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Warmest Celebration and
Commemoration on
the 100th Birthday Anniversary of
His Holiness Kyabje Chadrang Sangye
Dorje Rinpoche

What are the Methods of
"Mental Visualization"?

Where is the "Foundational Basis for
the Visualization of Mind-Training"?

What are the Key Points in the
"Disclosure of a Patient's Conditions"?

Whether the Relatives Should Adopt
the Strategy to Lie When "Disclosing
About the Patient's Conditions"?

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**The Last Living Greatly Realized Master and Mahasiddha of
Tibetan Buddhism in Contemporary Times**

**Warmest Celebration and
Commemoration on
the 100th Birthday Anniversary of
His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Gyatso
Dorje Rinpoche**

Dudjom Buddhist Association (International)

**Having Great Merits in Spreading the Vajrayana
Teachings Beyond Hundred Years,
the Master Paragon's Shining
Lights Span Across the Four Seas**

**Upholding the Nyingma Teachings
via Thousand Years of Blessings,
Praises of His Enlightened Activities
Embrace the Three Realms**

**— Wishing the Greatest Health and Longevity
for this Holy Saint !**



**Parts of the Stupas and Retreat Centers Built by
H.H. Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche in Nepal**



H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche

The **Dudjom Buddhist Association (International)** has most recently held a grand Long-Life Puja and Mandala Offering to warmly celebrate and commemorate on the **100th Birthday Anniversary of His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Sangye Dorje Rinpoche**, the Most Beloved and Most Honoured Wish-fulfilling Crowning Jewel (Root Guru) of our Vajra Masters Yeshe Thaye and Pema Lhadren. At this special occasion of this very auspicious Holy Day, we offered our most humble offerings of whole-hearted prayers of great sincerity for the great health and longevity of His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Sangye Dorje Rinpoche, so that His Holiness' Lotus Feet will remain unshakable and stand firm and steadfast in this universe for thousands of aeons, so as to continuously uphold the Victory Banner and to turn the Wheel of the unsurpassed and profound Holy Dharma that embrace the Three Realms, for the benefits of countless motherly sentient beings!

For this special commemoration, our Association would like to describe, in short format, on the Compassionate and Wisdom Merits, and Enlightened Activities of His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Sangye

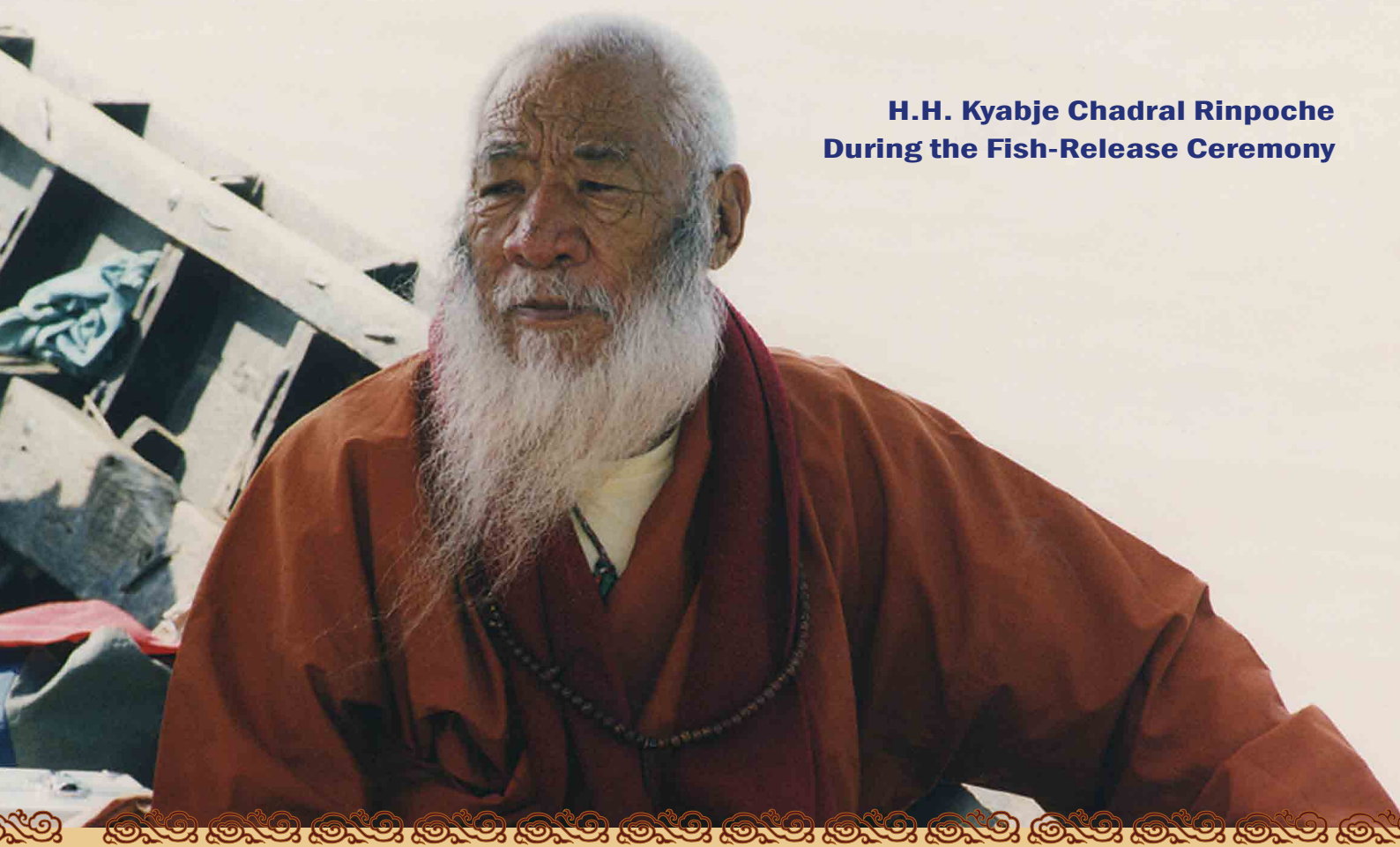
Dorje Rinpoche's liberated life story so as to arouse the kind-heartedness of friends and believers in rejoicing at, and to appreciate of, the **painstaking efforts, great courage and strong perseverance of such a great and genuine Dharma practitioner** in our contemporary times.

His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Sangye Dorje Rinpoche, as a Spiritual Master of the highest caliber and a greatly realized Mahasiddha of Tibetan Buddhism in our contemporary times, is also known as **Trogyal Dorje** and **Buddha Vajra**. His Holiness is being considered as the Exemplary Elder of Awareness-Holder in the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism, and is, indeed, the **Guru of gurus!** The Tibetans have respectfully called Him as **"Chadral Rinpoche"**, meaning the **"vagabond recluse"**, or the **"one who has abandoned all mundane activities"**. He is **one of those living principal lineage holders who has held the most complete lineage systems of "Great Perfection", and is one of the last living greatly realized master and Mahasiddha of Tibetan Buddhism in contemporary times**, unexcelled by any others in this whole world. These Dharma lineages include that of the Longchen Nyingthig, as well as all the major lineage systems of the recent "major tertons" including Sera Khandro, Dudul Dorje, Longsal Nyingpo, and Dudjom Lingpa, among others.

His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche was born on the Tenth Day of the Fifth Month (**Guru Rinpoche's Birthday***) of the Water Ox Year of the 15th Rabjung Cycle of the Tibetan calendar (**the year 1913 of the Western calendar**), in the valley Apse of Nyarong province of Kham, and soon migrated to Amdo with his family. His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche started learning Tibetan and Buddhist Sutras at the age of four; and at the age of fifteen, he abandoned his ties with his family and went to many teachers to study and practice. He insisted on travelling on foot and refused to enter the residences of householders, staying and taking retreats only in those sacred places, caves, and hermitages that were blessed by Guru Rinpoche and other Spiritual Masters, or staying in his own little tent.

His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche had

H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche During the Fish-Release Ceremony



gone to the place of the Great Wisdom Dakini and Terton, **Sera Khandro Dewai Dorje**, to learn many Terma teachings and Buddhist Tantras, including the whole and complete teachings of the “Dudjom Tersar” lineage. At the same time, His Holiness had also received all the Terma treasures of the “Dudjom Tersar” lineage once again from **Tersay Dorje Dradul**, the youngest son of the **Terchen Dudjom Lingpa**.

After which, His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche had received instructions from the Great Wisdom Dakini Sera Khandro to go to Kathok Monastery. There, he was warmly accepted by, and thus received important teachings from, the Kathok Khenchen **Ngagi Wangpo Rinpoche**, the Principal Lineage Holder of the Khenchen Nyoshul Lungtok Tenpai Nyima. His Holiness thus received all the complete teachings on the important lineages of Longchen Nyingthig, Dudul Dorje and Longsal Nyingpo, which started from the preliminary practices (**Ngondro**) all the way through to the highest Great Perfection (**Dzogchen**), and also took retreat practices on these teachings for six years and five months. Thus, His Holiness had received all the “empowerments, oral transmissions, practical

guidance, pith oral-instructions, and lineages” from the Great Khenpo Ngagi Wangpo Rinpoche, who had entrusted him to spread the Holy Dharma to all suitable vessels. In this way, **the Great Khenpo Ngagi Wangpo Rinpoche had become the most important Crowning Jewel (Tsawai Lama, or Root Guru) of His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche.**

At that time, the Regent in Tibet, **Gyaltsap Redring Jampal Yeshe**, had requested the Great Khenpo Ngagi Wangpo Rinpoche to transmit teachings to him. The Great Khenpo then said to him : “**I have a disciple whose mind and realization is the same as mine, and his name is Sangye Dorje.** You can go and ask him to transmit the teachings to you. **He is my representative.**” In this way, the Regent Gyaltsap Redring had asked His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche to go to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, in becoming his Guru. Thus, His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche became **the “Spiritual Master” of the entire land of Amdo, central Tibet, and Kham.** After the transmissions of teachings, His Holiness Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche believed that the title of “Spiritual Master” could only be a distraction from the path. Therefore, he had exchanged the



H.H. Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche

clothes of His beautiful brocades with a beggar's clothes, so as to avoid from being tracked down by the Regent's servants, and thus continued with His **rigorous Dharma practices** in mountain caves and retreat hermitages.

His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche has always lived a very simple life of Dharma practice. He always meditated and practiced in those mountain caves that were blessed by Guru Rinpoche, and by practicing alone in other retreat hermitages. His Holiness had travelled all over Tibet on foot and camping, insisting to practice like a **wanderer** for over a few decades, and has finally earned the admiration and respect from many great Tibetan Dharma practitioners, and thus they called His Holiness as **"Chadrak Rinpoche"**, meaning the **"vagabond recluse"**, or the **"one who has abandoned all mundane activities"**, and **"Kyabje"** is the honorific title given to a **"greatly accomplished master"** of the highest caliber with the highest respect. Furthermore, His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche not only has received many great

Terma treasures, but he has most respectfully offered these Dharma treasures to the many great Tibetan Dharma practitioners at that time, including **Dudjom Jigdrak Yeshe Dorje** (Kyabje Dudjom Rinpoche II), **Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje** (His Holiness the 16th Karmapa), **Jamyang Khyentse Chokyi Lodro** (Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche II). In this way, they would transmit teachings to each other and thus became each others' disciples, which also became a much talked about holy story of the time.

