



Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche ***Questions and Answers 11***

QA11: Questions and Answers 11 (after the teaching BA15)

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Transcribed by Pat Murphy

Teachings on the Bodhicharyavatara for the Bodhicharya Online Shedra

I am sorry that I was out of station for some time. I went to Thailand for a teaching tour and I didn't have the right circumstances to send you internet teachings. So now I am back and first I would like to answer some of the questions.

This is the QA11 and there are three questions. The first one is,

“Thank you for a poem that reminds me how lightly and effortlessly being positive during a difficult day can feel. I’m turning to this poem often as a kind of song not just for the year but also for how to view my days during these very difficult kaliyuga times. Dearest Rinpoche, would you please comment on action bodhichitta and the teaching “The longest journey is from the head to the heart?””

Thank you very much for taking this poem as an instruction. If one is ready to receive the teachings then everything can become a teaching and every word can become a teaching whoever may speak them. So this shows that you are good at receiving the teachings. Now the action bodhichitta... Yes, “the longest journey from head to heart”. It means that it is not difficult to understand intellectually, but it's very difficult to really make that understanding a way of life. That doesn't mean that to have an understanding is not also important. Understanding is very, very

important but once you understand that, then trying to make that understanding deeper and deeper and it's so deep that it becomes your way of seeing , your way of reacting, your way of living your life - that becomes the most important thing.

In a way, action bodhichitta is also the result of the intention bodhichitta because you cannot have any actions that do not come from some kind of intention or motivation. So first we try to generate the understanding, some kind of intention, or positive motivation and when that motivation, that intention becomes clear and strong and deep then it naturally comes out in your action.

Action means in your action, in your activity of body, speech and mind. Action is not just action of the body and action of the speech, it's also action of the mind because the way you really see it - it's not I should see it like this but I really see it like that. So if you understand like that, if you really see it in that way then I think the action doesn't become a very difficult thing or something very, you know, as if I am sacrificing a lot. It becomes very natural. It becomes like as if that's the way you know to help myself and others. So therefore it doesn't become something far or something extraordinary or something that I am, you know, sacrificing something for doing that. So then that means that the teaching has come to your heart from your head. So therefore this action bodhichitta is that. So this is the kind of a general step by step way of intention becoming action.

Next question is,

“Could you please say something about the story of the son called Daughter recorded by Kunzang Palden in his commentary as I find it rather strange and hard to relate to?”

Actually “Daughter” is just a name. There was a boy born and because in India it was tradition in India that whatever the father's profession was the son would inherit the same profession. So since mother most probably did not want the son to take up the same profession, she wanted to hide the son and so she called him a female name. Daughter or something like that. [Larki?] So nobody would notice the son and so that there would be no pressure from her clan. I think that is

why. But also sometimes it is usual - I don't know whether it is the same in India but it's in Tibet, that if you give a name which is different, especially like a girl's name or some different kind of name, it is said to be protection. So she was not a daughter, she was a boy but was named a female name. So this is nothing to be confused.

And then the last question is,

“In the creation phase of the sadhanas, if we imagine all the beings between ourself and the deity receiving the blessings, is this a good method for encouraging bodhichitta in our minds?”

That's exactly what in the sadhana in the Vajrayana we call using the result as a path. So when you visualise yourself, or when you feel yourself as the deity or the Buddha or the bodhisattva then naturally you have to feel great compassion and great wisdom. Also, you know, the activities of the Buddha would be to purify all the beings, to heal all the beings, to transform all the beings. So when you allow this to happen in your mind, you are not thinking compassion, you are feeling compassion, you are actualizing compassion. So therefore this is regarded as a very, very important training or the practice of compassion in action; because you are not kind of thinking or making a prayer that may all these beings be free from suffering but you are actually feeling they have become freed from suffering, they are being purified. They all feel wonderful and healed and good and then you feel that it has been accomplished. So therefore, you know, it's a way of training to feel as the result, as the one who is completely having the limitless compassion and the limitless wisdom. So this is a very good practice.

So thank you very much.

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