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How to Express
"Unspoken Consensus" to Patients
so to Eliminate Regrets
on Both Parties
What are the Key Points
on the Confession and
Repentance of Wrongdoings?
Why "Visualization" is
a Method of Dharma Practice that
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"Visualize the Mind" Could Achieve
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The Profound Abstruseness of
Life and Death

The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences (38)

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



- **How to Express “Unspoken Consensus” to Patients so to Eliminate Regrets on Both Parties**
- **What are the Key Points on the Confession and Repentance of Wrongdoings?**

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 external
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

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 Approaching 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,
- 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.

How to Express "Unspoken Consensus" to Patients so to Eliminate Regrets on Both Parties

- (2) The **heart-to-heart "unspoken consensus"** can be classified into: -

- b) **Express Unspoken Consensus** - with the attitude of more expressing feelings concurring with the patients.

At the critical moment of death and thus with permanent separation, it is also the most needed moment for both the patient and/or the families and friends to express their "unspoken consensus" in a mutual way. During the process of caring, families and friends need proper expression of "unspoken consensus". For instance, one should more express feelings on the same stance as that of the patient. During the final moment of life, expression of "unspoken consensus" is even more badly needed. **This sort of relentless expression of feelings, regardless of time intervals, resembles injecting vital booster shots one after another.** They soothe the **constantly** anxious and depressed sentiments of the patient at their needed moments.

“Expression” could be said to be a state of arts, especially in “expressing unspoken consensus” to those who are facing death. It is a kind of “intellectual knowledge” to properly master when and how to express “unspoken consensus”, as well as its relevant range and depth. Improper expression would easily lead to regrets or tragedies. The following case could be taken as a typical example.

Case 44

A mother and her daughter had been living in a way of “mutually dependent” upon each other for thirteen years. They had developed strong affections between them with the “unspoken consensus of mutual caring for each other”. One day, the mother was diagnosed of cancer of terminal stage. The daughter took care of her mother strenuously in all respects, which was in nature, an “unspoken consensus” of “linking heart-to-heart”. However, all of these were completely shattered by the frank “expression” of the mother.

The mother unveiled to her daughter a secret which had been kept deep in her mind for thirteen years because she felt that they were not truly “linked heart-to-heart”. Greater the care tendered by the daughter, the more “guilty” she has felt. It made her felt resistant to this sort of “unspoken consensus”, so much so that even she had procrastinated in going for treatment. She tended to achieve the utmost and sincere “unspoken consensus”, and so she has “expressed her confession and repentance of her wrongdoings” to her daughter, and has begged for her forgiveness and acceptance.

Thirteen years ago, she was in love with a married man. They were so feverishly in love with each other that, in order to maintain this extra-marital affair, the man deceived her relentlessly that he would break up the current marriage in order to marry her at the right time. Consequentially, the man dragged on for several years. During the period, the man had a daughter born. The situation dragged on but the man did not marry her eventually. Until the man’s daughter was over two years old, the man still kept lying and

giving excuses to her in order to maintain their extra-marital affair. The man indicated that he didn’t want to divorce his wife at that moment because he loved his daughter too much, and he begged her to keep on waiting for him. His unfolding made her became hysterical as she was in a rapid process of aging. Without considering the consequence, she made a crafty plot.

She trailed behind the man’s wife and decoyed to steal her daughter, while she was not attentive to the child. She did it in the hope that the man would have no further concern after the daughter was lost, and would proceed to divorce his wife and marry her instead. As expected, the man was deceived and considered that it was his wife’s fault of being absent-minded in caring for their daughter. As a result, he had a fierce quarrel with his wife. He told his wife that he had decided to divorce her and marry another woman.

The wife missed her beloved daughter so much. She went alone in the streets to look for her daughter. Unfortunately, she was so distracted and not being mindful of the traffic, and so she was knocked down and killed by a car accident. As such, this woman also felt very guilty about it, and decided to raise the daughter all by herself, and left the man as a gesture to show her apology to his wife. She sincerely hoped that what she did could compensate for the damage that was done to the wife, and would also be a kind of punishment to the man for his harm to herself.

She led a frugal life and worked very hard, and she took good care of the child meticulously to very details. As such, a kind of mutually-dependent “unspoken consensus” of “heart-to-heart” linkage was developed. Time did fly and in an instant, the girl was almost sixteen years of age. Nevertheless, the kind of feeling regret had never been ceased for even a moment to this woman. It is uncertain as to whether she felt so regretful that she had suffered too severe the torments; or whether it was the man’s dead wife who went after her for revenge, that she had finally gotten the terminal cancer.



On the one hand, she worried that there was nobody to take care of the daughter after she passed away; on the other hand, she had concerns that she “had no guts in facing the man’s wife” who had passed away a long time ago. Moreover, she became more remorseful when her daughter endeavored so strenuously to take care of her and became so exhausted. The daughter looked so sad and was so afraid of losing her. After thoughtful consideration, she decided to disregard the dignity and show the real truth to the daughter. She told the whole story of what had happened in details to the daughter, and also gave her the father’s photos and address. She hoped that the father could be reunited once again with the daughter and can show the affection of parenthood in caring for her.

