



Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche Motivation

BA 1 MOTIVATION

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Teachings on the Bodhicharyavatara for the Bodhicharya Online Shedra

I'm very happy that you have already started studying *Bodhicharyavatara, The Way of the Bodhisattva* by Shantideva; and also you have studied discussions and started to initiate the discussion with "Action and non-action": and I think there are lots of discussions going on in that and I'm very happy about it. In due time, maybe I will also say something about that.

Now, I wanted to go through the text of the *Bodhicharyavatara* and try to briefly explain stanza by stanza. I'm using the translation of the *Padmakara Translation Group*, of course there are other translations also in English and they're all equally good, and there is also a commentary on this book, *The Way of the Bodhisattva*, by Khenpo Kunpal, into English. His English translation is also from the *Padmakara Translation Group* and it's an excellent translation. I think it is also translated into other languages. There are translations of this text, *Bodhicharyavatara*, I think, in many languages, including the languages in the west. Some people thought that this kind of teaching that I'm going to give, or the explanation that I'm going to give, should and could also be translated into other languages: and if there are people who would like to do that I'm very happy. They can verbally translate it and then make it available in audio to the people who want to listen to them.

Now, to start the book, as you know, it's tradition that we should first remind ourselves to generate the right motivation or to remind ourselves of the motivation for doing this study or teaching on this text, and if there is... I'm sure there is no negative or no other motivations for it, but also, if there is, then to correct them because we can always change our motivations, we can always remind ourselves and kind of change our way of thinking a little bit. So to do that— this is not actually for studying this text but for anything we do—why do we do anything? Because we want something good coming out of it, some benefits for me and for others. It is not easy, or it's most usual for any beings, any human beings that we first look at what good and what benefits it will bring to me. That's nothing bad, there's nothing wrong. But it is also important that [although] what it brings is good for me, for me only is not enough. We should also think what my actions, whatever I'm doing, is bringing something that is good for others as well. That's why, if I do something that I feel and I understand is good for me and good for others as well and nothing really bad for anybody, then I must understand it, I must feel very strongly, clearly, that what I'm doing is a good

thing. I'm proud of what I'm doing, I'm satisfied with what I'm doing, I feel meaning with what I'm doing, I feel purposeful and useful [for] my life that I'm living now, today.

Therefore, to really understand this and use this way of finding out that what I'm doing is something that is worthwhile doing or not and then doing those things that are worthwhile is a way of making my life worthwhile. I think, in a way, it's a very important way to bring happiness to myself, satisfaction to myself because if I'm doing something that I feel is useful and beneficial to myself and others most of the time then I have to feel kind of satisfied and content and happy.

Therefore, this motivation is not something that we kind of *pretend* to generate or to try to *artificially* make as a prayer or [just] to say words, but it's a genuine way of living our life. So therefore, generate the bodhicitta, try to generate *bodhicitta*, try to think what I'm doing is something that's worthwhile and good for myself and for others, for now, in this moment in life, these days and also for the long term. I'm going to do something that is going to bring good things, happiness, and lots of benefit for now, for myself and others and I also wish that I could eventually get rid of all the sufferings of all the beings and bring a lasting peace and happiness.

This is a very big thing and many times we might think that it may not be possible. It's too big; it's too great a motivation. But, if it is possible that I, or one person, can be freed from suffering and pain and bring a kind of happiness to oneself, then it's also possible to bring that to all the beings. It might take a long, long, long time; it is of course not an easy thing at all. But there is a possibility and there's nothing wrong to wish for the best.

Therefore...we all know that this is not something that is going to happen soon, easily, but that's the most important thing that should happen. Therefore, even if it's just one prayer, one wish, one strong kind of aspiration, why not make it?

So, I don't want to take too long because this whole book is about how to generate this and how to work on this. Therefore, I don't need to talk much at this point, trying to generate the *bodhicitta*. This, actually, should go at the beginning of every teaching, every lesson, every meditation, every practice, every morning, every starting of the day. But of course, I will not say it because it is going to take time. I know everybody has not that much time. So please, listen to this if you want to remind yourself, otherwise just remind yourself. It doesn't need to take a long time. That's the first thing.