHAY MAY  
Samsara is craving and attachment to appearances. Although I know this is deception, I lack self-confidence.

རང་མགོ་རང་གིས་བསྐྱོར་འདི་ཡིད་རེ་སྟོ། །སློ་སྣ་ཚོས་ལ་བསྐྱུར་ཞིང་ངན་ལས་གཤོལ།

RANG GO RANG GI KOR DI YI RE KYO LO NA CHÖ LA GYUR SHING NGEN LAY SHOL  
I am saddened by my self-deception. I will turn my mind to dharma and cease wrongdoing!

- Short meditation session ( 5-10 minutes, seated or walking )

*Simply be with your mind, your awareness.  
Do not slip into thoughts of the past, present or future.  
Stay with your awareness.  
You are giving yourself a break from thoughts.  
You may use your breath as an anchor if you wish.*

*\*Assume the proper position*

- Custom aspiration for the day.

Ex. Today may I be patient and kind to my family and everyone I meet.  
May I be compassionate and put the needs of others before my own.  
May I apply my three gates in virtue and bring clarity and awareness to all I do

At the end, dedicate the merit:

༄༅། ཁབསོད་ནམས་འདི་ཡིས་ཐམས་ཅད་གཟིགས་པ་ཉིད། །

SÖ NAM DI YI THAM CHE ZIK PA NYI  
By this merit, may all attain omniscience.

ཐོབ་ནས་ཉེས་པའི་དགུ་རྒྱུ་མས་ཡམ་བྱས་ནས། །

THOP NE NYE PAY DRA NAM PAM JE NE  
May it defeat the enemy, wrongdoing.

སྐྱེ་ན་ན་འཆི་བ་བརྒྱུ་བས་འབྱུགས་པ་ཡིས། །

KYE GA NA CHI BA LAP THRUK PA YI  
From the stormy waves of birth, old age, sickness, and death,

བསྐྱིད་པའི་མཚོ་ལས་འགོ་བ་གོལ་བར་ཤོག །

SI PAY TSO LE DRO WA DRÖL WAR SHOK  
From the ocean of samsara, may I free all beings.



“...we are born as a human being, which is pretty good, and if before we die we are not able to progress any further, then is not very good, not [a] very meaningful life. But even if we don't progress, as such, but if we did not degenerate, then we should consider [it] not too bad.

My ambition is: From birth to death, I want to improve by 1%, that is my ambition. And to improve in everything, improve in knowledge, improve in experience, improve in wisdom, improve in realization, in everything. **Then, in 100 lives, I will be Buddha.** You know?! So, that would be quite a shortcut, and in 100 lives I can be Buddha, and each life will be 1% better. Then, I go for it; I go for it.

So, my humble definition of a meaningful life is: We become 1% more kind, 1% more compassionate, 1% more wise, 1% more enlightened, 1% deeper realization, so everything [increased by] 1%. Then, if that is the case, I will call that a meaningful life.”

- *from the video, A Meaningful Life, by HE Tai Situ Rinpoche*

#### Wheel of Self-Propelled Improvement



Our best can always get better!

Happy with the improvement I see

Continuing to develop

## Taking Hold of Bodhichitta

Through these actions now performed  
And all the virtues I have gained,  
May all the pain of every living being  
Be wholly scattered and destroyed!

For all those ailing in the world,  
Until their every sickness has been healed,  
May I myself become for them  
The doctor, nurse, the medicine itself.

Raining down a flood of food and drink,  
May I dispel the ills of thirst and famine.  
And in the aeons marked by scarcity and want,  
May I myself appear as drink and sustenance.

For sentient beings, poor and destitute,  
May I become a treasure ever-plentiful,  
And lie before them closely in their reach,  
A varied source of all that they might need.

May I be a guard for those who are protector-less,  
A guide for those who journey on the road.  
For those who wish to cross the water,  
May I be a boat, a raft, a bridge.