She piteously implored for the daughter’s forgiveness. However, her daughter was really unable to take such a tremendous impact upon her, and so she snarled at the woman with rage and anger. The girl exclaimed to her decisively by saying: “Never”, and just left her behind in searching for her father alone. The woman couldn’t help becoming so desperate, due to her loss of all hopes, and so the idea of committing suicide gradually developed in her. She thought that her daughter might forgive her only if she had committed suicide.

In the beginning, by the grace of nurturing the daughter for thirteen years with the kind of “unspoken consensus” of “heart-to-heart” linkage, she thought that so long if she could frankly expose all the facts to the daughter, this kind of animosity could be resolved. However, the daughter thought that she was the murderer of her biological mother. Thus, this concealment of thirteen years made all the trust between them just went down the drain. **A life without any hopes is so traumatized and unbearable to a person, thus making her non-recoverable.** The cancer cells rapidly spread all over her body and her will for survival totally collapsed. The only thing on her mind was to die in order to remedy for her sin and wrongdoings.

What are the Key Points on the Confession and Repentance of Wrongdoings?

So, whether her frank “expression” was to be considered right or wrong? For the sick patient, **if attachments could be let go**, and to confess and repent her wrongdoings of the past in order to stop any further wounds and bigger traumas to happen in the future, even at the time of her last breath, **this kind of behaviour is certainly right and correct!**

For one thing, the **bad “karmic forces” could be stopped from further stretching out through the power of confession and repentance.** (“Karmic forces” are “tractional forces”. The **“web of karmic forces”**: due to both virtuous and wicked deeds amassed through **countless past lifetimes**, the linkages of the mental strength of both one’s inner self and of others are crisscrossing and inter-influencing each other, so as to form the network of tractional forces. This is known as the “karmic network”. Please refer to the DVD on “The Inconceivable Law of Karma”, published by the Dudjom Buddhist Association). For another thing, the damaging power of “wicked consequences” being formed could be lessened by good intentions. In this connection, why had the woman developed into a situation that her daughter ran away to forsake her, and thus resulting in her “committing suicide to repent her sin”? The key factor is her **“attachment of love”** to her daughter.

The genuine meaning of “confession and repentance” is for the **“letting go of all attachments”**. However, if **“attachments are still firmly grasped after one’s confession and repentance”**, the “wicked consequences” would become even worse. According to the true meaning of Buddhism, the “cause” would already be planted upon the completion of a deed or an action. The “tractional forces” of such a “cause” would ceaselessly link up with the

“mental forces” of affected individuals accordingly. This sort of ceaseless linkages would eventually be agglomerated for the outcomes of “consequential effects”. Since it takes time for agglomeration of this sort of ceaseless linkages, **Buddhism teaches that for those individuals who have committed wicked deeds, they are to be reminded to make their “confessions and repentances” within a certain time frame. The sooner the “confession and repentance” is being made, the better will be the result in diminishing, or even eliminating, the agglomeration of “consequential effects”.** When the period of agglomeration of “consequential effects” has reached over three years, the “complete linkage” would be more or less completed. Thus, according to the true meaning of Buddhism, the “confession and repentance” of deeds over three years would merely result in “having severe karmas for light retributions”, but in no way to be able to totally eliminate the retributions of “consequential effects”.

The “confession and repentance” of this lady after 13 years results in the negative retributions in her suffering from cancer, which has been formed and is now very difficult to be eradicated. It was merely expected to have the relaxation of one’s “mind” through this “confession and repentance”, and that hopefully the metastasis of cancer would be slowed down in order to help prolong her life. Unfortunately, the woman could not let go of her **“attachment of love”** to her daughter, and still grasped firmly onto the outcome of her daughter’s forgiveness. **This kind of attachment had made her “confession and repentance” ineffective in terms of the relaxation on her “mind”, but conversely had made her “mind” to become more unsettled.** As a result, her illness rapidly further deteriorated, and she had developed the “thought” of entering into a “dead end” by “committing suicide to repent her sin”. As such, we can see that the key points on the “confession and repentance” of wrongdoings include:

1. **Be in time**, the sooner the better;
2. **Should learn how to let go one’s attachments**;

3. **Should realize the purpose** of “confession and repentance” is to let go, and not to further grasp upon the attachments. Therefore, one should **not be mindful about the retributions of “consequential effects”** are “still persistent” and “could not be eradicated”, simply because the purpose of “confession and repentance” is to let go, and not for the eradication of the retributions of “consequential effects”. One should **accept the retributions of “consequential effects” quite readily, and try to work out the most sincere compensation for the past wrongdoings, so as to “achieve the purity and peace of mind”.**

This lady had set her goals and **purposes** of “confession and repentance” as to “let the daughter to have someone to depend upon”, and to “receive forgiveness from her daughter”. When these goals became “attachments” and were not able to be accomplished, the negative retributions of “consequential effects” would merely become worse and not being reduced. The **purpose of one’s “confession and repentance” is to “have the purity and peace of mind”, but not to add on burdens to one’s “mind”.** Therefore, the **purpose of any kind of “confession and repentance” should only be targeted at the “letting go of attachments”, but not to further “enhance the persistence of attachments”.** Even though after one’s utmost sincere “confession and repentance” has been done, and yet if forgiveness is still not to be obtained, one **should just “let go of the attachments, with one’s mindset to be oriented to be readily accepting the retributions of “consequential effects”.** These are, indeed, the key points and genuine meanings of “confession and repentance”, and that of retributions of “consequential effects”.

When the purpose of “confession and repentance” is wrongly set, one’s “mind” would become more unrest, and would soon be “lost” in a state of disorientation. The consequences could evolve into more and more serious situations. Thus, this woman had chosen the path of no return by “committing suicide”. What was the ending of this tragedy, which was a real story with true figures?



Eventually, the daughter did meet up with her father and recognized him as such, and so both of them enjoyed the reunited family happiness. She had gotten a shelter for both her mind and living. The father finally realized that he should not have pinned upon his wife, but instead should blame himself for his selfish lust of love, so that all the three females involved and himself were badly hurt. In order to remedy for his own wrongdoings, he implored his daughter to bring him over to see this woman and asked for her forgiveness. At first, his daughter refused his request firmly. However, during this renewed period of happiness that she has regained, she couldn't help recollecting the numerous snatches of warm moments from this lady during the period of 13 years. Her heart started to soften somewhat.

After repeated petitions from the father, the daughter finally agreed to let go of her animosity. She has abandoned the "impure hatred", and replaced it with the "impeccable reciprocation for the grace". Thus, all the **negative energies were released** and vented out, while **positive energies were being absorbed**. Both the father and daughter just hurried back in time to save this woman, who was already attempting to commit suicide by incision into the veins of the wrist. The woman at her imminent death was being hospitalized.

Although the woman relentlessly "confessed and repented" to the daughter over and over again, the daughter was only willing to call her as "auntie", and the word of "mother" was never heard of ever. This sort of regret deeply hurt this woman's heart. **"The affair which was really pitiful now becomes memories,**

it is regretful to have it started in the first place but it is now ineffectual!"

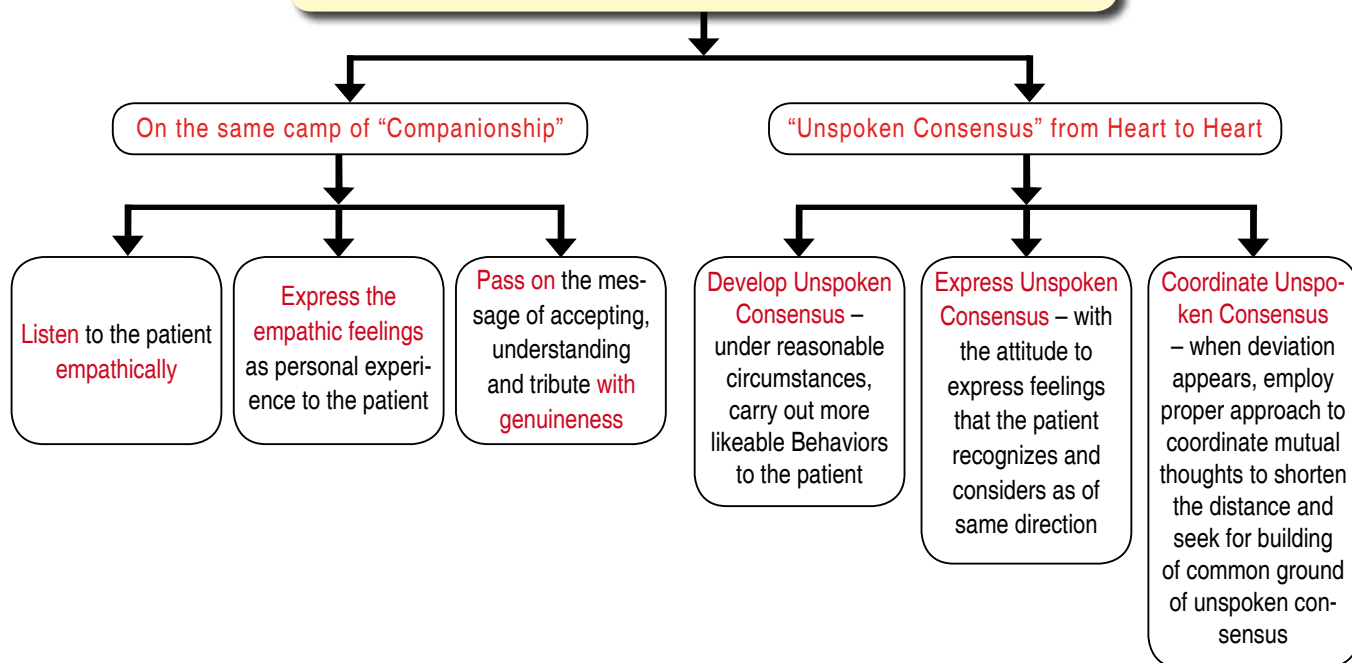
Upon reunion with her old love, her hatred seemed persisting yet mixed with yearning. While meeting with her beloved daughter, her happiness seemed mingling with sadness. The woman was lingering at her death bed under such kind of complicated mixed feelings, merely leaving her last trace of faint breath and grievous eyesight, **longing for the "most precious total forgiveness"**. At this most critical moment, her daughter cried out loudly, "Mom, mom, I love you. I am willing to forgive you. I don't hate you. Please don't go away!"

