



# Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

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***Mind Training and Its Importance***  
***3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter, Stanzas 11-12***



BA3\_11-12: Mind Training and Its Importance. 3rd Chapter, Stanzas 11-12.  
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So now we are in the third chapter, stanza number 11. And we said that there are two preliminaries to taking hold of bodhichitta. One is the accumulation of positive deeds through the seven branch practices that we have talked about. And then second - the training of the mind. Now there are four things - the actual training of the mind and why it's necessary or important to do that. And then, especially, the offering of our body - and then to dedicate the result of this mind

training.

Now, mind training. It says here in stanza number 11:

*My body, thus, and all my goods besides,  
And all my merits gained and to be gained,  
I give them all and do not count the cost,  
To bring about the benefit of beings.*

What it's saying here is, I would like to give my body, which is the basis of my ego-clinging or self-centeredness, because the body is the most important thing based on this. Usually we talk about the three things that are the most important graspings that we have, that we are most [commonly] clinging to - the basis of our ego, you can say, or of our grasping and clinging - and that's the body, and then my possessions, what I own, what I have, what I call mine. And then, the things that are supposed to bring me more joy and good wellbeing, like my positive deeds, my merits, the causes of my happiness, you can say. So these three things, I say I would like to give them, I would like to offer them, to all the beings without any kind of stinginess or holding back or wishing for any kind of special appreciation or result or anything like that - I would like to give.

Now this is the mind training - now here, mind training – it's not actually giving here at this stage, because if you give without really wanting to, or wishing to, or being really ready to give, then it's not really giving. You do it, but you don't want to do it. So then it's like a snatching away, then you will feel bad afterwards, then you will have resistance afterwards. So therefore it's not good to just give, when you are not prepared to give. So therefore we need to train our mind, [so] that I would like to share and give and offer and do things for others – everything as much as possible, because it's so important that I work for the benefit of other beings like we discussed in the beginning of bodhichitta. So therefore I dedicate my body, my possessions and also my positive deeds, my merits and give them. I want to give them, I will give them, I'd like to give them, may I be able to give them - thinking like that, and so I train my mind to do that, to give that. So this is the main understanding.

And usually, if I really make a certain kind of decision, that I dedicate this body, this life and all the things that I have, I possess, and even all the positive deeds that I have gained or accumulated or will be accumulating for the benefit of all beings, that means I am totally committed - totally dedicated towards the wellbeing of other beings. When that kind of experience or understanding or way of being is cultivated, then I cannot have any fear. I cannot have any [fear] because, my body, my possessions, my everything is for others - so therefore there is nothing to lose. I have nothing to lose. So therefore this training is made first in our mind.

So this is actually the basis of what we call the *lojong* trainings, mind trainings, this is the basis of the *tonglen*, the giving and taking meditation that we do in tonglen practice. It's just one stanza but it is on this stanza [that] all the trainings of the seven points of mind training and all other mind trainings are based. So this is extremely important. And when you say I give or I intend to give or I wish to give or I make a meditation of giving, like through tonglen practice or through *chöd* practice, you know, *chöd* practice is also like giving my body to all: I create a big offering of my body and give it to everybody and feel that everybody eats my body and gets great - not only a fill up as food - but it becomes a great healing, great offering, great transformation to everybody. So this kind of *chöd* practice is there, 'cutting through'. So this is also based on that.

And especially when we give, it's not just - and this is also very important I think - that there is giving. There are four things: giving, protecting, purification and increasing or kind of multiplying. So I want to give my body, for the benefit of all the beings. But that doesn't mean that I don't have to take care of my body - I just waste my body, I do nothing for the body, I don't care for my body - that's not the idea. I feel that I need to use this body or this life for great benefit, for a great purpose, to help all sentient beings. So therefore, when I've dedicated my body for that, I must really take care of it, so that it's not wasted. So this I think is very important - these two things. Sometimes people think that I give my body, so I don't have to take care of it - even if it's rotten it's okay, even if it's sick it's okay, even if it is really not used properly. That's not the case. I must protect it, I must use it in a proper way, I must make the best use of it so that it doesn't get wasted in a negative way. So therefore the protection - whether it's the body, whether it's the possessions or the things that I have and, as well, the positive deeds that I must protect. And not only that I have to protect - I have to also purify it. I have to make it free from obstacles, I must make it nice, I

make it pure, I must make it clean, I must make it very good so that it becomes the most useful, most desirable, most beneficial - the best and pure. And not only to purify it, but also I must increase it - I must do something that gives the greatest amount of benefits. So therefore to increase it, to multiply it, to make it so useful and beneficial that it is not a kind of a small thing, my possession - I have a little thing, I give it, finished - I don't want it anymore - not like that. I give it, but because I have given it, now I have to really take care of it, I have to multiply it, I have to make it useful, I have to make it that it will last long, so that it becomes really something that is wonderful and useful and it is not only just a little bit useful but it's pure and a lot and things like that. So therefore sometimes we talk about these four things, three things multiplied by four makes it twelve. We have to give our body, wealth and positive deeds. And these we not only give, but give, protect, purify and increase. And these [four] we can also not [develop] only in the giving but these four things has to be in all the six paramitas also - but that we will come to later on.

So therefore we try to do it in our mind first with the aspiration, and then, whenever we have too much clinging or too much undisciplined attachment or if all the negative emotions, lots of clinging or grasping comes up, we can remind ourselves that this body, I have given it, I want to give it, I want to use it for all sentient beings, for the benefit of all the sentient beings - so therefore I don't need to use it for negative things, or for my own gratification too much, or in a useless way - or I must not waste it, I must not do [things] in a negative way or which are not benefiting other beings. It doesn't mean that I cannot enjoy myself - that's not the case. I have to be happy, I have to be joyful. Because even when you are dedicated and you are working for somebody, then you also have to take care of yourself, otherwise you cannot work properly - so therefore you have to take care of your body, take care of your possessions, but also at the same time you want to dedicate it. So therefore this is the kind of training, training of the mind. I don't need to say too much because we have already lots of teachings on the lojong and tonglen and chöd and things like that.

Now the second part, which is very important, is the 12th stanza:

*Nirvana is attained by giving all,*

*Nirvana is the object of my striving;  
And all must be surrendered in a single instant,  
Therefore it is best to give it all to others.*

Now, my true liberation or true enlightenment or freedom from samsara can come only if I get rid of my clinging, if I get rid of my self-centeredness, if I can be free from the negative ways of grasping and holding onto, if I liberate myself - then through that. So therefore I get nirvana, I get liberation, I get enlightenment by being able to let go of negative things and positive things as we discussed in the beginning. So, by giving all, and by giving all only, I attain nirvana. And nirvana for myself, because if I want to have the lasting peace and happiness and that can only be if I have nirvana - total freedom from all kinds of negativity and negative mind poisons and that can only be if I have nirvana - so therefore, that would be my ultimate goal, not only for myself but for others also.

So therefore:

*"And all must be surrendered in the single instant."*

Now I have this body. If I don't give it, even then, sooner or later, I have to leave it. You know, I cannot keep my body – it's not mine. So if I don't use this body for something purposeful, for something useful, for something beneficial, then, I'll use it for something not so useful, not so beneficial and I can actually bring lots of suffering for me, because I am so attached to my body, I'm so attached to the pleasure of my body. If I allow my body to be my boss and if I submit to all its desires then I would become addicted to everything. I become a slave and I don't use it properly and I lose it anyway. So is the wealth and so are all the positive deeds also - if I don't dedicate it, if I don't then if I do something negative, if I have a negative emotion, then all the positive deeds are lost. Therefore I will lose it, I will lose it anyway, my body, my possession, even my positive deeds - unless I give it. But if I give it to others, then it's benefiting others and it's also benefiting much more myself, because by this giving to others I actually gain enlightenment because I use it in a proper way. So therefore it's so important that I am able to give it - I am able to offer it, to share it

with all the sentient beings – otherwise it will be wasted and it will not be useful - so therefore giving is more beneficial for me than not giving. Therefore it is very important to give.

So these are the two stanzas - I'll stop here.

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