His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche's wisdom and life experiences could be reflected upon from all the wrinkles on his face. With such weather-beaten and hardworking life experiences on His Dharma practices, His Holiness' "worldly and supra-mundane" wisdom are the best proof of His Holiness' **entire lifetime of steadfast and firm Dharma practice**. Yet, most of those Great Rinpoches, Khenpos and Tulkus of today have already been accustomed to live in their grandeur monasteries with extreme comforts and luxuries with modern facilities. It is, indeed, a **huge difference** between their lifestyles with that of Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche!

By the end of the 1950s, His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche moved to Bhutan, and then to India. He restored a simple temple near Darjeeling and later started a hermitage retreat center, where practitioners trained in the Longchen Nyingthig lineage are required to take retreats of more than three years. This is the **first of its kind for any Tibetan retreat centers** to be established outside of Tibet. This is, indeed, the kind of practice tradition of the Lord Buddha and of the previous saints of the Nyingma school, which states that **"Life relies on Dharma, Dharma relies on poverty, poverty relies on death, death relies on caves"**. This has established the uniqueness of the practice style of the Nyingma school, where **pure and simple firm practice** is the core, such that it could remain in a **stance of simplicity and purity** in this world.

His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche has abandoned all secular activities in His entire life, and never in any way to engage in the monastic systems, and never chasing after fame, glory and respect. His

Holiness insists at all times to **practice in a way of a “vagabond recluse”**, and uses the way of traveling on foot to worship holy places and shrines, and **practice by retreats** across Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal and India. His Holiness lives the life of a **“secret yogi”**, and never to be moved by the “eight worldly concerns”. His Holiness is a pure vegetarian for many years and have always **kept His pure and rigorous vows and samayas**. His only focus is on the **practice of the Holy Dharma** and nothing else.

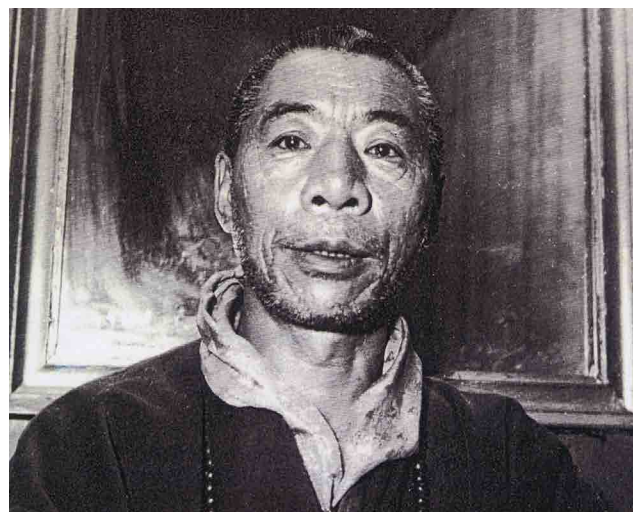
Throughout His entire life, His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche has spared no time and efforts on activities other than Buddhist ones. By the using of all offerings that He has received in helping all sentient beings, such as to conduct the **ransom of countless lives** by releasing them, as well as in the **almsgiving of both material and spiritual assistances to all retreatants**, thus His Holiness has benefited countless sentient beings. He has also **established numerous Buddhist śāṛīra-stūpas and retreat centers** in the snowy mountainous regions of Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal and India. For many years, His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche has provided food, lodging and other necessary facilities for the retreatants in His retreat centers, and thus provided a lot of help to many Dharma practitioners. With great aspirations to **benefit both oneself and others**, His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche has established a **great role model of “Great Wisdom, Great Compassion, Great Strength, Great Aspiration and Great Action” of a great-hearted bodhisattva** in this world, such that **“a clean spring of fountain” has been created by His Holiness’ enlightened activities in this secular world!**

Numerous Tibetans, Indians and Nepalese have all regarded His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche as their own **“Lord of Refuge and Protector” (Kyabje)**. Countless teachers and Dharma practitioners from Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal, India and other western countries tried to seek for His Holiness’ teachings, and thus His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche is, indeed, the **Guru of gurus!** There are even many more people who came to worship, and seek for blessings from, His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche, to whom they have all shown their greatest honors and

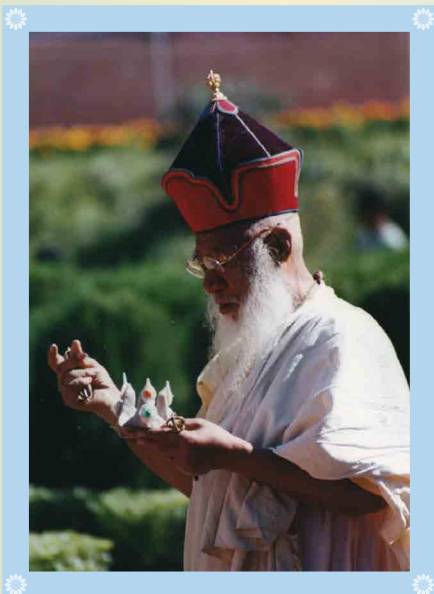
respects. Within Tibetan Buddhism, His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche can thus be rightly named as the **Unsurpassed Maha-Guru and Mahasiddha with great realizations, complete accomplishments in enlightened activities and merits, in this contemporary age**. Hence, an endless stream of pilgrims has gone to pay their greatest respects and worship to His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche. All those who could visit with, or even be blessed by, His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche would feel extremely happy and joyful, when considering oneself not to be wasting one’s whole life after all, in having this extreme fortune and matchless happiness!

(***Note:** According to the Great Terton Guru Chawang and the tradition of Mindroling Monastery, the annual birthday anniversary of Guru Rinpoche is on the Tenth Day of the Fifth Month of the Tibetan calendar. Yet, as according to the other tradition of the Great Terton Sangye Lingpa, the annual birthday anniversary of Guru Rinpoche is on the Tenth Day of the Sixth Month of the Tibetan calendar.)

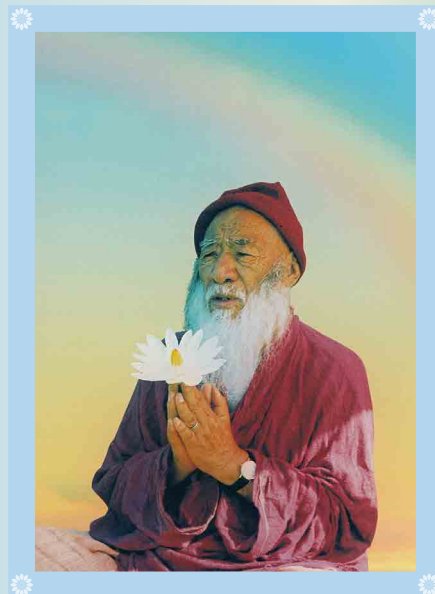
(For those readers who are interested to learn more details about the Liberated Life Story (“Namthar”) of His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche, please be kind and patient enough to wait for the right time when the Dudjom Buddhist Association (International) will publish the whole full version on the “Liberated Life Story of His Holiness Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche”. Please kindly pay attention to our notice in the future.)



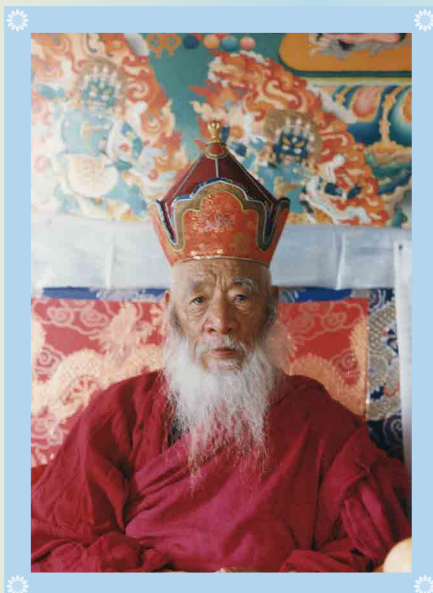
H.H. Kyabje Chadrak Rinpoche



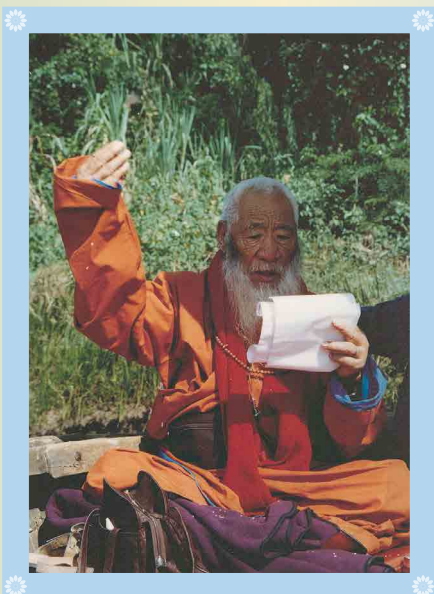
**H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche
During a Consecration Ceremony**



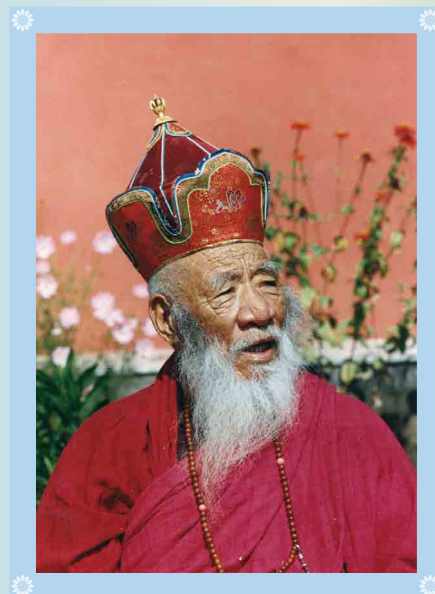
**H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche
Holding a Lotus Flower During the
Fish-Release Ceremony**