The love engraved in the hearts and minds of these people for 13 years have finally erupted and burst out at this most precious moment. A most timely expression of **"unspoken consensus"** indicated that their mutually-dependent hearts of loving care still continued to exist. Just a simple word of "mom" stood for thousands of words and sentences. It also represented **the "most precious total forgiveness"**. This sort of timely expression resulted in no more remorse for both parties. This also ascertained that the "confession and repentance" before her death with the "exposure of everything" was not wrong at all. It is **absolutely right and correct!** According to the Buddhist teachings, one has to face the "causes and effects" after one's death. It is even more severe than facing the situations when one is still alive. **If an individual can finish with and eradicate those negative unresolved issues in one's "mind" before death, it would be greatly beneficial to the deceased person, as well as to his/her families and friends.**
.....(To be Continued)

Love and affection being entangled for half-of-one's life, with sadness and happiness eroding into one's mind life after life.

Don't retain any sense of remorse, and you are urged to conduct utter confession and repentance for the purification of one's mind.

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 (38)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Fong Wei

- **Why “Visualization” is a Method of Dharma Practice that Can Most Directly Link to One’s “Nature of the Mind”?**
- **Those Who are Able to “Visualize the Mind” Could Achieve Complete Liberation and Swiftly Attain “Buddhahood”**

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.

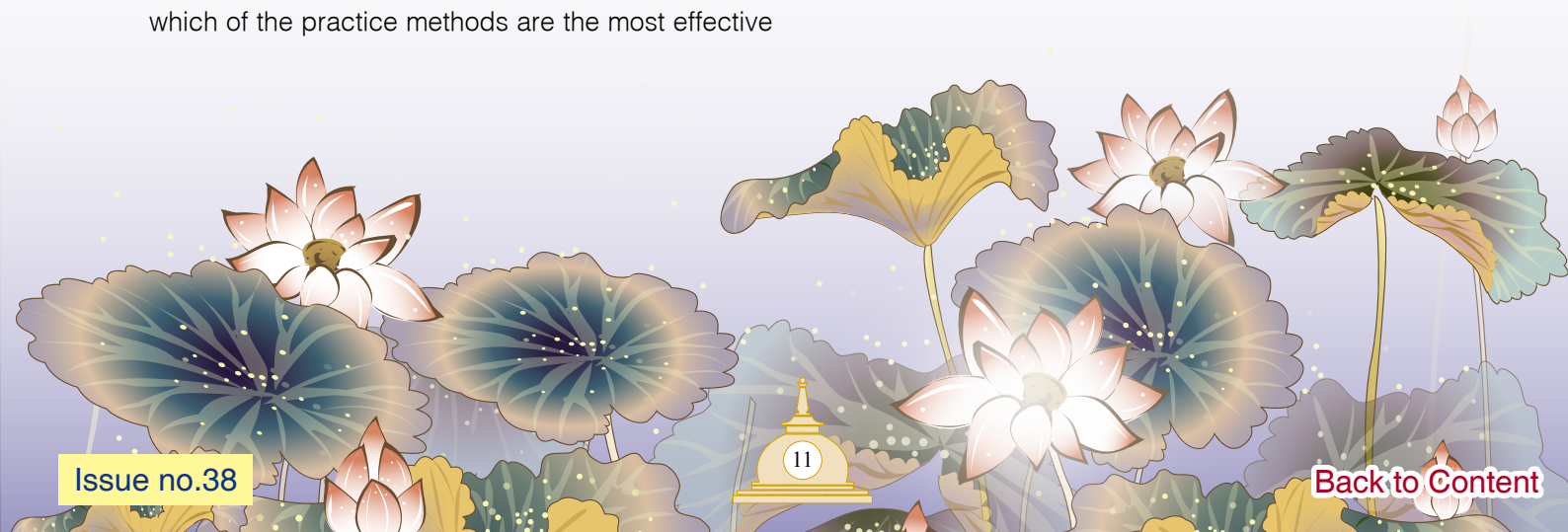
Irrespective of which types of practice methods, it must include the training of one's "mental strength". Otherwise, it would not be able to produce any effects. One of the important points for judging which of the practice methods are the most effective

ones is the degree of influence that these can have on one's "mental strength"? What percentage will they constitute?

The previous five chapters have clearly explained the effects and mysteries that the sound has produced upon people (Please refer to the articles on the "Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practices" of Issues 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 of the "Lake of Lotus"). The part on the rationale for the "resonance" and "operations of particles" is one of the functions on the recitation of mantras. Since the sound of mantra does not necessarily have to be words that could be translated or understood, particularly those mantras which are meant for the following purposes:

1. linkage or condensation;
2. cutting off the linkage or condensation;
3. taming and shattering.

The previous few chapters (in particular please refer to the article on the "Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" in Issue 26 of the "Lake of Lotus") have mentioned that the merits of having received the "relevant teachings" in the recitation of mantras are remarkable and vast. As to its abstruseness, apart from relating to its rationale on "resonance" and the "motions among the particles", it is also very much related to the different high or low levels of the "Right Concentrations" (or "Samadhis" in Sanskrit). According to Bodhisattva Maitreya's classification, in Volume 45 of the "Yogacaryabhūmiśāstra", "Dharanis" are divided into the following kinds:



- (1) **Dharma** Dharani – the successful symptom for the receiving of the “relevant trainings” in the proper recitation on this type of “mantras” is that one would be able to remember the words and sentences of the various Sutras in one’s numerous lifetimes (please refer to the article on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 26 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (2) **Meaning** Dharani – the successful symptom for the receiving of the “relevant trainings” in the proper recitation on this type of “mantras” is that one would be able to remember the meanings of the Sutras in one’s numerous lifetimes (please refer to the article on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 26 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (3) **Mantra** Dharani – the successful symptom for the receiving of the “relevant trainings” in the proper recitation on this type of “mantras” is that, through one’s “meditational power”, one would be able to experience the special effects of the “mantras”, and would thus be able to help other sentient beings to remove all kinds of calamities and illnesses (please refer to the article on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 27 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (4) **Endurance** Dharani – the successful symptom for the receiving of the “relevant trainings” in the proper recitation on this type of “mantras” is that one would be able to know the true existence of, and the real meanings behind, the various Dharmas, as well as the ability without losing them (please refer to the article on the “Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 28 of the “Lake of Lotus”).



