

**Live Teaching by Khen Rinpoche Kalsang Nyima**  
**‘The importance and ways of taming our mind (7)’**  
**7:30 p.m., 20 October 2020**  
**English transcript**

Dear Dharma brothers and sisters,

Our Venerable Khen Rinpoche Kalsang Nyima gave a live teaching on ‘The importance and ways of taming our mind (7)’ at the Facebook page of ‘Wake Up with Dharma’ at 7.30 p.m. on 20 October 2020. The Tibetan teaching was translated into Cantonese by Professor Lozang Hau. The English translation of the Chinese transcript of this online teaching is now available for reading, learning, and sharing. Thank you.

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**‘The importance and ways of taming our mind (7)’**

[First of all,] may all Dharma friends please give rise to the auspicious bodhichitta when listening to the teaching.

We continue to meet many difficulties, troubles, disturbances, and hustle and bustle in our life. When we face these difficulties or troubles, our way of thinking enlarges some tiny troubles and difficulties, turning into unbearable suffering. We often meet many of these situations and suffering.

How do we enlarge these small issues?

We can never be able to see our own mistakes no matter when and where. But we exaggerate others’ small mistakes, see them as something very serious and create many difficulties.

If we can understand and think about the fact of dependent arising in terms of relative truth, then it can bring huge benefits [to us].

Some children or people blame their parents for their own poor health conditions. Similarly, some spouses or lovers blame their partners when they face problems, be it within a married or an unmarried couple. In short, we always shift the responsibilities to another person when there are problems or difficult situations.

But when something good happens, we [always] attribute that to our own ability or talent, rarely thinking that comes from other people’s kindness.

What is the actual situation?

[The actual situation is] that all phenomena appear due to the results of many causes and conditions. The wealth, health, respect and ability in our life come from the virtuous karma that we practiced in past lives. Similarly, parents, spouses or children who we find terrible are the ripening results of the negative karma and bad things that we did to others in past lives.

In ancient times, there was an arhat who had mystical powers. One day, he laughed after seeing a family on his way. Why did he laugh? Because he saw the situation of that family, i.e. the karmic situation of cyclic existence, which was very strange and funny.

At that time, the arhat saw a lady carrying her own son, loving him dearly like her own life. She was holding and eating a fish with another hand while throwing the fish bones onto the floor. A dog was eating the fish bones on another side. But the lady was beating the dog to send it away with one hand and cuddling the baby lovingly with another hand.

The baby who this mother carried with her hands was killed by her in the last life. The mother owed this life debt and so the person who was killed was reborn to become her son to ask for the karmic debt. He has made this mother treat him nicely and love him to repay the debt.

The fish, which this lady was eating, was actually the rebirth of her father [of the past life]. When he was alive, his father liked to eat fish. So, he was reborn to become a fish in this life and was eaten by a human being. The mother of the lady was reborn to become the dog that appeared in front [of the lady] after its death.

So, the lady cuddled the enemy of the past life as her darling in her arms in this life. The fish that she ate was her father of the past life which she ate and dumped [in this life]. The dog that she beat was her mother in the past life. The fish whose bones were being eaten by the dog were her husband in the past.

Sometimes, parents love their children dearly after giving birth to them. But the children take possession of all the parents' belongings, giving their parents a very difficult life and lots of suffering. These children are in fact enemies of their parents and are reborn to ask their parents for this karmic debt.

Hence, we have our own family members, husbands and wives with whom we have had karmic links and developed a relationship for many lives. When the karma of each other mixes or when there is a karmic debt, it will bring us some difficulties now, which are the results of the ripening of karma that we did in the past.

If we had not done any negative karma, then we would not have met poor family members, friends or bad people. If we understand that all these things happen due to our own negative karma, we will naturally reduce the thoughts of thinking that a certain person is terrible or bad and so forth, and that others are wrong. If we can learn about our own negative karma from others' problems, then we will naturally be less angry or lose less temper. If we can be less angry, then our mind will be more at peace and happier. It is more than that. If we are able not to get angry, it can prevent and eliminate the negative karma that creates a lot of suffering in this and future lives.