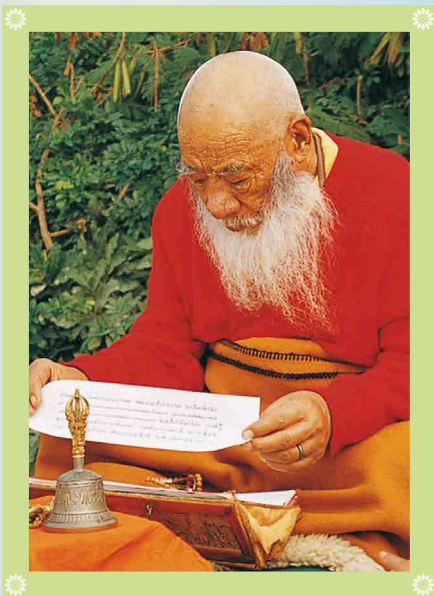
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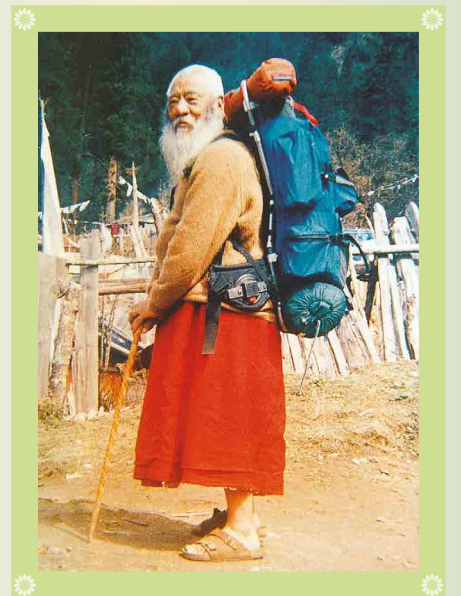
**H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche
During the Fish-Release Ceremony**



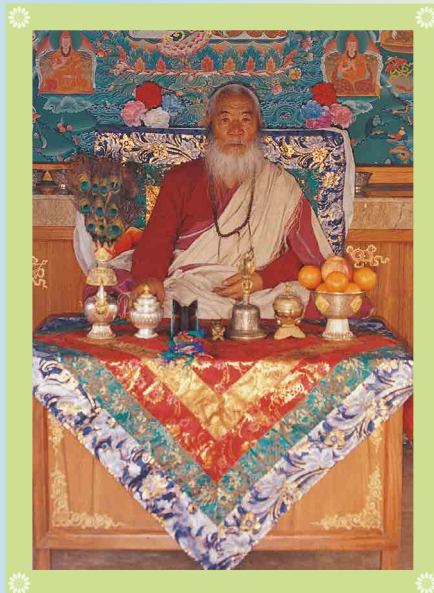
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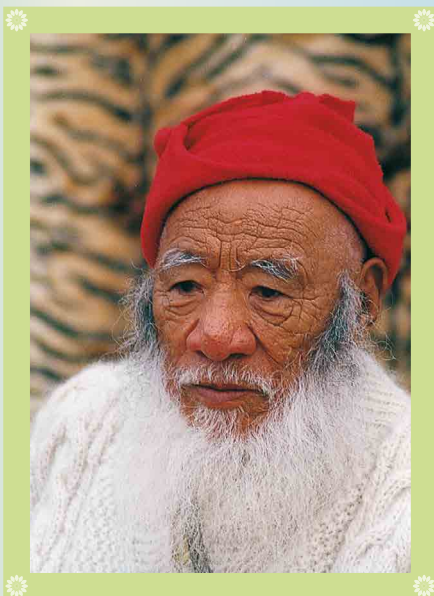
**H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche
in Practising the Sadhanas**



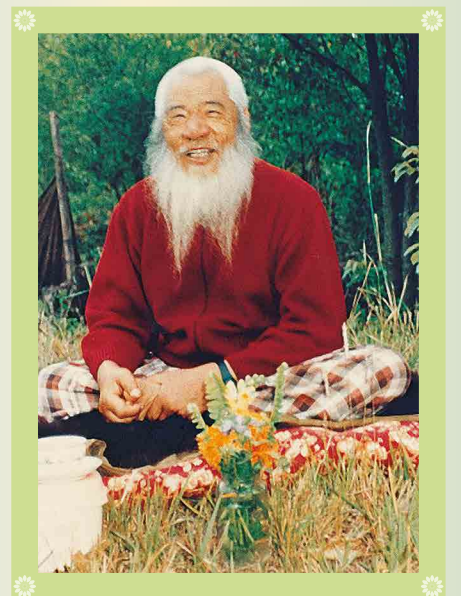
**H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche
Going into the Woods**



H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche



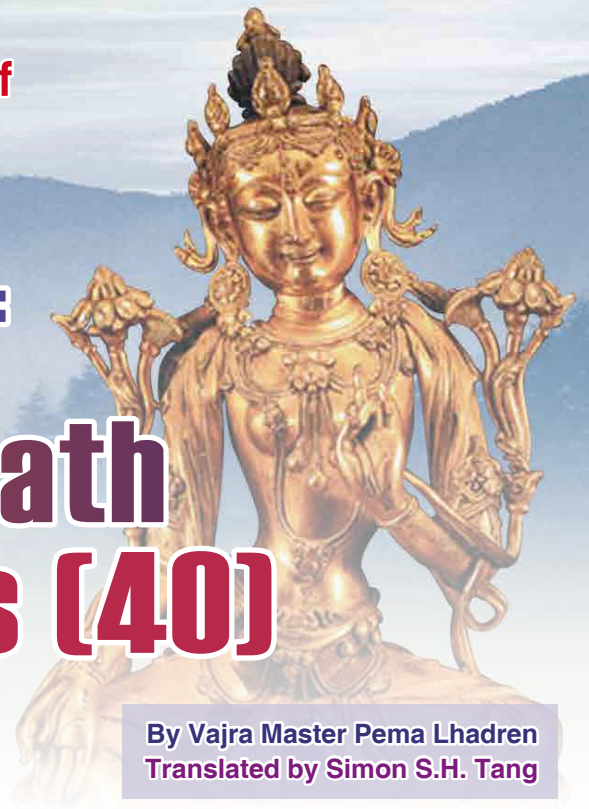
H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche



**H.H. Kyabje Chadral Rinpoche
Camping in the Woods**



The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences (40)



By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Simon S.H. Tang

- **What are the Key Points in the “Disclosure of a Patient’s Conditions”?**
- **Whether the Relatives Should Adopt the Strategy to Lie When “Disclosing About the Patient’s Conditions”?**

Excerpt of Last Chapter:

Various Reasons on the Formation of Different Scenes at the "Moment of Death"

The “scenes at the moment of death” can be roughly classified in the following categories in accord with the varieties of the “main causes” and “auxiliary conditions”:

1. The “Separation of the Four Elements” – the “main cause” (the internal “consciousness” and “sub-consciousness”, including all kinds of memories) conjoins with the “auxiliary conditions” (the ‘Separation of the Four Elements’ in the
2. The “Endorphins Inside the Brain” – the “main cause” (the internal “consciousness” and “sub-consciousness”) conjoins with the “auxiliary conditions” (the “endorphins inside the brain” of the external circumstances) in forming the

external circumstances) in forming the “scenes at the moment of death” (please refer to the articles on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issues 8 and 20 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

“scenes at the moment of death” (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 21 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

3. The “Karmic Forces” – the “main cause” (the internal “consciousness” and “sub-consciousness”) conjoins with the “auxiliary conditions” (the “karmic forces” of the external circumstances) in forming the “scenes at the moment of death”. This can be further classified into the following two kinds:

- i. **Wholesome Ones** – arising from: (a) virtuous retributions (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 21 of the “Lake of Lotus”); and (b) the efforts of one’s Dharma practice (the main theme of this article in this issue).
- ii. **Unwholesome Ones** – arising from: (a) vicious retributions; and (b) the forces of karmic creditors in seeking compensations on one’s karmic debts.

According to the records of different surveys, most of the dying people had seen the following scenes:

1. **Protectors or avengers:**
 - (i) **good ones** – saw kith and kin who had passed away, unknown protectors, deities or Buddhas coming to fetch for oneself.
 - (ii) **bad ones** – being besieged by a crowd of ferocious persons or beasts, and going along in company with groups of people who looked confused.
2. **Strange places:**
 - (i) **good ones** – saw pavilions, balconies, buildings, flower fields, rivers, light zones, towns or cities.
 - (ii) **bad ones** – saw wilderness, forests, darkness, caverns, hells.
3. **Messy Issues that cannot be recalled clearly.**

How would the Buddhist point of view comment on these phenomena? According to the Buddhist teachings, it was said that rebirth would take place

within forty-nine days after a person has passed away, then why would a dying person see the kith and kin who **had passed away long time ago** still coming to fetch for him or her? Why had not the kith and kin taken rebirths after so many years posthumously? Are the appearances of these deceased persons merely the illusions of the person who is going to die? Or were they really true? Are there any other reasons? Are those strange places the destinations where they are going to be reborn into? Under what circumstances would the normal rebirth of a dying person be negatively encumbered? Is there any way to help a deceased person to avert sufferings and elevate to a better place of rebirth?

Human beings have four kinds of conditions of consciousness (please refer to the article “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 26 of the “Lake of Lotus”) as follows:

1. **Beta β waves** – the “conscious condition” of daily living;
2. **Alpha α waves** – the relaxed “consciousness condition”, such as in entering into the elementary stage of ‘visualization’, or at the first stage of “mental concentration”; or the condition when the “spiritual body” is **slowly separating** from the “physical body”;
3. **Theta θ waves** – the peaceful “conscious condition” of having entered into higher levels of “visualization”, or at the deeper levels of “mental concentration”;
4. **Delta δ waves** – slow “conscious condition” of not having any dreams, and in a stage of slow-wave deep sleep.

In fact, how does the arising of the different stages in approaching death and its “transformation of consciousness” affect the thoughts and behaviors of dying patients? What are their relationships with the “scenes at the moment of death”? How should the family and kin and kith who take care of the dying patients respond to the “transformation of consciousness” and change of “scenes at the moment

of death” for guiding the emotions and spiritual direction of the dying patients? Could the “transformation of consciousness” and the change of “scenes at the moment of death” be complementary to each other? Furthermore, the “**disintegration of the Four Elements**” of the physical body **also affects** the “transformation of consciousness”, as well as on the change of the “scenes at the moment of death”. Hence, how should one support and provide guidance to a dying patient in order to **reduce or resolve** the predicament from these problems?

What is the Ultimate Assistance in the First Stage of Approching Death?

The care-givers, kin and kith and professional counselors should perform the following steps when a dying person is **approaching the “first stage of death”**:

1. **Accepting and Understanding**
2. **Listening and Observing**
3. **Analyzing and Adopting**
4. **Leading Out and Guiding In**
5. **Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus**

The key points of application and their importance on the issues of “Accepting and Understanding” and “Listening and Observing” had been clearly highlighted in the cases of the previous chapters (please refer to the articles on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issues 29-30 of the “Lake of Lotus”), as well as on the issue of “Analyzing and Adopting” by the dying persons (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 31 of the “Lake of Lotus”) have been clearly explained.

To most people, the issues of “Accepting and Understanding” and “Listening and Observing” are not difficult to do and it is relatively easy to carry out under the **call of “love” and with one’s wisdom**. Not too many skills will be required. Even though a person has never learned of the relevant know-how, nor

have received any such relevant training, he or she can still spontaneously provide proper care or resolve various problems for the seriously-ill persons, or dying patients.