Why Visualization is a Method of Dharma Practice that Can Most Directly Link to Ones Nature of the Mind?

The previous chapters from Issues No.24 to 37 of the “Lake of Lotus” have clearly explained the effects and mysteries that “sounds” can produce upon people, especially in the Dharma practice of one’s “core basic sound”, which is also the “Seed Syllable” (Bijas) of the mantra sounds in “Vajrayana” practices, and are the wonderful combinations of “visualization” and “sounds”. Such kind of combinations are inter-dependent and complementary to each other, with the virtues and effects thus generated from their wonderful interplay, to be far beyond the imagination of sentient beings. Regardless of what kinds of religions, the methods for Dharma practice can be broadly divided into “Prayers, Recitations and Visualizations”. Having talked about the detailed explanations on “Prayers and Recitations”, it now comes to the further discussions on the method of Dharma practice that can most directly link to one’s “Nature of the Mind”, namely “Visualization”.

Why “Visualization” is a method of Dharma practice that can most directly link to one’s “Nature



of the Mind”? Where are the reasons and the evidences? In order to see the evidence, one should first look at what the “Buddhist’s Sutras” have to say. The “**Avatamsaka Sutra**” has mentioned: “Everything comes from the Mind”. This quote points out that the manifestation and emergence of all things are caused by the tractional forces of the “Mind”. In other words, the “Mind” is the source of everything. To catch all the thieves, one needs first to catch its chief. Therefore, in order to achieve success in one’s Dharma practice swiftly, not as slow as “ants crawling upwards from the ground”, one needs to deal with the “Mind”. In this regard, “Visualization” is a method of Dharma practice that can most directly link to one’s “Nature of the Mind”. Let us look at the following golden verses from the Buddhist Sutras that can provide us with guidelines (as pointers) towards the “Grand Boulevard of Golden Light”.

The Preface One [0294b22] in Volume One of the “**Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**” reads like this in present-day explanations: “All Tathagatas (Buddhas) have two kinds of Doors to the Dharma. Because of these two Dharma Doors, they would not reside only in the state of “Meditation” (Samadhi) permanently. One is “Great Mercy”. The second one is “Great Compassion”. In abiding by the Dharma Door of “Great Mercy”,

(the Buddhas) would give happiness to all sentient beings, and share with them. In abiding by the Dharma Door of “Great Compassion”, (the Buddhas) would remove the grief, pains and sufferings from all sentient beings. By practising these two kinds of Dharma in countless prolonged periods of lifetimes in billions and trillions of years (kalpas), they had trained and corrected the nature of their minds in order to finally attain the “Perfect Enlightenment” (Buddhahood). (As this way is too slow), all sentient beings in the world would have too much sufferings and afflictions (they could hardly make use of these two Dharma Doors to become Buddhas expeditiously). Due to this causal condition (so as to facilitate all sentient beings to gain liberation more quickly), the Tathagatas (Buddhas) soon arose from their “meditative concentration” (Samadhi) so as to immediately give sermons on the ways of how to use the Mind for visualisation as a meritorious and wonderful mind-training method of the Mahayana Dharma practice (wonderful “Mahayana Dharma of visualizing one’s Mind Ground”, in order to enlighten all sentient beings). (The Buddhas) Advised all sentient beings not to beseech only human and heavenly pleasures and virtuous rewards, but instead they should seek to swiftly attain “Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi” (that is, the other-worldly “Unsurpassed, Well-Balanced and Equally-Abiding, Complete and Perfect Enlightenment”; in other words, to be able to get liberated from the sufferings of the cycle of karmic existence for the eventual attainment of “Buddhahood”). Why is this so? (In order to achieve this goal) The Lord Buddha Shakyamuni today released the golden lights from His chest such that wherever this Light shone, all the places were all seemed to become golden colours. The secret meanings and purposes so displayed by the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni in His actions were extremely profound and far-reaching, and so even all the “Sravakas” and that of the “Pratyeka-Buddhas” in the whole world were unable to comprehend the reasons, even after stretching their thinking capacity and scrutiny to the very limits (that is, to the best of their knowledge and thinking patterns). (The Lord Buddha Shakyamuni then enlightened



them by saying that because) The worldly people do not visualize their own minds (that is, not to use visualization for one's mind-training and Dharma practices), and thus they are subject to the sufferings of the cycle of karmic existence life after life, drifting and floating in the Ocean of Life and Death. As all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are able to use visualization for mind-training and Dharma practices, they can cross the Ocean of Life and Death to reach to the other shore (that is, to be liberated from the sufferings of the cycle of karmic existence). All the Tathagatas (Buddhas) of the Three Times (that is, of the past, present, and future), because of their using this Dharma on visualization for mind-training and Dharma practices, were able to attain "Buddhahood". Hence, the release of this (Golden) Light by the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni is not without any causal condition."

Then what is the causal condition? Why is it that even the Dharma practitioners of the "Sravaka Vessel and Pratyeka-Buddha Vessel" were not able to understand or know the reasons, even after stretching their thinking capacity and scrutiny to the very limits? "Gold" represents steadfastness, nobility and stability. "Light" is the best manifestation of "Energy". The release of this "Golden Light" by the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni is for achieving the following purposes:

1. **Blessings** – Due to their ignorance, sentient beings are blinded by their numerous "karmic obscurations" and "defilements in thoughts". As such, they are unable to understand the

true meanings of the Buddhist teachings and their reasons as taught by the Lord Buddha. Therefore, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had to use a stable kind of "Energy" to assist them with the "Golden Light" to remove their barriers and blockings, so as to unleash their inner wisdom. In so doing, it could help to accelerate the speed in the Dharma practices of sentient beings, so that they do not have to go round and round in prolonged periods of countless lifetimes in billions and trillions of years. However, sentient beings ought to know that this "Golden Light" of radiance does not exist eternally. It only appears slightly when the "causes and conditions are ripen and matched together", and will disappear within an instant. Therefore, it is necessary for the sentient beings to "keep" this Energy that has been bestowed upon them ("added on") by the Lord Buddha, and to "hold onto" it in their own "minds" through the "visualization of mind". Only in this way can one possess it eternally for use. This is, indeed, the true meaning of the so-called "Blessings". "Blessings" do not mean that the Lord Buddha would do everything Himself in making all sentient beings to become automatically enlightened and to attain "Buddhahood". This is because "Enlightenment" must be through one's own self-initiative in arousing one's potentials within one's mind, while the Lord Buddha could not either indirectly or directly change the "minds" of sentient beings. Any sentient beings who think that "blessings"

are to be **relied upon** as a gift of mercy and compassion is, indeed, a **kind of deluded “superstition” and reliance that has been formed out of their ignorance about the “Law of Causes and Effects”** (the **“Law of Karma-vipāka”**). Therefore, the Buddhist teachings have advised all sentient beings to be **“self-accountable early on”** so as to become liberated and enlightened.

2. **Manifestations** – Since sentient beings do not understand that Dharma practices are actually meant for the development of their own **potential energies**, and given that “Bright Light” is the best manifestation of “Energy”, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni thus released this “Golden Light” for demonstration. As for the development of one’s own **potential energies**, one must first use **“Great Mercy and Great Compassion”** as the basic foundation. Otherwise, what would be developed will only be the “Evil Forces”. The reason being that the characteristics of one’s “intrinsic nature or Buddha Nature” are **“Great Mercy and Great Compassion”**. The lacking of these characteristics will not be able to restore one’s “intrinsic nature or Buddha Nature” for one’s liberation from the tractional forces of the “cycle of karmic existence”. That is why in the **“Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”**, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had enlightened us on the **important points for mind-training**, at the very first onset, leaving the other “visualization” practice methods to be taught in the later parts of the Sutra. Thus, all sentient beings should realize that the guidelines on the Dharma practice methods as expounded in the **“Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”** are progressing from **“the Exoteric to Esoteric Buddhism”**, instead of unfolding the “secret teachings on the visualizations of the body, speech and mind” right at the beginning.

So how much weight and proportion does the “Light” actually occupy in one’s methods of Dharma practice? Let us first look at the **“Sutra of the Meditation on the Buddha of Infinite Life”** in which the “Visualization” methods, as taught by the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni, begin with His teaching on the **“Visualization of the Sun” for the training up of Dharma practitioners’ abilities to “give rise to Light”**. From this, one can start to better understand how heavy and in what proportion that the “Light” actually occupies in one’s methods of Dharma practice. In other words, where no energies of the Light are arising, there will be no actual effects in developing one’s “energies of the Mind”, let alone the attainment of “Buddhahood”. **“The mere talk of eating does not satisfy one’s hunger”**, and so if one simply talks about truths and teachings without any actual practices and experiences, or simply recites the sutras without any “visualizations”, the speed of one’s Dharma practice will be very very slow, indeed. The disparity is **just like the “Heaven and Earth”**. The **“Sutra of the Meditation on the Buddha of Infinite Life”**, also known as the **“Sutra of the Sixteen Kinds of Visualizations”** (or simply the **“Amitayur-dhyana-sutra”**), all relate to the various methods of “Visualizations” on Dharma practice. From this, one can again understand how heavy and in a large proportion of “Visualization” is in the methods of one’s Dharma practice.

The fact that the Dharma practitioners of the “Sravaka Vessel and Pratyeka-buddha Vessel” were unable to understand the reasons, even after stretching their thinking capacity and scrutiny to the very limits, is because the methods of their Dharma practice do not take “Visualization” as the main practice. Apart from **limiting** their achievements, this will also **confine** their **wisdom** such that they were unable to understand the **casual conditions, the purposes and effects** of those actions taken by the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni.





**Those Who are Able to
"Visualize the Mind" Could
Achieve Complete Liberation and
Swiftly Attain "Buddhahood"**

Actually how important is the method of "Visualization" in one's Dharma practice? Let us first look at the following text of the Sutra.

As far as the "Vajrayana" methods of Dharma practice are concerned, "Visualization" is the main practice of all. Hence, **this passage of the Sutra has shown how important the "Vajrayana" practice methods actually are.** This is just like "someone who drinks the water will be able to know for himself as to how cool or warm the water is". Only those Dharma practitioners who **have the actual experiences through practical training** would be able to realize this. Those **ignorant** people who, while not having the slightest knowledge about the true meanings of the Buddhist teachings, nor having the profound knowledge on the Law of Nature, nor having the **realisation** capabilities from the practices of the Holy Dharma, have casually criticized the "Vajrayana" practices and have rejected the teachings of "Vajrayana" based upon their very limited and biased knowledge, should be extremely mindful of their breaking the "serious precept" of slandering the Lord Buddha's teachings, resulting in their own downfalls to the "evil realms" due to their evil retributions.

The Volume Eight on Mind Visualization Section No.10 of the **"Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation"** says in modern terminologies as follows: "Virtuous Men, within the 'Three Realms' (of the 'Kamaloka' - Realm of Desire, the 'Rupaloka' - Realm of Form and the 'Arupaloka' - the Formless Realm), the **Mind is the pivotal of everything** (those people who have the virtuous roots and wisdom would take their Minds as the decider that controls everything). Those who could **visualize their minds** (and use the 'Mind' for visualizations) can eventually get liberated (and can attain a complete liberation). Those who could not ('visualize their minds') will sink eventually (and completely into the Ocean of Sufferings). The minds of all sentient beings are **just like the Ground** (Mother Earth) upon which the Five (kinds of) Grains and Five (kinds of) Fruits (i.e. all the 'causes' and 'effects' that were accumulated by all sentient beings) will grow. Accordingly, the **'Dharmas of the Mind'** will give rise to the Five virtuous and/or evil life-paths of 'this-worldly' and 'other-worldly' realms [The Five Realms are namely: heavenly (including 'asuras'), human, hungry ghosts, animal and hell realms], as well as the 'Saiksas', 'Asaiksas', 'Solitary Buddhas', 'Bodhisattvas' and even 'Tathagatas' all have the same causal condition (that is, they all emerged from the causal condition of the 'Mind'). The **'Three Realms' come from the 'Mind'** (that is, only the 'Mind' is in total control), and (that is why) **the 'Mind' is known as the 'Ground'** (of everything, the very Foundation). For all those worldly people who become closed

to 'virtuous knowledgeable friends' in hearing (and learning) about the 'Dharmas of the Mind Ground' (that is, the methods of 'Mind-training'), (to be able to follow and) observe with reasoning on their principles (for further observations), to practise them (in accordance with their reasoning) as being said (so much so that the religious disciplines are carried out) with praises, encouragements, joys and comforts (that are arising automatically from their Minds), these people will (be able to) eradicate (and remove) the three kinds of Hindrances ("Triny avaranani" in Sanskrit, namely: the Affliction Hindrance, Karmic Hindrance and the Requitil Hindrance) for their quick accomplishments in all the (Six Paramitas and ten thousands of) virtuous deeds, and thus swiftly attaining the 'Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi' (the other-worldly "Unsurpassed, Well-Balanced and Equally-Abiding, Complete and Perfect Enlightenment"; that is, 'Buddhahood' expeditiously)."

(Note: 'Saiksas', 'Asaiksas' – Amongst the holy beings attaining the Hinayana 'Four Holy Fruits', the 'First Three Holy Fruits' are called 'Saiksas' (with learning) while the 'Fourth Holy Fruit' is called 'Asaiksas' (without learning). It is because there are still something that the 'First Three Holy Fruits' will need to learn during their Dharma practices, and so they are called 'Saiksas'. The 'First Three Holy Fruits' of the 'Four Holy Fruits' are 'Srota-apanna', 'Sakodagamin', 'Anagamin' who are all considered as 'Saiksas'. The 'Fourth Holy Fruit' is known as 'Arhats'. As they have nothing more to learn and are enhancing their Dharma practices, and so they are known as 'Asaikas'.)

According to the "Parinirvana-Sutra", the "Mahāvibhāṣā-saṣṭra" (Volume 115)", the "Yogacaryabhumisastra" (Volume 29), the three kinds of Hindrances ("Triny avaranani" in Sanskrit) are:

1. **Affliction Hindrance (Kleshas)** – such defilements as greed, hatred, ignorance, jealousy, pride, doubts, and others that work as impediments to one's own spiritual development. The "Parinirvana-Sutra" says: "Hindrance is concealment", meaning that sentient beings are covered and concealed by the karmic obscurations of their greed, hatred, ignorance and other doubts so much so that they fail to see the 'Right Path' and cannot cultivate a virtuous mind. That is why this is called "Hindrance".
2. **Karmic Hindrance (Karmas)** - such as the barriers caused by the karmic forces of the "Five Kinds of Non-Interrupting Sins" ("parca anantarya-karma" in Sanskrit) and the "Ten Evil Deeds" which will block and conceal the 'Right Path' from these people, and so they are known as "Karmic Hindrance". (The "Five Kinds of Non-Interrupting Sins" are those who have committed the five kinds of evil acts of killing one's father (patricide), killing one's mother (matricide), killing an Arhat, causing bodily injury or shedding the blood of a Buddha, and breaking the harmonious relationship within the Sangha community).



