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CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class One: Course Overview

Introduction:

We study ethics in order to reach nirvana. Nirvana is escaping from samsara; your samsaric condition is caused by your bad thoughts. Your own body and mind are part of samsara. Sooner or later your body will die, and your mind is constantly struggling, without success, to try to maintain a state of satisfaction. The nature of samsara is such that you cannot trust any normal object in this life: you don't know with any certainty that what you have now you will have next week. There is no certainty about anything, and security doesn't exist. The state of your mind a week from now is not within your control. This is suffering and it is a part of our nature. Escaping samsara is escaping from that part of our nature. Nirvana is reaching that mental place where you are incapable of having a bad thought ever again no matter what happens to you. You might have pain, but it won't disturb your peace of mind. And you must perceive emptiness directly to reach nirvana.

The Three Trainings: (presented in reverse order):

3. **SHERAB** **Extraordinary Training of Wisdom**, taught in the Abhidharma. It means the direct perception of emptiness.
2. **TING NGENDZIN** **Extraordinary Training of Meditation**, taught in the Sutras. It means meditative concentration that has the ability to keep the mind fixated on a holy object. Perfect meditation is like water in a pond that is totally still, no ripples, no movement.
1. **TSULTRIM** **Extraordinary Training of Ethical Living**, taught in the vinaya. It means ethical living, morality, being a good person in everyday life. This is like a pond in which the water is perfectly pure and clear.

Note that "Extraordinary" refers to Buddhist training aimed at nirvana and Buddhahood.

When water in a pond is perfectly clear and totally still, the moon can reflect vividly off of the water. If that thing called emptiness is going to reflect on the surface of your mind, the mind must be totally quiet and pure. In order to be able to reach a deep state of meditation, which is necessary for the direct perception of emptiness, your conscience must be clear. To reach nirvana you must perceive emptiness directly. To perceive emptiness directly you need to achieve a high level of meditation. To reach a high level of meditation you need an ethical way of life.

Morality leads to Concentration which leads to Wisdom

To progress in your meditation practice you must be doing the preliminaries properly, meditating on a holy object for at least an hour every day, and keeping your conscience clear by living an ethical way of life.

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Class One, continued

Three Different Meanings of "Sutra":

1. The open teachings of Buddha
2. A short book
3. One of the three great collections of Buddhist scriptures:

Ten Misdeeds:

1. Killing
2. Stealing
3. Sexual misconduct
4. Lying
5. Divisive talk
6. Harsh words
7. Idle talk
8. Craving others' possessions or qualities
9. Ill-will
10. Wrong view

Vinaya focuses on misdeeds of body and speech (#1-7), and bodhisattva & secret vows focus on misdeeds of mind.

Kleshas are mental afflictions: any thought which disturbs your peace of mind. The strength of the disturbance corresponds to the strength of the klesha. Even a tiny bad thought, such as a moment of irritation, causes unhappiness. When you get rid of all the kleshas permanently, which depends upon seeing emptiness directly, you have reached nirvana.

The Meaning of "Vinaya":

Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra said: We call vinaya 'vinaya' and we call discipline 'discipline' because the subject matter of the scriptures on discipline, which is the seven rules and all their friends, functions to discipline the mental afflictions and also functions to discipline your sense organs. "Dulwa" means "to tame," as in to tame a wild horse.

DULWA **NI** **TEN DANG** **TUNPA** **NGU YIN**
discipline is Buddha's The Teacher actual is
vinaya Teachings (Buddha)

"If vinaya is taught truly anywhere, I the Buddha, am there." Vinaya itself is enough to represent Buddha and all of His teachings.

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Class One, continued

The Two Root Sutras: These two sutras are the ultimate source of vinaya.

GELONG PAY SOTAR GYI DO
fully ordained monk vowed of sutra
morality

GELONG MAY SOTAR GYI DO
fully ordained nun vowed of sutra
morality

The Sutra of Vowed Morality for Fully Ordained Monks (PAY)

The Sutra of Vowed Morality for Fully Ordained Nuns (MAY)

DULWAY DO Early Sanskrit commentary, basis for Buddhist discipline in Tibetan
Vinaya Sutra monasteries. Written by Master Dharma Bhadra, Loppon Yun-Ten U (500
a.d.). Dulway Do is a Tengyur commentary, not a true Sutra (Open
teachings of an Enlightened Being). So sutra here means "short book," not
"Buddha's words")

Three Commentaries Used in this Course:

1. **DULWA GYATSOY NYINGPO**
discipline ocean, dalai the very essence

The Essence of the Ocean of Vinaya, a three-
page summary by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419).

2. **NYIN JE**
daytime to make

Day Maker (sunshine) by Ngulchu Dharma
Bhadra (1772-1851). Day Maker sheds light on
Je Tsongkapa's text (above). Dharma Bhadra's
commentary was the basis for Pabongka's
commentary, which is an important work in
the Vajrayogini lineage.

3. **YISHIN NORBU**
wish-fulfilling jewel

Wish-Fulfilling Jewel, by Choney Lama
Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748). This commentary
was missing for 40 years, and was just found
recently in St.Petersburg. We will be the first
to study this work in modern times.

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Class Two: Outline of the *Sutra on Discipline*

Choney Lama, in the *Wish Fulfilling Jewel*, explains the whole *Vinaya Sutra*. This class covers, in outline form, the entire scope of vinaya from beginning to end.