However, the quality and depth of the resolution to a problem would be inadequate or imperfect, due to the lack of relevant know-how or training by the participants. In order that both the care-giving family members and the dying patients do not have remorse which will be too late to repent later on, but only **ultimate offering in farewell with a “heart-to-heart connection and having no trace of regret”**, the following three steps should be included in the issues that must be done when a dying patient is **approaching the “first stage of death”**.

There are at least two parts to the issue of “Analyzing and Adopting” in the third step. The first part of “Analyzing and Adopting” is to be **directed by a dying patient**, while the second part of “Analyzing and Adopting”, which is to be **directed by the care-givers, kin and kith and professional counselors**, have already been discussed in the previous two chapters (please refer to the articles on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issues 32 and 33 of the “Lake of Lotus”). The fourth step on “Leading Out and Guiding In” has already been discussed in the next before last chapter (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 34 of the “Lake of Lotus”). Now, we are discussing on the fifth step on **“Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus”** (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issues 35 and 36 of the “Lake of Lotus” for some parts that we have already discussed).

The Key Points of “Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus”

When a person comes across a major crisis, some expectations will certainly arise from oneself.

Besides some vague wishes, it is crucial that some pragmatic needs should be satisfied which would be more significant to them. For instances, when a person gets cancer, the most needed would be someone who cares about him, understands him, accepts him, makes company with him and assists him to go through the proper treatments.

Therefore, a care-taker must stand by the side of the patient and understand what is the patient's need and most wanted thing. At the same time of understanding, the care-taker would best be able to develop a relationship on the issue of **"Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus"** with the patient.

There are a few key points in the development of such kind of a relationship:

- (1) **On the same camp of companionship** – comprising of
 - a) **Listen** to the patient **empathically**, ... (please refer back to Issue 35 of "Lake of Lotus");
 - b) **Express the empathic feelings** as personal experience to the patient, ... (please refer back to Issue 35 of "Lake of Lotus");
 - c) **Pass on the message** of accepting, understanding and tribute **with genuineness**. ... (please refer back to Issue 36 of "Lake of Lotus");
- (2) **Unspoken Consensus from Heart to Heart** – comprising of
 - a) **Develop Unspoken Consensus** – under reasonable circumstances, carry out more welcome behaviors to the patient ... (please refer back to Issue 37 of "Lake of Lotus"),
 - b) **Express Unspoken Consensus** – with the attitude to express feelings that the patient recognizes and considers as of same direction ... (please refer to Issue 38 of the "Lake of Lotus");

- c) **Coordinate Unspoken Consensus** – when deviation appears, employ proper approach to coordinate mutual thoughts to shorten the distance and seek for building of common ground for unspoken consensus ... (please refer to Issue 39 of the "Lake of Lotus").

What are the Key Points in the "Disclosure of a Patient's Conditions"?

- (2) The **"unspoken consensus" from heart-to-heart** can be comprised of: -

- c) **Coordination of Unspoken Consensus (2) -**

In order to achieve the coordination of unspoken consensus, some pre-requisites have to be met. Relatives and friends who take part in this coordination of unspoken consensus will also need to possess certain specific abilities, which had been discussed in last chapter (please refer back to the article on "The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences" in Issue 39 of "Lake of Lotus"). As the dying patient's emotional changes are extremely complicated, and so **once the caring of the patient has started, every step must be cautiously arranged; otherwise, the pre-requisites of the coordination of unspoken consensus could be slashed, and thus will be hard to bring out any effects**. Among which, the first step of foremost attention is how to handle the issue of the "disclosure of the patient's conditions".

A good starting is the foundation of "coordination of unspoken consensus". Thus, when a patient approaches the first stage of death, one of the ultimate assistances is to cautiously deal with the issue of the "disclosure of the patient's conditions". In fact, what are the key points in the "disclosure of the patient's conditions"?

The “disclosure of the patient’s conditions” can be said to be an “art”, and is a bit difficult to touch upon. But, then, some guidelines in assisting the kith and kin for appropriate arrangements can still be concluded through inductive reasoning. For those seriously-ill patients, the “disclosure of conditions” will generally take into account six different aspects for a holistic consideration, and must have to deal with them simultaneously in a cautious manner, one by one.

1. **Opportune Moment:** The opportune moment on the “disclosure of a patient’s conditions” is very important. Under certain conditions, the patients themselves do not directly know their own conditions or situations. Therefore, under such kind of situations, the relatives and friends must have to evaluate the right moment carefully in order to disclose their conditions. As a matter of fact, what is the right moment on the “disclosure of a patient’s conditions”? In general, one should **let the patient to initiate the first step**. For instance, when the patient initiates to ask about it; or when the patient becomes skeptical about it, or when the patient is in a relaxed condition, and at the same time in a state of privacy. All of these factors can be considered as a proper moment for the “disclosure of a patient’s conditions”. Yet, another most important factor for one’s consideration is: “Why is it necessary to disclose? Would this “disclosure of a patient’s conditions” be good to the patient himself/herself? Would there be any negative effects if this is not disclosed?”
2. **Status:** Whether the informer is in good terms with the patient? Whether he/she is being trusted by the patient? Whether he/she knows how to handle the patient’s emotional reactions? Whether the person is the attending physician of the patient? Would the person will keep company with the patient along this journey?, and so on. All these factors need to be considered for the “disclosure of a patient’s conditions”. Hence, if they are strangers, or those who not suitable candidates

in paying visits to the patient, and yet they knew about the seriousness of the patient’s conditions, the kith and kin who know the situation must alert them of not disclosing the conditions to the patient prematurely and casually. This is because once the patient learns about his/her own conditions, it might start off a series of emotional reactions, or a kind of **“delay reaction”**. When this kind of **“delay emotional reactions” turn into abnormal behaviors**, it would make those relatives and friends, who are responsible in taking care of the patient, to be caught unaware, due to their not being able to master the actual situations from time to time. Under such circumstances, tragedies would likely occur in a series of sudden changes thereafter. Hence, those visitors who know about the patient’s conditions must be advised that **their best gesture is to listen to the patient when they pay their visits**. They should express their empathic feelings as personal experiences to the patient, so to induce the patient to elaborate and vent out his/her suppressed emotions or thoughts. However, never casually make suggestions or criticisms.

3. **The method:** The mode for the “disclosure of the patients’ conditions” has to be warm and tactful. At the same time, **the patient should be given some kind of a hope right away**. For instance, “Leukemia that you have acquired is also known to be a kind of blood cancers. There are currently good treatment methods to cure or control this disease”, etc. Or **offer to the patient promises of supports to practical needs**, and that these promises must be pragmatic and workable (**but not ungrounded empty talks**) which met with consent from the patient. For example, offers such as to keep company with the patient, or to assist with some of his/her needs. In order to seek for the best way on the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions”, one must first of all have a better understanding about that disease. One can obtain the relevant information from the “patients’ association of that disease”. In this way, one can

realize the possibility of emotional reactions from the patients of such a disease. All these factors are helpful for one in deciding about the ways and manners in the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions”.

4. **Content:** The contents on the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions” **must be carefully arranged after one’s cautious considerations**, and not to stuff up the patient with a pile of facts. During one’s conversations with the patient, one must **pay attention to the reactions and needs of the patient so as to adopt a “mode of gradual progression step by step”**. One’s profound empathy and skills of communication will also be needed. In general, it is better to leak out the “bad news” to the patient “bit by bit” in accord with the actual situations, such that the patient could have enough time for buffer, understanding and digestion.
5. **Location:** A location of good privacy should be chosen for the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions”. The location should be a place where people can sit down, and can let the patient to vent out his/her emotions without any disturbances. When the patient is too emotional and loses control, whether the location is convenient for one to seek for further assistance, or whether it is convenient for the patient to commit suicide, should all be considered. Therefore, in general, attention should be given to the **“physiological and psychological concentrations”** of the patient when selecting a suitable location.
6. **Reasoning:** The most important point is: why do you need to inform the patient about his/her conditions? It is most necessary, indeed, to **sort out and evaluate** what kind of **benefits** will this “disclosure of conditions” to the patient himself/herself, and just not to satisfy one’s own curiosity. There are also others concerns for one’s further consideration. For instance, as in the case of an AIDS-infected patient, the concern is not just for the patient, but it is also required to consider

for the general public, as well as on the issue of transmission of this disease within the community. As such, it is required to “disclose the conditions” to the patient himself/herself.

Whether the Relatives Should Adopt the Strategy to Lie When "Disclosing About the Patient's Conditions"?

The taking of such a cautious attitude in dealing with the issue aims to achieve a more positive living condition for the patient, and not to let the patient to suffer unnecessarily. **“To introduce cautious treatment, and to avert unnecessary trauma”**. For the terminally-ill cancer patients, this “disclosure of the patient’s conditions” is a process that one **has to face**. Why is it? Rather than in adopting an attitude of covering, distorting, feigning the facts, such that the patient will **pass away unknowingly with regrets**, it is better to frankly expose the truth to the patient such that the patient can **actively engage oneself with the meaning of life in his/her remaining life-span**, as well as the hope to improve his/her quality of life. This is, indeed, the **true meaning on the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions”**. To command the opportunity and good skills of communication is the proper way for the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions”.

Under the present social and cultural contexts, in which people are afraid to talk about death, this act on the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions” to a patient who is approaching death is, indeed, not easy, and is also an issue that is difficult to accept and to talk about. According to the research statistics in Taiwan, if a seriously-ill patient does not realize his/her own conditions, over 90% of their relatives will adopt “the strategy of lying” when “disclosing about the patient’s conditions”. Conversely, about 80% of the patients themselves do hope to be directly informed about their own conditions. In fact, over 70% of the patients

came to know their actual conditions either through their own situations, or the kind of treatment methods, or the attitudes of their surrounding relatives, friends and care-takers. It is only too true that the patients and their relatives are **mutually covering up the truth, such that the patients have no way to communicate thoroughly with their relatives about their own wishes, thoughts and aftermaths of death.** It is really a great pity!

In fact, there is a great discrepancy between a **truly reasonable** way in dealing with the situation with the **actual** practice in handling the situation, and so the **kind of knowledge** for the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions” becomes **a topic of great priority and of urgent need** for relatives and friends **to learn about.** Why is there such a significant discrepancy in this issue on the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions”? In general, this is simply because **the “sentiments” of people have covered up their “rationality”.** Ever since, there exist two diametrical sides of pros and cons for their reasoning on the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions”.

The Reasons in Support of the “Disclosure of Patients’ Conditions”

- (1) **The right to know:** Patients, rightfully, do have the right to “know” the facts;
- (2) **Response of the body:** To certain extent, everyone knows about his or her own bodily conditions;
- (3) **Coping with medical treatments:** After the patient knows about the conditions, he or she could have better interactive cooperation in medical treatments under good communications;
- (4) **Arrangement of issues:** After the patient knows about the conditions, he or she can make preparations and arrangements on various issues according to his/her own wishes;

- (5) **Respect of human life:** Give the patient an opportunity to depart peacefully, which is an important part of human rights.
- (6) **Bereavement counseling:** Peaceful feelings of the patient at the end of one’s life is an important force for the relatives to walk out of bereavement and grief. Therefore, it is suggested to urge the patient to have a two-way communication with the relatives upon knowing one’s own conditions. This could make “both parties at ease with life and death” and without regrets.

The Reasons in Objecting to the “Disclosure of Patients’ Conditions”

1. **Aggravate the symptoms:** Concerns about too much psychological burdens to the patient would further aggravate the deteriorations of conditions;
2. **Right of decision:** As the relatives are willing to take up the responsibility, and so they have the right of decision on medical treatments;
3. **Why should the patient be informed about the situation:** The relatives deem that the patient is already at a severe condition anyway, so why should the patient be informed to enhance his/her worries?;
4. **Unfavorable conditions:** The moment and location of disclosure are not suitable and proper;
5. **The issue of confidence:** Lack of confidence on the person who would inform the patient; or that the presentation technique of the person is not skillful or mature enough.

Regardless of their contentions, both sides do agree on one particular point. Upon the “disclosure of the patient’s conditions”, no matter how conservative and tactful will be the medical staff, or the informer,

in terms of spoken words and facial expressions, when the patient comes to know of the seriousness of one's illness and is approaching one's death, at that very moment, the patient would fall into a **painful and panic psychological condition**. This is also what their **relatives are most concern about**.

Usually, after a period of one to two weeks, most of the patients could gradually recover from the condition of psychological depression. One of the tasks of physicians, nurses, relatives and friends is to help the patient to come out from such condition of depression as soon as possible. With the support and follow-up after the "disclosure of the patient's conditions", it is extremely important to encourage the patients to properly express their emotions. To give guidance to the patients in expressing their emotional feelings and worries, to continue to provide the follow-up care and to give supporting companionship. **Don't let the patient feel being abandoned** is the most crucial supporting element.

Generally speaking, in taking cancer cases as an example, there are one to two patients out of hundred who could not withstand such a psychological impact. Upon hearing one's conditions, these patients would swiftly develop with instability in emotion, anxiety, and speaking in confused manner. They would not accept the advices of medical staff, or relatives and friends, and would be apathetic towards all happenings around them. Once such a situation occurs, **it could possibly develop into obstructions to further medical treatments**. For these patients, their relatives should share their opinions with the physicians, or relevant psychological counselors, to study the weakness in the patient's character, and to see whether it is suitable to disclose the actual conditions to the patients.

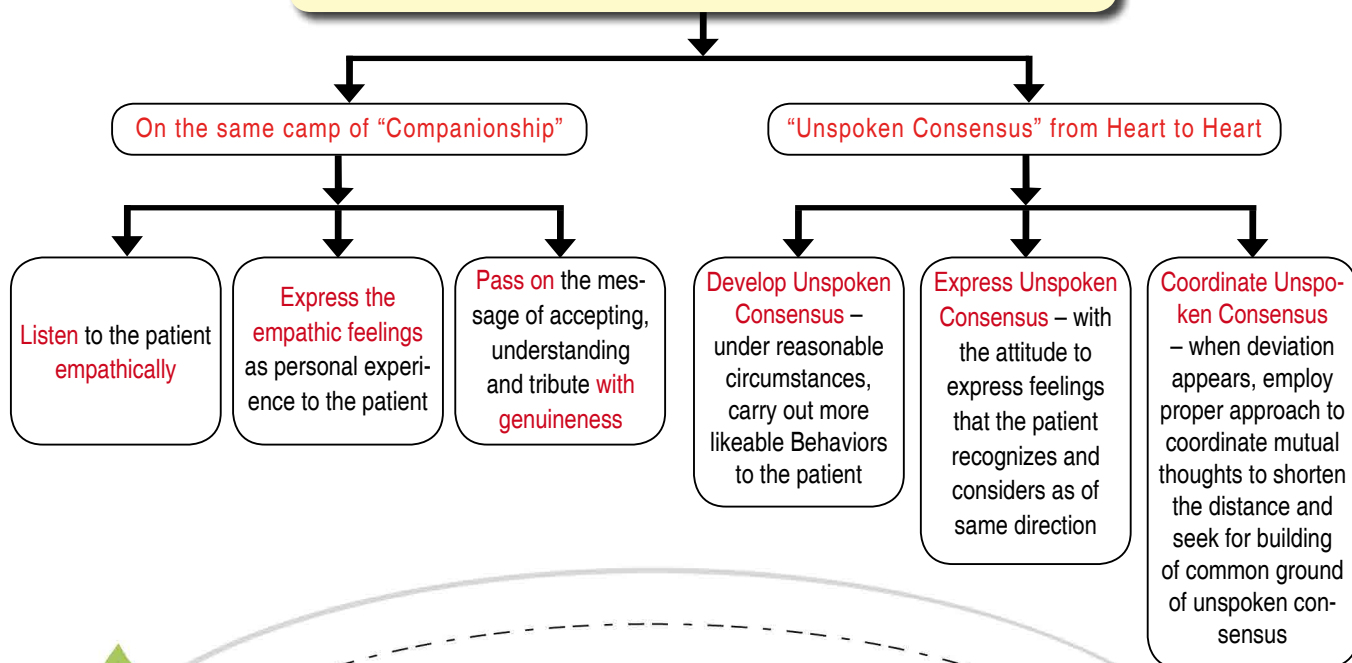
Thus, whether the **relatives should adopt the "strategy of lying"** about their **"disclosure of the patient's conditions"** should cope with the actual situations, in conjunction with the opinions of the professionals, and not merely concerning one's own emotional conflicts. All the aforesaid factors must be included in the scope of our studies. All should be under the pre-requisite of **"introduction of cautious treatment, and avoidance of unnecessary trauma"** for a **rational resolution of the problem**.

Realizing that the "life cycle from birth to death" cannot be avoided, it is extremely important for us to learn how to take proper management and to vent our sorrows, and thus it is **reasonable that this knowledge should be included as some kind of a routine and formal education within our community**. There are people who have suffered from bereavement, when they came across the loss of close relatives in their early stages of primary or secondary schooling without knowing how to handle the situations, and so they suffered a lot psychologically for the rest of their entire lives, and have thus affected their further developments, in terms of learning and career prospects.

In order to allow more people to have the opportunity to be exposed to this kind of education **in a more active manner and with a higher level**, the Dudjom Buddhist Association (International) has cooperated with the Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation to hold a seminar on Life and Death Education titled "The Light of Life". Scholars and experts in the field will be invited from overseas to give talks on the two facets of "near-death experiences" and "bereavement counseling", in order to elevate on the advanced knowledge and to gain a deeper and better understanding of life and death. Our audience should not miss this great opportunity! (Please refer to the advertisement in this Issue of "Lake of Lotus").....(To be Continued)



Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus



Remarks:

1. The newly-released book on **"The Meanings of Near-Death Experiences (1)"** has been published. Its contents include the articles on "The Meanings of the Near-Death Experiences" from Issues 1 to 10 of the "Lake of Lotus".
2. The newly-released book on **"The Meanings of Near-Death Experiences (2) – The Key Points at the Moment of Death and the Essential Revelations of the Tibetan Book of the Dead"** has been published. Its contents include the articles on "The Meaning of the Near-Death Experiences" from Issues 11 to 20 of the "Lake of Lotus".
3. The newly-released book on **"The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences (3) – The Various Ways of Realization and Rescue of Dying Kith and Kin"** has been published. Its contents include the articles on "The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences" from Issues 21 to 30 of the "Lake of Lotus".

The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (40)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Fong Wei

- What are the Methods of "Mental Visualization"?
- Where is the "Foundational Basis for the Visualization of Mind-Training"?

Excerpt of Last Issue

For the general populace, and even up to the great Dharma practitioners, their objectives of Dharma practice should be more or less of the following types:

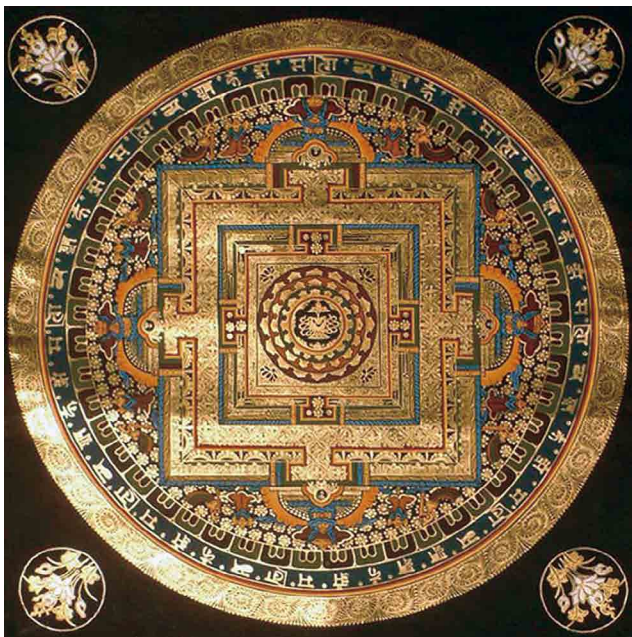
1. **Praying for worldly desires** – For example: to seek for oneself and one's own relatives to have "longevity, recovery from illness, success in one's career, good marriage, wealth increase, averting disasters and relief from sufferings, as well as reunion with those deceased loved ones". Also, there are those who hope to get the "ease of heart and security at the present life", etc.; or for "fame, wealth, respect" in order to study Buddhism; as well as for those who put in efforts to practice the Dharma.
2. **Rebirth in the good realms** – For example: to hope and pray for rebirth in the heavenly realm, or in the human realm, and not to fall into the evil realms (of animals, hungry ghosts and hells).
3. **Liberation from the tractions of the "cycle of karmic existence"** – to hope and pray for the freedom in deciding for oneself as to whether one would be reborn into the six realms (of heavens, asuras, humans, animals, hungry ghosts and hells), or whether to remain in the highest level of the "Realm of Form", such as the "Akanistha" (the "Heaven at the End-of-Form-Realm"), which is beyond the control of the tractions. (Please refer to the explanations on the "Three Realms" in the article on the "Profound Abstruseness of Life and Death: The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences" in Issue 17 of the "Lake of Lotus").
4. **Attainment of Buddhahood** – The recovery of one's "Primordial Nature" and the originally possessed and boundless capabilities, which are free from any bondages and to remain in the "Dharma Realm". (The "Nature of the Mind", also known as the "Buddha Nature", or the "Primordial Nature", refers to the original possession of that most crystal clarity of awareness. Please refer to the articles on "The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences" in Issues 4 & 5 of the "Lake of Lotus").



What are the methods that one can choose in order to achieve these four types of objectives? What will be their effects? What are the **critical key points** that one should pay attention to when judging upon and in choosing those methods of Dharma practice? Regardless of what kinds of religions, the practice methods can be broadly divided into the following types:

1. **Prayers** – Including confessions, repentance of one's conducts, and in the making of aspirations and wishes;
2. **Recitations** – mantras, Buddhas' Holy Names, or sutras;
3. **Visualizations** – themes include the formulae for different types of "meditation", or even the making use of the internal functions of one's body for coordination.

Irrespective of which types of practice methods, it must include the training of one's "mental strength". Otherwise, it would not be able to produce any effects. One of the important points for judging which of the practice methods are the most effective ones is the **degree of influence** that these can have on one's "mental strength"? What percentage will they constitute?



What are the Methods of "Mental Visualization"?

The previous two chapters have clearly described those who are able to "visualize the mind" could achieve complete liberation and swiftly attain "Buddhahood", and this is also the important guideline in the **"Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation"**. Then comes the question as to how to "visualize one's mind"? Whether it will be fine by just "visualizing" oneself as the Buddha or the "deity"?

What are the contents and procedures of one's "Visualization"? In modern terminology, it is the question of how to proceed with the programming of one's "visualization" in order to be most effective? **There are countless and endless methods of "visualization", and so which kinds of them are correct? To which levels of "visualization" do they belong? What kind of situations are they specifically for? How are their effectiveness being demonstrated? Are there any opposing effects, or side effects?** A series of such questions are the "important points for consideration" in choosing one's method of "mental visualization".

In the **"Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation"**, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had enlightened us on the due process and conditions of "Mental Visualization". Hence, this Sutra can be said to be **a pivotal point and convergence of all kinds of "mental visualization" methods**, and is also the **foundational base** for all the Dharma practices which can help all sentient beings to **swiftly attain "Buddhahood"**.

Volume One on the Requit of Gratitude Section No.2 [0296b26] of the **"Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation"** mentions the following passage (**in modern terminologies**): "For those virtuous men and women with good minds, if upon hearing by the ears on the virtuous and wonderful

Dharma practices of this Sutra, they could in an instant **concentrate their thoughts and minds to follow the guidelines and teachings on their Dharma practices of “mental visualization”, slowly repeating those trainings and practices for many times, such that their thoughts and minds are nurtured and trained to become the superior kind of enlightened nature of the mind**, it would not be long for them to be able to sit on the precious “Diamond Throne” (“**Vajrasana**” in Sanskrit) under the “Bodhi Tree” to attain the “Unsurpassed, Well-Balanced and Equally-Abiding, Complete and Perfect Enlightenment” (“**Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi**” in Sanskrit) of “Buddhahood”.

Then what actually are the grading/levels, procedures and conditions for these methods of “mental visualization” in Dharma practices? Can one jump some of the steps in these practices? Before further explanations are given, let us first have a look at the “**Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**” to see how the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had generally classified the “mental visualization” methods, **from shallow to deep, and from the foundational basis to progressive elevations** :

1. Mental Visualization on the Requit of Gratitude
2. Mental Visualization on the Repulsion of Desires
3. Averting the Delusive Mind
4. Visualization of Entry into the Holy Wisdom
5. Visualization Method of the Mind Ground
6. Mental Visualization on the Bodhicitta
7. Visualization on the Three Great Secret Dharmas



Where is the "Foundational Basis for the Visualization of Mind-Training"?

In the “**Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**”, when the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni disclosed to all the Bodhisattvas and heavenly beings in the different Heavenly Realms, as well as to all the disciples in the Realm of Human Existence, on the **most supreme Dharma practices: the key to one's mind-training**, it was never like what today's “Vajrayana” practitioners do by immediately giving large numbers of “empowerments” at the beginning of one's Buddhist learning. Their so-called Dharma practices are only on the “visualization” of oneself as different forms of “deity”, in countless numbers with wide varieties, all filled with greed and glaring arrogance. Most of those so-called “gurus” only know of the rattling, drumming, in the



performances of “empowerment” rituals and other ceremonies, yet with **extremely limited explanations on the Buddhist teachings**. Even if there are such explanations, they will all focus on the **boasting of** how powerful this “deity” is, and how meritorious that “empowerment” is, etc.

When the “Vajrayana” training and practices were propagated by the real Lord Buddha, with in-depth explanations on the visualization of mind-training, they were fundamentally different, and totally opposite, to those kinds of Dharma propagation formats that are used by these so-called “gurus”. Any Dharma practitioners with wisdom, if they would patiently read this **“Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”**, would be able to distinguish immediately between those who are the “Genuine Gurus” and those who are the “lion worms” in corrupting the Buddhist teachings.

When the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni gave sermons to the Bodhisattvas and disciples of different levels and senses faculties, He would not do it for the sake of showing off his profound knowledge and understanding of the Buddhist teachings, but rather it was for the sake of making all sentient beings to understand that **all holy Dharma practices should require foundational bases and conditions**. Therefore, in order to become liberated from the control of the “karmic forces” in the “cycle of karmic existence within the Six Realms”, one must first understand the reasons therein, what are

the “cardinal cause” and “secondary cause” thus involved? What conditions one should have? What kind of environments one should make for one’s Dharma practice? Only with this knowledge would one be able to understand why one should use such kind of Dharma practice method, and would also enable one to have effectiveness more easily in one’s Dharma practices.

Therefore, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni instructed that as the first step for one’s mind-training, one should start with the “Mental Visualization on the **Requital of Gratitude**” in order to **repay the four kinds of gratitude** to all sentient beings and Bodhisattvas in the worldly and other-worldly realms. He also enlightened us that **this kind of Dharma practice is where the “foundational basis for the visualization of one’s mind-training” lies**. But actually where are the reasons and evidences? How useful is it for one’s Dharma practice? Would it be so indirect as to slow down the speed and time for one’s liberation from the “cycle of karmic existence within the Six Realms”? The five hundred elders that were present at that time in hearing the Lord Buddha’s preaching had almost rallied together to protest. They raised different views to the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni by saying that: “It is too difficult!”. The original text reads as follow: –

Volume Two on the Requital of Gratitude Section No.2 [0300b20] of the **“Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”** says that: “At that time, the five hundred elders spoke to the Lord Buddha, “My Lord, **these four kinds of Gratitude are, indeed, too difficult to be repaid**”.

What the “Mental Visualization on the **Requital of Gratitude**” refers to is that one’s Dharma practices should be done with the mentality to repay gratitude. These are to be implemented through one’s deeds in our daily life, such that one’s heart is filled up with the thoughts and minds on the requital of gratitude. When “every thought and notion” is from one’s heart to repay gratitude, and when one is



100% full of such kind of thinking, then one is able to swiftly attain “Buddhahood”. This is known as the “Mental Visualization” method on the **“Mind Ground Visualization on the Requit of the Four Kinds of Gratitude”**.

This kind of Dharma practice belongs to the **basic foundation of Dharma practices**. Irrespective of the “Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana” practices, and even for any levels within the Vajrayana Dharma practices, one still requires to practise this “Mental Visualization” Dharma up to a certain degree, before one can **achieve double or more of success in one's other Dharma practices**. Hence, this “Mind Ground Visualization on the Requit of the Four Kinds of Gratitude” can either be regarded as a **principal Dharma practice**, or it can also be taken as a **fundamental auxiliary Dharma practice on “mental visualizations”**. Furthermore, this kind of Dharma practice on “Mental Visualization” can be **further divided into many tiers**, as according to the abilities of the sentient beings in their choices of Dharma practices at different levels. (Please refer to the Volume One on the Requit of Gratitude Section No.2, from [0297a07] to [0300c22] of the **“Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”**).

So, what are the four kinds of Gratitude? What degrees of difficulty are they? Why does one have to practise them? And what are the consequences for not practising them?

The four kinds of Gratitude in the worldly and other-worldly realms are:

1. **Filial Gratitude to Parents**
2. **Gratitude to all Sentient Beings**
3. **Gratitude to the King/the Head of State**
4. **Gratitude to the Three Jewels** - the Gratitude to the Buddha Jewel, the Gratitude to the Dharma Jewel, the Gratitude to the Sangha Jewel.

At a rough glance, it does not appear to be too difficult. So, what are the actual difficult parts of them? The difficulties lie in the definition on the requital of gratitude to one's parents, as expounded by the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni in the text of the Sutra.

Volume Two on the Requit of Gratitude Section No.2 [0297a07] of the **“Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”** mentions the following passage (in modern terminologies): “For those virtuous men and women with good minds, even though one may use one kalpa's time (a billion of trillions of years) in making offerings to one's parents by the cutting of one's own flesh in the morning, afternoon and evening respectively everyday, this is still not enough for one to repay the great kindness and gratitude that owed to their parents for just one single day. **Do you think this is difficult?** Do you think people nowadays can do this when they are so much care and concern about independent thinking and individual autonomy? How about if your parents are bad guys in this present lifetime, and if they want you to do some unlawful things, do you have to obey them? While the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni did not give any explanations to this kind of situation in the text of the Sutra, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni expounded with examples on the consequences of being un-filial to one's parents as follows:

Volume Two on Requit of Gratitude Section No.2 [0297a07] of the **“Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”** mentions the following passage (in modern terminologies): “If **one's parents feel resentment** because of (their children's) failure in their filial piety, and so long as a mother speaks from her mouth of any bad words, curses or blames, her sons or daughters will become downfall and be reborn in either the Hell, Hungry Ghosts or Animal realms. **Do you find this horrible?** As told by the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni, the impacts so generated by

such resentful thoughts (of the parents) are much faster than the strong gusts of winds, so much so that even all the Buddhas, heavenly beings and the gods of the five supernatural powers will not be able to save them. Is this too exaggerated? Is this really true? Where are the reasons and evidences?

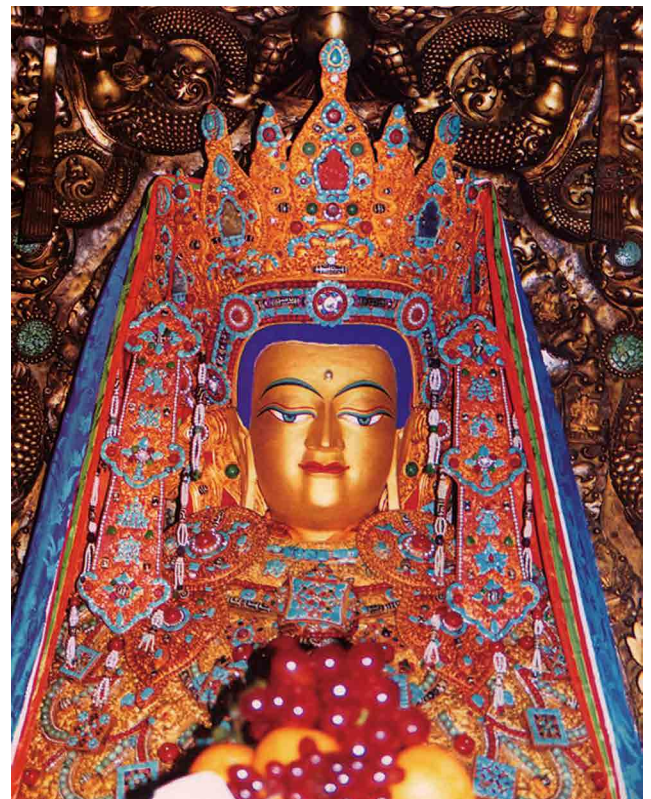
For all “karmic retributions”, their main structures and impacts are the effects of some “mental forces” formed by the intersections of the mental strengths of different sentient beings. As parents, nine out of ten will love and cherish their children. Anything that can make parents to change their loving thoughts for their children to become the thoughts of bad words, curses and blames, must surely be some very unfilial things that have been done by their children. When this extreme love changes to hatred, it must also be extreme enough to form a very strong impact of “mental force”. The “Mental Force” is already faster than the speed of light, and so it is normal and not surprising that its impacts are much faster than the strong gust of wind. The Lord Buddha Shakyamuni did not exaggerate this at all.

