

# "The Benefits and Importance of Mind Training in our Daily Practice"

As taught by Ven. Geshe Sangey Thinley at Jam Tse Dhargyey Ling on Sunday 12th September 2004

*"Do no negative actions,  
Accomplish excellent virtues,  
Completely subdue your own mind  
- This is the Buddha's teaching"*

This quotation means that all the Buddha's teaching is designed to subdue the followers' mind; there's no teaching or instruction that isn't designed to discipline the mind. We all know that this is very important, but we don't know how to do it. That's why we need to study the great texts and deepen our understanding of this subject matter, then to learn the antidotes and how to apply them when disturbing emotions arise. Without this kind of practice our minds won't become pacified of their own accord.

In order to change our mental attitude we have to think deeply, try to decrease our self-cherishing and increase our kindness and loving attitude towards others. If we change our mental attitude, then our physical and verbal actions will follow. We know this because when we have negative, disturbing intentions, our speech and physical actions will be gross and unpleasant.

The whole purpose of practicing Buddhism is to subdue and pacify our mental attitude. This is a precise and brief explanation of Buddhist practice. If our mental attitude is disciplined and motivated by compassion, we can practice effectively and contribute positively to the community.

Going back to our opening quote, the first three lines are from the Sutras of Buddha. It is very simple and short, and yet has profound meaning.

The first line tells us to do no negative actions, the consequence of which lead to suffering and rebirth in the lower realms.

The second line refers to the quality of our practice - to have a pure motivation at the outset, practice sincerely and conclude by dedicating our merits for the happiness of all beings. This is what is meant by "excellent virtues". As a result of this kind of practice we will experience more peace and happiness in this life, but the main consequence of such practice is that we will gain fortunate rebirths which will bring us closer to enlightenment.

The third line, "completely subdue your own mind"; as we said at the beginning, everything depends on our mental attitude, so to subdue or pacify our own mind is crucial.

If we practice according to these three lines, this is the Buddha's teaching and this is the practice. All our views and actions should be based on these instructions. It is very precise and simple. If we really want to engage in Buddhism, we need to recall these lines. Then we can penetrate into them further and think of the meaning of doing no negative actions, and analyze just what positive actions are, deeply and thoroughly.

We talk about ten non-virtuous actions, we also need to recollect them and try to understand just what they mean, then put them into practice. It is very short and easy, only ten points to recollect and to keep in our mind, then we know what to avoid. The opposite, the ten virtuous activities, are what we should adopt and put into practice, so we have very clear guidelines or instructions. We need to keep in mind that the whole purpose of Buddhist practices is to subdue ones mental attitude, and to be clear about why we have to do this for the short and long-term consequences.

The great master Chandrakirti said that our mind is merely the agent and creator - everything depends on our mind. So it is very important to subdue our own mind. In Buddhism there are six primary consciousness's and fifty one mental factors. The mind, as many people think, is not just one thing. There are many types of consciousness and mental factors.

Among them the superlative one is bodhicitta, the altruistic intention. This is the best for everyone, but normally our mental attitude is self-centred, and it's very difficult to exchange this attitude to cherishing others and develop the altruistic intention. This is the source of all goodness and happiness.

It's also important to think of all living beings with our altruistic intention, not only limited ones, then develop the sincere attitude and wish to be responsible for the happiness of them all, and to lead them all from suffering. This is bodhicitta.

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