Thus for everything that lives,  
As far as are the limits of the sky,  
May I be constantly their source of livelihood  
Until they pass beyond all sorrow.

— Shantideva (abridged from *The Way of the Bodhisattva*)

Even if others cut off my head when I haven't done the slightest wrong,  
Taking upon myself their misdeeds through the power of compassion  
Is the bodhisattvas' practice.

(Verse 13, *The Thirty-Seven Practices of Bodhisattvas*)

## **The Blissful Path to the Ocean of Bodhicitta**

A Brief Prayer of Aspiration for Mind Training

by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche

By the truth of the perfect mind of awakening  
Generated by the supreme noble Lord Avalokiteśvara  
And all the buddhas and bodhisattvas,  
May the supreme mind of bodhicitta be born  
In me and in all other beings, as limitless as space.

May the causes and effects of beings' suffering—  
Their involvement with the five poisons,  
And painful experiences in the six classes,  
All ripen on me! To them all, as limitless as space,  
I offer the six perfections in my own mind,  
And sources of virtue, free from the five poisons.

May all the realms of saṃsāra's six classes be emptied,  
And may everyone attain the level of Avalokiteśvara,  
In his six sublime families and with six types of wisdom.

May all disease, famine, belligerence, wrong views,  
Impairments, transgressions, downfalls, harmful actions,  
Self-cherishing, obstacles, harmful influences and impediments,  
All ripen on me and me alone!  
And to all these beings, who are as limitless as space  
I dedicate long-life, glory, wealth, happiness, power,  
Experience, realisation, and knowing, loving wisdom.  
May they all, through supreme enlightened actions,  
Attain the level of the most splendid Noble One!

In short, may all the causes and effects  
Of egotism and self-cherishing ripen on me!  
And may all beings gain a wealth of benefit and happiness,  
And realise the meaning of emptiness and compassion!

May all beings, especially those who harm me, or who have developed a negative connection  
Through seeing, hearing, thinking of, or encountering me,  
Purify their obscurations, enter the path to enlightenment,  
And attain awakening straightaway!

May I take the place of those experiencing the cause and effect  
Of unbearable, extremely negative acts,  
And may they all purify obscurations  
And be born in realms of perfect bliss!

For the sake of all, but especially those who harm me,  
May I remain only in the lower realms,



And may all beings, my very own mothers,  
Escape samsara's ocean to reach liberation's shore.

The only basis for bodhicitta—  
Kind enemies and harmful forces—  
For your sake, I shall gladly give away  
My body and my life—may you be benefitted!

When I attain complete enlightenment,  
May you become the first in my circle,  
And, just like the five original disciples,  
Attain omniscience there and then!

From now until I attain enlightenment,  
May I never be apart from you who do me harm,  
And with calm, untroubled view and conduct,  
May we set out together on the path to enlightenment.

May those who see me, hear me or think of me,  
And also those who merely hear my name,  
Or are simply touched by the same breath of wind,  
Discard their obscurations and enter the way to peace!

All beings are my own parents, as limitless as space,  
So how could I ever feel hostility towards them?  
Wishing only to repay their kindness, and acting gently,  
May I bring them, all at once, to enlightenment!

May beings never be harmed on my account,  
Whether directly or indirectly,  
And, through bringing them only benefit and happiness,  
May I lead them all to the state of perfect bliss!

In each and every instant, may all limitless beings,  
With skill in the means of liberation and the force of compassion,  
Become just like Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī,  
And Vajrapāṇi, the Lord of Secrets.

May those who suffer and are difficult to tame,  
Receive special loving care and guidance,  
And may the compassionate prayers and aspirations  
Of the Supreme Sage and the Lotus Born come true!

In the wisdom space of the equality of self and other,  
Through the dawning of emptiness and compassion's power,  
Just so the benefit of others may be secured,  
May this prayer of aspiration swiftly be fulfilled!

Translated by Adam Pearcey, 2015. With thanks to Po-yu Sung for providing the Tibetan text and a draft translation.

For reference, here are the books that were read from:

