



Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche
How to Accumulate More Positive Deeds. Part 2
5th Chapter, Stanzas 76-83



December 1, 2012

Transcribed by Desi Lake and revised by Rinchen.

Teachings on the Bodhicharyavatara for the Bodhicharya Online Shedra

Now continuing *Vigilant Introspection*, chapter 5 of Bodhicharyavatara – we're talking about the second *shila* or good conduct – how to accumulate more positive deeds. And we are now on stanza number 76.

*Extol their qualities discreetly;
When they're praised by others, praise them too.
But when the qualities they praise are yours,
Reflect upon their skill in recognizing qualities. [5:76]*

So, if you see or you meet or you hear about good beings, great beings, then try to inculcate, try to [develop] their positive qualities in yourself discreetly. Discreetly means slowly, not making a big deal about it, not talking too much about it – *“I’m getting this, I’m trying to do like that or like this.”* Instead, discreetly, you try to get the good qualities, try to accumulate good qualities and learn from the good qualities of others.

“When they are praised by others, praise them too”: when somebody is praising somebody who is very positive, is good, then, out of jealousy, or out of envy or out of competitiveness, or just trying to say something different, don’t reject those praises, don’t say something different or opposite to what others are saying. But you also [can say something] to praise them too, because good people need to be praised and need to be appreciated, and if others appreciate and praise them, you should join force with them and praise them too.

“But when the qualities they praise are yours”, if somebody is praising you or talking about good qualities that you have, then do not become proud, do not let that go to your head, but – *“Reflect upon their skill in recognizing qualities.”* Then you think *“Oh, that’s very good”*, because these people, or this person knows what is a positive thing. They see positive things in me because they have the capacity to see positive things in themselves, so therefore that’s very good. They have that good quality so I must respect them, I must feel the positive quality of that person who sees positive qualities in me. And do not let it go to your head – that’s very important.

*The goal of every act is happiness itself,
Though, even with great wealth, it's rarely found.
So take your pleasure in the excellence of others.
Let them be a heartfelt joy to you. [5:77]*

All of us are looking for happiness. It's not [just] from the Buddhist point of view, but generally everybody, all people want to be free from suffering and want to have happiness – whatever you call it: happiness, joy, satisfaction, wellbeing, whatever – that's what we are trying to get. And even if we have lots of things and lots of money and wealth it's not always easy to find true happiness. Real happiness is very rarely found so we need to learn how to find happiness in

ourselves on every occasion so we can do that in everything.

"So take your pleasure in the excellence of others." If somebody is good at something, if somebody does something good, if somebody achieves something, use that as a way of getting pleasure or getting happiness for yourself. You just rejoice in that and then you are happy. So that's why it is said again and again that if you want to be unhappy all the time for no reason then you can be jealous and envious. If you want to be happy for no reason, at no extra expenditure, then you have to be rejoicing. So this is what we have to do.

"Let them be a heartfelt joy to you." You just become very happy, very joyful, rejoicing, that somebody did something good, said something nicely, somebody has some good qualities – very good, very nice, very wonderful – and you feel happy – that's a very good reason to be happy. You're happy and that's very useful, why not? So therefore don't allow yourself to be unhappy because somebody did something good and somebody has a good quality, or somebody has achieved something wonderful. That's terrible, that is not good for you, that's not good for anybody, and it's totally useless, a waste of time for yourself and, therefore, don't do that. That's very important.

By acting thus, in this life you'll lose nothing;

In future lives, great bliss will come to you.

Wrongdoing brings not joy but pain,

And in the future dreadful torment. [5:78]

So if you act like this, as was discussed before, then you will lose nothing. By praising others, by rejoicing in others' good things, by wishing well to everybody else, by trying to be considerate with others, wanting something positive for others – all these things will not cause you to lose anything. There's nothing lost, and *"In future lives, great bliss will come to you."* Not only in this life – in this life also at this moment, at this very moment you become happier – you become more positive, you have more friends, and so therefore, you will become more successful. And *"In future lives,"* even better: *"Great bliss will come to you"*. Because you became more positive you become more peaceful, you become more kind, you become more joyful – so therefore your state of mind, your realm, whatever you call it, becomes better, better and better. So then eventually

maybe you'll even have more compassion and wisdom. So therefore, *"great bliss will come to you"* and that's what you need, so therefore you do it.

"Wrongdoing brings not joy but pain," so if you do something negative, the opposite to what has been discussed, that won't bring any joy to you. It will make you unhappy, and bring pain to you and to others as well. If you are jealous, if you say bad things about other people, if you are unhappy because somebody has achieved something, if you're not considerate of others' needs and benefits, if you are unhappy and if you don't wish well to others, then it will bring lots of pain to you and others and it will not bring any good, any joy, any happiness, any satisfaction to you. And that's for now. In future even more, *"and in the future dreadful torment,"* because your habitual tendencies, your personality, will become like that – negative, hurtful, insensitive, and unhappy, angry, upset – that's what brings you to negative realms and more and more [it becomes] like that. So it's very, very important to understand that, because this [determines] how we act. The practice of dharma is not about going away from your home and staying somewhere in the countryside. You can do that as well, but that's not [essential]. This dharma practice is how you are, and that's now and in every action of yours.

Speak coherently, appropriately,

Clear in meaning, pleasantly.

Rid yourself of craving and aversion;

Speak gently with moderation. [5:79]

So this is how you have to speak, the positive way of speaking. With speech you can accumulate more positive deeds, and that's by speaking coherently – speech that can be understood clearly by others. Appropriately means that it is not disturbing to others or not hurting others or is something that will bring a more positive understanding [as well as more positive] attitudes and emotions. We should not say what should not be said – [we should] not [speak] like that. So *"appropriately, clear in meaning, pleasantly"*. We have to say things clearly – what we want to say and what needs to be said – but also pleasantly. Sometimes people think that, *"I have to tell the truth."* And then they just say something very rudely, just [as if they were] attacking. I know people do that sometimes. But I think they don't understand. They think that saying truth means saying it unpleasantly, but that's very bad. You have to say things pleasantly. And it's not always

that you have to say everything that's on your mind. I'm sure that people understand this. I need to say things that need to be said – but not everything. And whatever I need to say then I need to try to say it in a way that is pleasant and not hurtful – not [in a way] that would [disturb] people, not [in a way] that would disturb relationships with others, that would create problems. It's all in the way of saying, the manner of saying. Sometimes they think, *"I am in that mood so therefore I said it [that way] – I was too tired, so therefore."* But that's wrong. If we're too tired, then don't say it. So then why do you write mail when you are so tired and then afterwards create so much trouble. And then you have to work so hard to remedy that. Why create more tension, more work and more unhappiness? If you are so tired that you might not say things rightly, or if you are so emotional that you cannot say things in a more pleasant way then don't say it, delay it. It's better [that such a thing is] not said than said. So try to say things pleasantly.

"Rid yourself of craving and aversion." Craving and aversion, or sometimes we call it aversion and attachment. If your mind is too much occupied by aversion, fear, anxiety, craving, greed, too much tension – then you [won't express yourself well]. So therefore when you are overcome, overpowered by these emotions, then let yourself rest. Let your emotions settle down before you speak, because you need to speak gently, with moderation. Moderation means neither talking too much nor explaining too little. Talking too much is not good, and not explaining enough is also not good, so try to understand that. And when you speak say it gently in a way that would not hurt people's feelings because it's sometimes [more important] how you say it, not what it is that is said. So this is the way of speaking. As you know, the basic, the most important activity of human beings is communication. So if we communicate well that is a source of great benefit to everybody and can lessen lots of problems and conflicts.

When you look at others think

That it will be through them

That you will come to Buddhahood.

So look on them with frank and loving hearts. [5:80]

So [don't] look at [others thinking] *"I'm going to help this person"* or *"I have to help this person, I have to try to do something to help"*. [Don't think] like that. No. [Think instead] that this person will be the cause of my enlightenment – through this person, by helping this person, by doing

something for this person the most benefit will come to me. I will get the most benefit because when I help, when I'm compassionate, when I'm kind, the [greatest] benefit is not [received] by the person to whom you are kind, but by yourself, because [by your actions] you accumulate positive deeds, wisdom and compassion – and therefore you become Buddha. So when you see somebody, you see that [it is] through these people [you progress] – so therefore you appreciate them. So look at them with loving hearts, “*with frank and loving hearts*” – with respect, with kindness and with gratitude. Look at people with gratitude.

*Always fired by highest aspiration,
Laboring to implement the antidotes,
You will reap great virtues in the field of excellence
And in the fields of benefits and sorrow. [5:81]*

So, always fired – all the time, constantly – with a good aspiration, with good motivation, with bodhichitta, “*laboring to implement the antidotes*” – you try to do positive things but you also try to implement the antidotes for your negative emotions and negative actions, and if you do that, then, “*You will reap great virtues in the field of excellence.*” You will accumulate positive deeds, great positive deeds, like the six paramitas and things like that. And you think about what you will do – you know you cannot do everything, you cannot help everybody, but you have to choose especially the field of benefit and the field of sorrow. The field of benefit means those who have been very kind to you, who have been very beneficial to you – like your parents, your teachers, those who are able to help others a lot. If you help them, if you assist them, then that is a very important thing, that's a great thing to do. And then another field is the sorrow, because if people are very sick, destitute, going through very difficult times, you can try to help them. And these two fields of your actions, or fields of helping, the targets or the objects that you can help and that will bring the most positive deeds, are these two fields – one of the great people who have been very helpful to you, or kind to you, or compassionate to you, like your teachers, friends and parents and others like that, and another is those who are in great need and are going through lots of suffering and pain.

*Acting thus with faith and understanding,
You should always undertake good works.*

*And in whatever actions you perform,
You should not be dependent on another. [5:82]*

“Thus with faith and understanding” – you have to see, you have to understand what you are doing and what will be the effect of that. And when we have real understanding, or stronger understanding, then we have faith. Faith is a clear understanding. So the more understanding you have the more faith you have – and then with this clear understanding and faith, you should act, undertake your good works with your body speech and mind. And *“whatever actions you perform”*, whether it’s a very big project, or a very big thing, or a very small thing –whatever [it is] you do, you should do [whatever] you can. You should try to do it without being too dependent on others. You should not say that *“I want to do this but nobody helps me”* or *“I’m trying to do this but this person is not doing it”*. If you are too dependent on others then your action will not be successful and you will be blaming everybody for not having done it. So [we should not do it with an] understanding like that. You have to take the responsibility and act accordingly. If other people are doing it, that’s very good. And if the others are not doing it, that’s also very good. You should not be totally dependent on what others are doing or not doing – that’s very, very important.

*The perfections, giving and the rest,
Progress in sequence, growing in importance.
The great should never be abandoned for the less,
And others’ good should be regarded as supreme. [5:83]*

The six paramitas, six perfections, the perfection of giving or generosity, the *shila*, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation, wisdom – these should be practiced in [sequence] because, in a way, they are taught as a progression. First generosity, then *shila*, then patience, [and so on] like that. And because these are a progression, the next one is more important than the preceding one. *“The great should never be abandoned for the less”*: something that is more important should not be sacrificed because of something lesser. So therefore you have to know what [aspect] is more important than [another] – for instance generosity is important, but discipline or acting with good conduct is in a way more important. Good conduct is important, but being patient is more important, and so on. So you should not sacrifice the latter because of the former. This is

important.

But then, there's another way of looking at that – it's not always [undertaken] in this order. "*And others' good should be regarded as supreme.*" So, the practice, the paramita practice, or the action that would most benefit lots of people, should be more important than something that is only benefitting a little or something that's only benefitting yourself a little bit. Something that's useful and benefitting more people, lots of people in the greater way is more important to do than something [lesser]. Of course it's important to know the priorities, to understand the priorities. So this is how it should be. This is 83, so I will stop here. This is the end of the second *shila* that is accumulating more positive deeds. So that's it, thank you very much.

©Ringu Tulku Rinpoche

This is a transcript of a video talk given for the Bodhicharya Online Shedra by Ringu Tulku Rinpoche. The transcript has only been lightly edited and is meant to be used within the Online Shedra study context.