If we can understand that everything that happens arises due to karma, then our difficulties and suffering will be reduced. When we face these difficulties and suffering, the past negative karma will also be ripened and ended after it has been experienced.

To go further, if we can practice compassion, patience, even Mahayana mind training and tong-len for other living beings, especially for those who we may think of as terrible and obscene and will make us angry, we can purify a lot of misdeeds and obstructions and accumulate vast amounts of merit. We can transform [difficulties and suffering] into these great opportunities.

Nobody wishes to have difficulties and troubles. But if we can use some [skillful] means to practice, we can transform problems and difficulties into vast amounts of merit. For example, when we go to poo, we dislike the dirty and stinky poo and do not want to sit together with the poo. But if we can use the poo as fertilizer and apply it to the soil, then we can grow flowers, grasses and trees. At the end, after the poo is being produced, it can bring huge benefits.

Similarly, although we do not wish to have difficulties and troubles, if we are able to practice patience, compassion, Mahayana mind training or tong-len, then we can transform them into practice opportunities, trainings to enhance our own capabilities; thus, they can become our practice companions. They can be great opportunities for us to purify our misdeeds and obstacles and accumulate merit.

In *The Sutra of Great Liberation*, Buddha taught that if one can use skillful means to practice, he or she can swiftly purify all the negative karma that he or she has done even though the negative karma is heavy and serious [enough] to lead to a downfall into the lower realms.

We now illustrate this point further with a historical event.

Once upon a time, there was a ship owner with a wife and children. He sailed his ship to hunt for treasures. His ship was in an accident and became damaged on one of the

journeys. The ship owner passed away as a result. His wife gave their son a girl's name when raising him. It is because the mother did not want her son to work like his father and then to die because of hunting treasures in the sea. So, she named her son after a girl.

After the son grew up, he asked his mother about his father and his occupation. The mother lied that the father sold flowers. So, the son went to sell flowers and offer all the proceeds of selling flowers to his mother. But other flower sellers told the son that his father did not sell flowers. Their family did not belong to the caste system of selling flower sellers either.

Subsequently, the son went to ask his mother again. His mother replied that the father sold incense. So, the son changed to sell incense and offered all the proceeds he got from selling incense to his mother. The other people told the son again that his father was not in that occupation nor belonged to the caste system of selling incense. The son asked the person about his father's occupation, whereupon the person told him that his father's specialty was hunting treasures in the sea.

The son then quarreled with his mother after going back home because his father was not selling flowers nor incense. He asked why his mother lied to him, upon which his mother said that his father died because the ship sunk when hunting treasures in the sea. She did not want her son to inherit the occupation and then possibly die in the sea. If the son would die, how would she be able to live for the rest of her life, given she had only him, who was her only son.

So, she asked him not to sail on the sea no matter what happened and to take up another occupation instead. But the son replied that this would not be acceptable, because it was the tradition for a son to inherit their father's job. Since the father worked on big businesses, he could not work on small, minor work. So, he prepared the money and ship for sailing.

When the son was ready to sail, his mother was very worried. She cried and called without letting go of the legs of her son. When her son saw that, he said he would go sailing to do big business and felt very impatient and angry. He then hit his mother's head.

After sailing on the sea for a few days, he encountered strong winds and big waves sinking his ship. All the other companions died. He was able to reach an island by holding onto a wooden board carried by the sea waves.

This island had very beautiful houses, a lot of food and beautiful ladies who presented food while singing and dancing. It had different kinds of pleasure. This

occurred because the son had offered the proceeds from selling flowers to his mother. When this karma ripened, he could enjoy this pleasure.

After a few days, the son arrived at an even more beautiful island with nicer houses and more food and pleasures. Then the son enjoyed being there for a couple of days. This is the result of the good karma of his offering of the proceeds from selling incense to his mother.

The ladies on the island asked him not to go to the south saying it was dangerous there. So, he spent a couple of more days on this island. Afterwards, he wished to go to the southern part of the island very much.

