



Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche **Questions and Answers 9 (Chapter 2)**

BA2Q9: Questions and Answers 9 (Chapter 2)

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Teachings on the Bodhicharyavavata for the Bodhicharya Online Shedra

The first question is:

"Rinpoche, thank you for your very profound commentary on these stanzas which I will try to think about and to understand. At a more mundane level is it correct to understand stanzas 60 and 61 to mean that it is pointless to go over and over things in one's mind that have already happened for example particularly good or particularly difficult situations involving other people, because this is just an attachment to a fleeting experience?"

I think it is correct. As it is said in Dhammapada also: *"If you think over and over again that 'This person insulted me', 'This person wronged me', 'This person defeated me', then thinking over and over of this will generate malicious thoughts and, therefore, bring all the conflicts and problems. So, therefore, give up this kind of malicious thoughts and have a very peaceful sleep."* It's something like that said in Dhammapada, so, in the same way, if you can let go, if you can say that whatever positive feelings or negative feelings you get, it is something that's momentary so, therefore, if you can, let them go. The good things, bad things, that happen in the experience that you have are not worthwhile holding on to too much. Of course, this stanza is more about how it is not necessary to get so much clinging or be attached to or take so importantly this kind of the momentary emotions and things like that.

So I think you are right.

The next question is:

"Dear Ringu Tulku Rinpoche, Firstly I would like to thank you for these wonderful and inspiring teachings, it is my main source of dharma this year as I can't afford to get to any teachings. It is also a perfect accompaniment for my ngondro practice. I feel I have much work to do on myself to improve as a dharma practitioner. My question is;

I have had a problem with a teacher in a different lineage, and he hurt me very much. Without going into detail I would like to know how to view him? Do I develop bodhichitta to him? How do I purify my anger and negative emotions to him? I am doing my prostrations and hoping this will purify my anger etc. I am worried of my samaya with him and feel it is very negative to have anger towards a bodhisattva."

I think, most of the time, this kind of problems happen because you expect too much. All wishes cannot be fulfilled by everybody or anybody. So, therefore, don't expect that your teachers will be able to fulfil all your expectations. It's not possible. So, therefore, let that be. If somebody doesn't do exactly as you want, or doesn't give you what exactly you want, or they don't behave exactly the way you want: let that be. They have the right to live their way. You cannot expect everybody to do as you want. But there is also no use, or no need, for you to be hurt by that. So this understanding is very, very important. And, I think, the most important thing is that you feel there is no need for you to be angry at anybody. And how much you allow yourself to be hurt or not is up to you. It's not about the other people. How much you allow yourself to be hurt or not is, I think, very much to do with ourselves. And, of course, if you feel that somebody, or a teacher, is not teaching the right teachings or that is not helping you, you can go away. You don't need to get hurt and sit there and make yourself hurt. Why don't you move away? You know? There's no need to stay there and be a target of whatever is happening.

And, therefore, if you have received teachings and you have a kind of connection then, you know, it's not good to do things *against* those people because you have received teachings and you still seem to think that he's a bodhisattva. So, just distance from him, and [it's] not necessary too much

to be there. But also no need to say too many negative things, or to feel negative things, you just distance a little bit, and then after some time you will feel OK, I think. And you will understand, maybe there's a misunderstanding; I don't know what's the problem.

Next question is:

"I have a dharma friend who speaks in a very negative way about another dharma friend. He has even spoken negatively about one of my teachers. I do not know what to do, as I'm not great at expressing myself, and do not want to upset him. But he is starting to upset me."

I think you should tell him that you don't want to listen bad things about other people. I think it is necessary that you make this clear to all your friends because if you allow them to speak negative things that you don't want to listen to, then you will no longer remain their friends for long. So, therefore make it very clear that you like them, you are their friend, but you don't want them to talk negative things or that you don't want to *listen* to these things, you know, bad things. So, maybe they will stop saying negative things. You don't need to speak about those things, you can have different opinions about many things but you don't need to discuss about that. You can have your relationship, a good friendship, without the subjects of disagreement between yourself and the others. I think that's the way. Of course you cannot make everybody speak good, you know, they can have their own opinions, of course. You cannot take that away, but you don't need to discuss that. I think that's it.

And even if sometimes they don't like something that you like, or they don't understand some people, or they don't respect some people you respect, it's up to them: you don't have to get angry also.

The last question is:

"What ultimately defines an action or an emotion as negative? Is it our grasping to it as truly existing and so our clinging to or pushing away of it that makes it negative? It seems difficult to clearly experience now if one is thinking of, and act on, potentially negative or positive outcome in the future. Outcomes it is impossible to understand or define clearly with a samsaric mind."

Is this text intended to clearly teach on the Mahayana understanding only, or does the Vajrayana understanding also have an influence? Can the two approaches be practiced equally together?"

Well, negative action and negative emotion is not so difficult to understand, if you think a little bit. If you are doing something that's harmful, that's hurting, that's not good for yourself and for others, that's negative. And if you don't understand whether that action is harming or helpful, then you look at your intention and emotion in which you are.

If your emotion is the five negative emotions, that's producing this action, that's instigating this action. The five negative emotions are anger, hatred etc. Anger and hatred, that's one group. Then greed, attachment, clinging etc., that's the second group, Then lots of the envy, and jealousy, that's third group. Then arrogance and too much, kind of, proud looking down on others, that's the fourth one, and then the confusion and ignorance, that's the fifth one. So if you are doing things with these kinds of negative emotions, especially with hatred, greed and envy then you know that this a negative deed and negative emotion, otherwise not. If it is something that is inspired with helping, with compassion, with kindness then it's positive, so this not very difficult to understand. It's very easy to understand, actually.

About the Mahayana and Vajrayana, I think I have discussed this before also, many times. That, there is nothing called 'this is only Mahayana' and 'this is only Vajrayana', there is nothing like that.

Everything that is Mahayana is also Vajrayana. Everything that is Mahayana is also Vajrayana. Everything that is Shravakayana is also Mahayana -- most of them. So, therefore, these three yantras are not, you know...

The Shravakayana teaching is the nucleus, that's the basic teachings, that's the first circle. Then there's some things more added to it, or some things explained more clearly about it. That's the second circle. It's larger. So, Mahayana includes Shravakayana, it's not otherwise. Mahayana includes Shravakayana, so everything that is taught in the Shravakayana level is accepted in the Mahayana. Nothing is rejected. Nothing in Shravakayana is totally rejected in the Mahayana. It's improved, it's clarified, but not rejected. In the same way, everything that's Mahayana is part of the Vajrayana also. Therefore, nothing that is taught in the Mahayana is rejected in Vajrayana,

everything is accepted. Some things are more clarified, some things you go a little bit deeper, a little bit more clearly explained but nothing is rejected. That is very important to understand.

Thank you.

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