In addition, most sentient beings are well aware of the profound greatness of gratitude due to their parents, and has thus formed a “consensually” strong “net of mental forces”. When this counter-acting reaction is combined with the parents’ resentful thoughts, it will form an energy form of retributions that are beyond the salvation of all the Buddhas, heavenly beings and gods of the five supernatural powers. When this energy form of retributions appears, even the parents themselves, from whom the vicious thoughts emanate, may not be able to resolve and eradicate them immediately through their forgiveness (of their children). This is because the retributions come too quickly and have infiltrated a “consensual” type of strong “mental force” which will take time to be dismantled and resolved. This is, indeed, the “Law of the Causes and Effects” which belongs to one of the operational rules in Nature, and not a superstition. There is no need for the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni to deceive anybody.

In the text of this Sutra, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had explained in details what are the gratitude and kindness due to one’s parents. In other words, those parents who have no gratitude and kindness, including those vicious parents who abuse their children, rape them, or betray them, they are not included in the list of “indebted parents”.

Any indebted gratitude must be repaid, lest the impacts of the karmic force so generated will impede one’s Dharma practices. On the contrary, if one requites the gratitude, it will arouse a strong “consensual type of mental strength” which is conducive to one’s success in the Dharma practice. This is the reason why, in the text of the Sutra, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had appealed to all sentient beings to practise this “Mental Visualization on the Requit of Gratitude”.

Nowadays, people care about their independent thinking and individual autonomy, and thus they will consider that “parental kindness” (to their children) is obligatory and needs no requital of gratitude, thus inducing their selfish and self-beneficial kind of indulging mentality. Actually, there is no such a



law as being “obligatory” in the Three Realms, but only the “Law of Causes and Effects”. Any sentient beings who have received and enjoyed any forms of “gratitude and kindness” should, first of all, know about “thanksgiving”, and then further try to make one’s “requital”. It is only that the methods of requital are different, as there are no specified rules or formats for them.

Therefore, the requital of “parents’ gratitude” does not mean that one has to obey the parents, even though the latter ask you to break the law. It is rather a matter of treating them without any selfish and self-beneficial kind of indulging mentality. It is because in the end, a selfish and self-beneficial kind of indulging mindset will only cause oneself to face, and suffer from, its own retributions, making it difficult to attain any achievements in one’s own Dharma practice. The right path would be for one to adopt a sincere attitude to make one’s parents realize and accept one’s way of requital of gratitude owed to them, so that it will not cause any resentment or hatred among each another.

Modern people would likely consider “filial piety” as outdated, and has mistakenly thought that “filial piety” is tantamount to a kind of “absolute obedience”. They take “filial piety” as a kind of superior-subordinate relationship, embracing “principal and secondary, high and low” levels in the hierarchy of identity and seniority, that would inhibit the development of one’s creativity and independent thinking. In fact, genuine “filial piety” is a kind of Dharma practice on one’s “nature of the mind” in terms of “thanksgiving and requital”, and is an equal reciprocating relationship that is conducive to the elevation of one’s wisdom, and is not a kind of blind “absolute obedience”. This is exactly the reason why, in the “Vajrayana” training and practices, the practitioners can swiftly attain “Buddhahood” by “realizing the Guru as the Buddha”.

All sentient beings do possess the “Buddha Nature”, and so the “Gurus” can guide and lead their disciples to realize and manifest their own “Buddha Nature”. Yet, the disciples must have to believe in their Gurus’ possession of such an ability in order



that they can follow the guidelines and instructions for training and practices. Therefore, it is only when “realizing the Guru as the Buddha” is taken as an equivalent to “seeing oneself as the Buddha”, that one would be able to visualize oneself as the “deity” (a way to address the Buddhas in “Vajrayana” practices), and so this is a kind of Dharma practice on the “Nature of the Mind” on an equal footing. For the same reason, all disciples of the “Vajrayana” practices are required to maintain a “thanksgiving and requital” kind of “nature of the mind” towards their “Gurus” as a foundational basis for their visualization of “mind-training”.

The Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had instructed that the foundational basis for one’s “mind training” must be built upon one’s “Requital of Gratitude”, so as to enable the Dharma practitioners to swiftly attain “Buddhahood”. The reasons being that:

1. Equal treatment – the two-way interchange of giving gratitude towards one another will arouse multiplying effects on the virtuous “mental forces”, which would then immediately enter into an orbit of the “virtuous cycle”, and will

be helpful for one's Dharma practice. It also plays an important role in holding a balance in one's Dharma practice on the "nature of the mind", thus enabling the practitioners not to lose one's balance easily, nor losing one's mental concentration, nor going towards a dead end, and not getting obsessed and possessed by the evil elements, etc. This is, indeed, an indispensable part of one's "mind training". If you are unable to treat those who have offered gratitude to you in an equal manner, how would you be able to treat others equally? How could one be able to practise and achieve one's superior Nature of the Mind on the "equal-abiding" during "meditation"?

2. **Reduction of obstacles and barriers** – Owing a debt (of gratitude) is a kind of negative energy that will arouse the multiplications of the vicious "mental forces", which will in turn lead to one's entry into the orbit of the "vicious cycle", causing obstacles and barriers to arise. In order to ensure that one's Dharma practices will be smooth without obstacles, one needs to reduce one's karmic debts by repaying the gratitude and kindness of others, and in so doing, it will be conducive to one's Dharma practices.

3. **Inducement of One's "Bodhi"** – The "Bodhi" represents one's "awareness, enlightenment, the Buddha Nature". One of its characteristics is Mercifulness and Compassion. When a Dharma practitioner treats everybody and everything with a "grateful heart", it will make one's "mind" to readily focus on "joy and gratitude", such that one's "Nature of Mind" will become soft and wide enough to carry and accommodate everything. It will also induce all the best things "internally", including wisdom and "awareness, enlightenment, the Buddha Nature", which are extremely important to one's Dharma practices, especially on one's "mind-training".

Yet the methods for the requital of gratitude, as cited in the text of the Sutra, are of very high degree of difficulty! Is it really necessary for one to cut one's own flesh in order to repay for the kindness of others? Will it form a kind of "attached mind" that will affect one's Dharma practice on "Emptiness"? How does one practise this "Mental Visualization on the Requit of Gratitude"? The five hundred elders had all said that "It is very difficult (to practise)!", but then the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had said that this is a must. So, are there any other solutions? What about the other six methods on one's "Mind-Training"?.....
.....(To be Continued)

Notes:

1. The newly released book on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (1)" has already been published. The content includes the articles on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" from Issues No. 1 to 10 of the "Lake of Lotus".
2. The newly released book on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (2) - Seven Methods of Strengthening One's Mind to Counteract Adversities" has already been published. The content includes the articles on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" from Issues No. 11 to 20 of the "Lake of Lotus".
3. The newly released book on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (3) - One of the Pivotal Points in Practising the Holy Dharma: The Mysteries and Usage of the Mantras and Sounds" has already been published. The content includes the articles on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" from Issues No. 21 to 30 of the "Lake of Lotus".





The Essence of Teachings:

Everything Comes from the Mind (12)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Various Disciples

Excerpt of Last Chapter

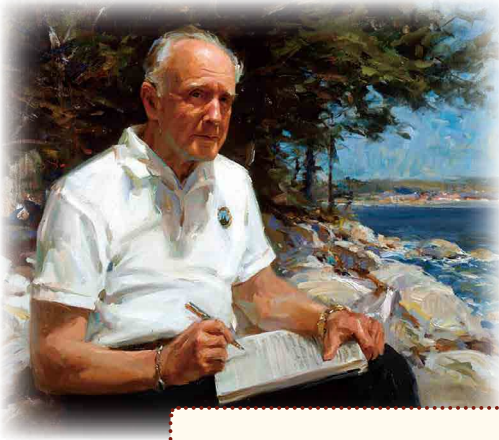
The “**Avatamsaka Sutra**” mentions that “everything comes from the mind”. So, in order to explain that “**everything comes from the mind**”, we have to talk about the importance of “**mental strength**”. Since the “cycle of karmic existence” composes of strong “tractional forces”, which would subject all of us to its bondages, to be drawn into, and under the control of, the tractional forces of the “**Law of Cause and Effect**”. So, the kind of force we called “**mental strength**” is the only kind of force that can counteract the “tractional forces of the cycle of karmic existence”, and can thus help us to be released and be “liberated from reincarnations”.

Since this kind of force is coming from the function of one’s own “**mind**”, and that is why it is called the “**mental strength**”, and is also a sign of “**everything comes from the mind**”. Furthermore, the “tractional forces of the cycle of karmic existence” are, in fact, originated from the combinations and permutations of countless “**mental strengths**”, thus constructing a grand design and blueprint of “**everything comes from the mind**”, and also form the “**Law of Cause and Effect**”.

For what scientists to be recognized as the “Law of Cause and Effect”, the so-called “**Cause**” is one’s “**Observation**”. The “energies” coming from one’s “sight” and “mental strength” will bring about changes in the **observed** electron. This is a mutual “interactions of tractional forces”, and this is the “Cause”.

Then, what is the “**Effect**”? The “**thing**” that is being observed by you will **manifest itself in a certain shape**; or else the “thing” that is being observed by you, due to the energy that was added by one’s “mental strength”, will change its original “speed”, “form”, and “direction”, and all these are the “Effects”. Thus, this is recognized by the scientists as the “**Law of Cause and Effect**”. (Please refer to the article on “**Everything Comes From the Mind**” in Issue 36 of the “**Lake of Lotus**”.)





“Only when something is put under observation, it will then exist. If there is no observation, the matter will not exist”.

(“Nothing exists until it is observed.”

by John A. Wheeler)

The Power of the "Mind" Upon the Mutual Causation of Matter and "Karma"

The “minds” of sentient beings will be attached to “all living things”, including the “materialistic” or “non-materialistic” bodies. Despite the attachments, the “minds” will continue to be the “main determinant” in performing various “virtuous or evil” behaviors. The “minds”, once being attached to whatever places, will make use of the material bodies to act out different behaviors. If we trace the original source for the bodies that are composed of materials, we will find out that they are mainly composed of the “minds” of those sentient being.