When he reached the southern part, he saw an iron room. After going into it, he saw people there who had their arms and legs tied together and asked for the reasons. A person told him that this was a place where people received punishment. After that, his arms and legs were suddenly tied together, and an iron wheel flew from the space to his head. It kept on turning and hitting his head and cutting his brain into pieces. He suffered unbearable pain. He was receiving this punishment in that place because it was the result of hitting his mother's head in the human world.

When he suffered unbearable pain, he recalled that it was a result of hitting his mother's head. He thought that many children in the world, who treated their mothers terribly causing their mothers suffered, eventually experienced the same result. There were many people who created the same negative karma and faced the same results like him. When he felt the result of the bad karma, he deduced that other people were going through such a great pain as him as well. He then generated a very intense compassion towards those who were suffering and prayed that those who experienced the same negative result as him in the world would not have to bear such suffering anymore. He prayed that all the results of their negative karma to only ripen on him. When he took up the suffering, he was able to help others bear the pain. He wished they would be free from this painful result. So, the son's thoughts were in line with the practice of tong-len.

As the son had such intense compassion and thoughts of practicing tong-len, the power of his compassion terminated the pain in his head that was being turned by the iron wheel. He passed away immediately and was reborn in the Heaven of 33 [the Trayastrimsa].

Due to his great compassion, he had cleansed a lot of misdeeds and obscurations and got freed from this result of his negative karma. Otherwise, the iron wheel would have turned his head non-stop for many years, making him suffer continuously. The pain could have never appeared just for a short while and then disappeared.

If he had gotten angry, i.e. gotten angry at the jailer in the iron room for making him suffer, he would have had accumulated more negative karma due to anger and would have fallen into the hell realm.

Hence, when we face difficulties and troubles in our life, if we get angry without knowing that these difficulties are being triggered by our own bad karma created in the past, we will have to experience the results of the negative karma and suffering and accumulate new negative karma at the same time. If that is the case, we will increase our suffering and make our own situation worse than before.

So, when our family member/s or friend/s create difficulties for us, what should we do?

We should firmly believe from the bottom of our heart that they are all the results of the past karma that we created in the past. We must think that our past negative karma has matured due to which we face these sufferings, negative results, troubles and difficulties. There are many people in this world who face the same situation as we do. May the pain, suffering and bad results of these people all ripen on us. We take up all the suffering at once, while wishing that others will not have to go through similar troubles and difficulties. We need to make such pure aspirations.

If we can firmly believe in causes and effects from the bottom of our heart and practice tong-len together with a pure aspiration, then Khen Rinpoche can totally guarantee or even sign a letter of guarantee that all our troubles, difficulties will definitely be reduced, and we can find peace and happiness.

By practicing compassion and tong-len repeatedly, we can purify our wrongdoings and obstacles of many lives. This point was taught by Buddha in the sutras. Leveraging such practice can truly pacify many troubles and difficulties. After that, we need to believe from the bottom of our heart that Buddhadharma has such a great power and huge benefits. Without others telling us, we should believe in these key points from the bottom of our heart. This confidence can become so strong and powerful that it can become unchanging. If we hope to be able to pacify troubles and difficulties, please do these practices from the bottom of our heart.

If we hope to be able to be freed from our troubles to get peace and happiness, please focus and be dedicated in practicing compassion, patience, and tong-len.

Khen Rinpoche talked about these [contents] in this live teaching because he had experienced many troubles and difficulties in this life. He became free from them through the above practices. All these are his personal experiences. They are real and it is true that these practices have such great benefits. So, we should not focus on seeing other people's mistakes anytime, anywhere. All the mistakes, difficulties and

troubles are caused by us. If we do not hope to suffer, we should eliminate our karma and afflictions. We should not just think of finding peace and happiness externally. We need to find peace and happiness in our mind, and practice compassion, patience, mind training and bodhichitta. Then we will be able to feel peaceful and happy naturally.

Our mind is very powerful. If we use the mind's power on bad things, it can create many troubles and difficulties. If we can make good use of the mind's power in a positive way, then we can develop and cultivate our qualities to create happiness and peace. Our mind has such an amazing power. It is therefore very important for us to be able to make good use of the mind's potential to reduce mistakes and give rise to and increase positive qualities.

That is all of Khen Rinpoche's teaching for tonight.

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