3. **Requital Hindrance** (**Vipākas**) – also known as “Resultant Hindrance”. They include the painful requitals of evil retributions in the Six Realms (**the Six Realms are the heavenly, asura, human, animal, hungry ghost and hell realms**). “Requital” means the “fruits of requital”. It refers to the afflictions that lead one to commit evil karma, which will then lead one to the rebirths in the three lower realms of “hells, animals, hungry ghosts”. As this kind of hindrance will block and conceal the ‘Right Path’ and so it is called the “Requital Hindrance”.

As pointed out in the **“Mahāyāna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”**, these three kinds of hindrances will follow us like our shadows. At all times, the **‘Middle Hindrance’** obstructs the ‘Holy Path’ (**that is, the road to study Buddhism**). The

‘Near Hindrance’ obstructs the wonderful happy fruitions of the realm of human existence and of the Heavenly realm (**that is, the meritorious wonders of the rebirths in the Heavenly Realms and in human existence**). The **‘Far Hindrance’** obstructs the Supreme Perfect Bodhi Fruit (**meaning the attainment of ‘Buddhahood’**). To be able to get liberated from these kinds of hindrances are no easy tasks at all, and the progress will also be very slow. Hence, one should be very familiar with, and be thorough in, the reading and understanding of this important Sutra, together with detailed explanations to be given by “Gurus”, as well as in receiving teachings on how to use and apply “Visualization” as a wonderful method of mind-training. Only in this way could one be able to achieve quick accomplishment in one’s Dharma practice, as well as to **swiftly attain “Buddhahood”**....
.....(**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 (10)



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 Function of the “Mind”

According to the Buddhist teachings, the “mind” of sentient beings carries the “karmas” and their “habitual tendencies” (the habitual behavioural patterns) accumulated through their countless past lives, which will “follow them like shadows” everywhere, and will influence the “mental

consciousness” of this present life and that of the future lives. When the “mental consciousness” is linked with the “conditions” during that time, it will then result in behaviors and decisions (“Karma” literally means “behaviours”, and can thus refer to both the “good and evil behaviours” that have been accumulated through our “numerous past lifetimes”. “Karmic networks” refer to those “mental strengths” of both oneself and others that are interpenetrating and influencing each other in forming a web or network of “mental strengths” throughout countless past lifetimes. All of these actions would bring about the creations of countless and endless “mental strengths”, which will then act as “forces of tractions” in pushing and pulling all kinds of sentient beings to be “transmigrated” and “reincarnated” within the “cycle of karmic existence”, known as “Samsara” in Sanskrit, and to bear all kinds of consequences thereafter. Please refer to the DVD on “The Inconceivable Law of Karma”, published by the Dudjom Buddhist Association).

What are the “conditions” during that time? For instance, when you were born as a human being, you would use the human body and its brain in order to act upon something. On the other hand, if you were born as a dog at that time, you would then act upon things by using the body and the brain, together with the appropriate levels of thinking patterns, of a dog. In this way, the “conditions” at that time would help one’s “mental consciousness” to push one’s body to perform certain behaviors. In other words, the “minds in the previous lives” of sentient beings have played the “main” role, by adding in with the “mind of this life” to become the “main cause”. Thus, the “unconscious” that scientists have talked about is, in fact, equivalent to the “mind of the previous lives” in Buddhist teachings.

Scientists have conducted experiments on human behaviors and have found that, within two thousand mini-seconds before one's "mental consciousness" would decide on an action, the "unconscious" was already ready for it. The "cognitions" and "free will" (that is, the mental consciousness) are only the "effects" of one's "unconscious". All our behaviors, which are supposed to be decided by our "mental consciousness", are, in many instances, all affected by the influences of our "unconscious", and so the "mental consciousness" is not the "main cause".

Rather, it is all the "karmas" and "habitual tendencies" (that is, the "mind of the previous lives") that have been accumulated through our countless past lives that are influencing our "mental consciousness" in making the decisions. In this way, the "main role" should be played out by the "mind of the previous lives". The "mental consciousness" of this present life can, at most, only be said to be part of the "cause", and not the most important "main cause".



For this point, it brings out a very important insight: since the "mind" of the present is influenced by the "mind of the previous lives", it thus forms an extended path of one's "karma", and makes us to be trapped within the "cyclic existence" formed by "karmas". What we considered as "karmas", and the "cycle of karmic existence" are all, in fact, the functions and products of the "mind", and thus resulting in the fact that "everything comes from the mind".

To analyze this from another perspective, through "Dharma practices", if we can train our present "mind" in transforming it to become autonomous and independent, then it will no longer be influenced by one's karmas and habitual behaviors of previous lives. At the same time, it will also not to become affected by our present emotions of "greed, hatred and ignorance", but instead to be solely directed by the "mental strength" of one's autonomous and independent mind, and thus can be released from the "cycle of karmic existence". This is the most important point of "Dharma practice" and is also the major direction. This is also the main reason why we need to have a much deeper understanding on "everything comes from the mind".

We have explained that "everything comes from the mind", and have also quoted some of the discoveries of some scientists, as well as on their experiments. Their findings have found out that, many things, regardless of whether they are material objects or human behaviors, are all influenced by our "minds". Such a "mind" does not only refer to the "mental consciousness" while one is awake, but it also refers to the "mind of the previous lives" that has been accumulated through countless past lifetimes. It composition includes many "karmas" and "habitual tendencies"..... (To Be Continued)

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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