In the past, we have already mentioned that “everything comes from Emptiness”, and so all materials also come from “Emptiness”. Where do they originally come from? What are the “causes and conditions” that are responsible for their coming

about? It is this “mind” which is the “main cause”, and when it combines with those “conditions” of the time, all things will then come about. For example, the “mind” will realize different material elements, and depending upon those material elements that are existing under the circumstances of the time, it will combine with the material elements to form different forms of material bodies.

All these are linked together, one after the other. With the materialistic structure of the physical body, one can make use of this body to perform different “virtuous or evil” behaviors. These “behaviors” will then have “good or bad” influences upon the “minds” of other sentient beings, resulting in the interweaving of the functions of those “tractional forces”.

Take for instance, if you were stimulated by “greed, hatred and ignorance”, and so you might end up by killing somebody. The “mind” of the person who was being killed by you will then give rise to a “mindset” of extreme hatred towards you. Such kind of a “mindset” will push that person to use various means in finding you in order to take his revenge. This is, indeed, a very strong function of the “tractional force”. As what you have done will have certain influences upon other sentient beings, and will thus produce “good or bad” influences in forming the interweaving of the functions of those “tractional forces”. The Buddhist teachings called this function of the “tractional force” as “karma”.....
(To Be Continued)



Organized by the **Dudjom Buddhist Association International Limited**



Co-organized by the **Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited**



A project funded by
Love Ideas ♥ HK

of The **Li Ka Shing Foundation**

Life and Death Education Series: Seminar on “The Light of Life”

**Due to Limited Seats Available,
Reserve Your Seats A.S.A.P.
Don't Miss This Great Opportunity!**

Since 2000, the **Dudjom Buddhist Association (International)** has endeavored to advocate on the importance of “life and death education”. We have invited internationally-renowned scholars and experts to deliver lectures; and in certain cases, we have cooperated with relevant academic institutions. Lecture and seminar series, training programs on “life and death education”, as well as information of multi-media publications, including periodical journals, audio-visual materials and so on, are extremely lacking in the contemporary society of Hong Kong.

Due to the general lack of knowledge on “life and death education”, this will bring fears, psychological damages and/or even tragedies to both the deceased persons and their families before death. At the same time, **modern people are incapable of constructing a holistic perspective towards life, world-view, as well as spiritual quality. As a result, many family and social tragedies occurred in our society.**

The Dudjom Buddhist Association (International) appreciates the great fortune of having the encouragement

and full support from both friends and the general populace. Through an open platform of fair competition, we have successfully obtained the generous sponsorship on 6th August, 2011 in the second round of the charity activity of “**Love Ideas, Love HK**”, sponsored by the “**Li Ka Shing Foundation**”. This becomes the main financial source for our continued advocacy in this year on “life and death education” in Hong Kong.

We are, indeed, most honored to be able to participate in this **profoundly meaningful** charity activity of “**Love Ideas, Love HK**”, sponsored by the “**Li Ka Shing Foundation**”, through a fair, equitable and open platform of fair competition by general voting of “one person one vote” in **selecting the different meaningful program items**, so that our whole community will be benefited from them. The program item that the Dudjom Buddhist Association (International) has been given the sponsorship is entitled simply as “**Life and Death Education**”, which belongs to the category of “education”.

For the aspect of “life education”, there are various courses that pertain to those in relations to the value-added self-hood and that of the elevation on psychological quality. Not only would these enhance one’s working capability, but more importantly, these would also enhance the counsel, relief and support of one’s spiritual and emotional aspects. As such, one can construct a stable, active and positive view towards life, with positive value orientations. As for the aspect of “death education”, special weight has been given to **the true understanding on the real situations and true meanings of death, as well as the mastery of the correct ways to deal with death issues**, from which one can then become more zealous towards life and its living, through one’s further upgrading to have a much deeper and true cognition in the meaning of life. As a result, one can truly be living a much happier, more splendid and joyful living.

In this regard, the Duddjom Buddhist Association (International) will be holding a seminar on “life and death education” at the “Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre”, at Wan Chai, Hong Kong on 5th August, 2012 (Sunday) with the following details:

Life & Death Education Series: Seminar on “The Light of Life”

Date: 5th August, 2012 (Sunday)

Time: 2:00 to 5:00 P.M.

Venue: Meeting Room S221, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai, Hong Kong (Expo Drive Entrance).

Keynote Speakers & Sub-Topics:

(1) Ms Evelyn Elsaesser-Valarino – Lessons From the Light: What NDEs Teach About Life and Death;

(2) Professor Janice M. Holden – The Role of Near-Death Experiences, Deathbed Visions, and After-Death Communication in Grief and Grief Counseling.

Fees: HK\$50; An additional fee of HK\$30 for those requiring professional simultaneous interpretation services with headphones (**services available for English to be translated into Cantonese**)

Short Introduction of Keynote Speakers:

(1) Ms Evelyn Elsaesser-Valarino



Ms. Evelyn Elsaesser-Valarino

For over thirty years, Ms. Elsaesser-Valarino has devoted much of her time to research on Near-Death Experiences (NDEs) and its after-effects, and has authored several books and articles on the topic. She frequently gives lectures in Switzerland, other European countries, and the USA, attending international

conferences and regularly contributes to their collective publications and congress proceedings. She is the European coordinator of IANDS (International Association for Near-Death Studies), as well as a special advisor for international relations of the Netzwerk Nahtoderfahrung IANDS Germany,

She is also an honorary member of SEDEL (Sociedad Española para la Difusión de la Espiritualidad, that is, the Spanish Society for the Diffusion of Spirituality). She further serves as a coordinator of the Scientific and Medical Network SMN of Switzerland for many years, and is a member of the scientific committee and honorary member of INREES (Institut de Recherche sur les Expériences Extraordinaires, that is, the Research Institute for Extraordinary Experiences) in Paris.

Furthermore, her book entitled “On the Other Side of Life: Exploring the Phenomenon on the Near-Death Experience” (柳暗花明又一生, published in six languages); and another co-authored book with professor emeritus Kenneth Ring entitled “Lessons From the Light: What We Can Learn From the Near-Death Experience” (穿透生死迷思, published in ten languages) have been published by the Chinese publisher Yuan-Liou in Taipei, Taiwan.

Synopsis of Topic:

Three major aspects of the Near-Death Experience (NDE) will be presented in this talk, namely:

- (i) The **Life review** – NDErs view in three dimensions, in full color, sound, and scent and out of time, every single event of their lives. They come to understand how their actions, words, and even thoughts, have affected the persons involved in the scene they review. They gain a holistic understanding of the impact of their deeds, the ones they are proud of as well as the more negative ones, by reliving the event not only from their own perspective but also from the one of the persons involved. The life review is highly transformative and pedagogic because it confronts us with our intrinsic responsibility towards our fellow humans and entails an empathic identification with all the persons we come across during our lifetime.
- (ii) The **After-effects** of NDEs – NDEs provoke a massive and fundamental questioning of values and objectives and the way to live one's life. The major After-effects of NDEs concern the conception of life and death and self-conception, as well as social and material issues. These personality changes have heavy implications in the lives of NDErs which will be presented and analyzed.
- (iii) The **"Lessons from the Light"** – NDEs trigger a profound change in attitude and belief systems, mainly due to an encounter with a "Being of Light" which is the core experience of this phenomenon. These "Lessons from the Light" are accessible not only to NDErs but to all individuals who learn about NDEs and deepen their understanding of this transpersonal experience.

(2) Prof. Janice M. Holden



Prof. Janice M. Holden

Prof. Janice M. Holden, Ed.D., is professor of counseling, and Chair of the Department of Counseling and Higher Education at the University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, USA. Her primary specialization is the transpersonal perspective in counseling, with implications on experiences that transcend the usual limits of space and

time, and their associated developmental potential. In particular, she has researched near-death experiences (NDEs), with over 30 journal articles, book chapters and numerous presentations.

Dr. Holden served six years on the Board of Directors of the International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS) since 2000, and was their past President for three years. Among other major works, she authored *the Near-Death Experiences: Index to the Periodical Literature through 2005*, *the Near-Death Experiences, Part 1: Recognizing a Pleasurable Near-Death Experience*, and lead-edited *The Handbook of Near-Death Experience: Thirty Years of Investigation* (2009, Praeger), in which leading researchers in the field of near-death studies provided comprehensive, critical reviews of all NDE-related research through 2005; and serves currently as the editor of *the Journal of Near-Death Studies*. Dr. Holden is a Texas Licensed Professional Counselor-Supervisor, Texas Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, and National Certified Counselor in the United States of America.

Synopsis of Topic:

Research on three transpersonal experiences surrounding death – **near-death experiences, deathbed visions, and after-death communication** – indicates that they are virtually always a source of comfort, reassurance, and hope to the bereaved. In this talk, Dr. Holden will define and provide examples of each type of experience, will present research results that indicate the overwhelmingly beneficial effects of these experiences for the bereaved, and will explain how counselors and other health professionals can interact with the bereaved about these experiences in ways that best promote the progression of the grieving process and the general well-being of the bereaved.

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You can also download the Application Form from our website at <http://www.dudjomba.org.hk>, or call us to fax you the Application Form. After you have filled in the form, please send it back to us, together with the necessary amount, by either fax or mail. Thank you very much!

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Tel: (852) 2558 3680

URL : <http://www.dudjomba.org.hk>

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EPILOGUE

The Buddhist teachings are meticulous and profound, while its methods of practice are practical and achievable. Nevertheless, the teachings are as abstruse and comprehensive as an ocean such that it is not an easy task for one to even just trying to grasp its contents in a concise and accurate manner. Therefore, our Association aims to help reveal the abstruse meanings of the Buddhist teachings in such a way that it can be easily understood by the general public through the distribution of CDs, VCDs and DVDs, either free of charge or with a cost.

Though we have limited resources and capabilities, we still humbly wish, with a sincerity of heart, to publish this bimonthly journal of the "Lake of Lotus", in order that the essence of the Buddhist teachings can be spread and popularized. We earnestly hope that the readers will help with your meritorious deeds by supporting this publication of the "Lake of Lotus", through subscriptions and donations, as well as in our various projects in the preaching of Buddhism, so as to sow the seed of meritorious cause in benefiting all our motherly sentient beings.

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After which, please send the deposit slip and the filled-in form to our address, or fax them to (852) 31571144. Phone for enquiry: (852) 25583680. Or Email to info@dudjomba.org.hk. For remittance of donations through banks, use the Swift Code : "HSBCHKHHHKH" Bank Address : The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Headquarter, Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong. A/C Name: Dudjom Buddhist Association International Limited.

(2) Taiwan

Please remit the amounts to the "Taipei Fubon Bank" (Bank Code No. 012) in the name of "Law Mei Ling" with Account No. 704210605166. Photocopies of remittance slips, together with the "Form for Donations, Subscriptions & Mail Orders" can either be mailed directly to "12F - 4, No.171, Nan Jing East Road, Sec.4, Taipei, Taiwan." of the Dudjom Buddhist Association, or be faxed to (02) 6601-4880. If there are any enquiries, please send your emails to info@dudjomba.org.hk Tel : 0989273163. For calculation purpose, HK\$1 is equivalent to NT\$4.

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