Preliminary Overview:

This section covers the life of Shakyamuni Buddha, describing the process by which the Buddha became a Buddha, outlining the major stages in His spiritual life over a time period of three "countless eons." It contains an explanation of the two root texts, the four explanatory sutras, all the canonical works on discipline, and their commentaries.

An explanation is given for why Lord Buddha said that if we wanted to get the whole essence of Buddhism it would be enough just to have the vinaya scriptures: the teachings of vinaya stand for the teachings of the Buddha. Vinaya addresses good deeds and bad deeds, and this is the subject of LEN-DRE, karma and its consequences. There is a connection between what you think, say, and do, and your whole world. It is useful for a person to know where everything in their world came from. The implication is that you can control your future and fix what you don't like about it now by leading a moral life. This leads us to the three levels of reality:

Three Levels of Reality: These categories are fluid depending on who the observer is.

- 1. NYUN GYUR**
obvious reality **Obvious reality**, that level of reality which you can perceive directly, for example with your senses. It includes the perception of colors, shapes, etc. You can also directly perceive your thoughts, like when you're thinking of something directly and not using a process of reasoning. Obvious reality is not the same for everyone. For example, when someone is color blind.
- 2. KOK GYUR**
deep reality **Subtle reality.** Reality which is deep enough that it can only be perceived by a process of logical reasoning for most people. It is not something you could see with your eyes, ears, nose, or hands. For example, at this stage of your development, emptiness is subtle reality—you can only perceive emptiness with reasoning.
- 3. SHINTU KOK GYUR**
extremely deep reality **Extremely subtle reality.** For example, the subtlest workings of karma and its consequences: the real connections between what you think, say, and do and what happens to you as a result. You had tens of thousands of distinct thoughts today and each one of them is going to have its own discrete result. Each thought contributes to your future reality and the reality around you now, which consists of millions of different objects, all of which have been created by different discreet karmas. Only an omniscient being can see the connections between actions of body, speech, and mind, and their consequences.

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Class Two, continued

Actual Explanation of Root Text:

1. TSEN GYI DUN **The meaning of the name of the title;** an explanation of what "vinaya" and "sutra" mean. Vinaya is called vinaya because you can control two things by studying vinaya: bad thoughts and desire for sense objects.

2. GYUR GYI CHAK **Explanation of the translator's obeisance.** The obeisance was a traditional requirement set up by early Tibetan kings in order to identify the subject matter based on whom you were prostrating to. In the vinaya we bow to Buddha because he understands the subtle workings of karma.

- 3a. GUSOK CHU SHI **Commentary upon the root text.** This is a common opening for every Buddhist text. It proves that the text is worth studying, that studying this book will be relevant to your reaching nirvana.

3b. Actual Commentary:

- i. DOMPA MATOPPA TOPJE **Getting the pure lineage vows properly.**
restrain you don't how to You should consider that the vows give you wings to
the vows have them get them fly if you grow them strong enough, not that they
restrict you.

- ii. TOPPA MI NYAMPA **How to keep the vows from being damaged, after
after you keep them from you've taken your vows.
got vows being broken**

Four parts to keeping the vows from being damaged:

- a. **Relying on an outer support, a monastic preceptor,** to help keep your vows: a NE LAMA, or "resident teacher," who guides a young monk.
 - b. **Relying on an inner support, your own pure intentions:** You should remember and always maintain your original motivation for taking the vows. You should think, "This life is suffering, and I am taking these vows to get out of it."
 - c. **Having a good understanding of the factors that work against them.** Know the vows clearly, what constitutes breaking them or not breaking them, and what can be modified.
 - d. **Mastering monastic practices. Three categories:**
 1. SOJONG The practice of the monks and nuns meeting together twice a month to do purification and confession.
 2. YARNE A three-month summer retreat. The sangha stays in a certain area, quietly, and studies scripture and meditates.
 3. GALYE Release of summer retreat, a three-week celebration following summer retreat.
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- iii. NYAM NA CHIR CHUPA **How to restore your vows, if they've been broken.**
It includes confession, purification and reconciliation.

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Class Two, continued

Drawing the Wheel of Life:

The section on ancillary points contains a description of how the Wheel of Life, designed by the Buddha to talk about samsara and nirvana, is to be drawn. Vinaya explains how to draw the seven components of that painting. The opening line of this section is:

GOKANG DU KORWAY KORLO O CHA NGAPAR JA O
at the foyer samsara the wheel part five make it

"Put that painting of the wheel of suffering life in the foyer; give it five parts."

Lord Buddha's seven-part instructions on how to draw the Wheel of Life:

1. **CHA NGA**
part five **Five realms of existence:** pleasure beings, human beings, animals, craving spirits, hell beings.
2. **BARDOWA DZU KYE**
Intermediate beings miraculous birth **Bardo beings.** Paint them in a chain to represent beings going up and down from realm to realm, dying and being reborn again and again.
3. **DUK SUM**
poisons three **Three poisons.** The three animals in the middle represent the three poisons of the mind that make us suffer our whole life. The rooster is liking things ignorantly, the snake is disliking things ignorantly, and the pig is ignorance. The tails of the other two are coming out of the pig's mouth to signify that because we don't understand the marriage between ethics and emptiness we behave immorally in order to get what we like and avoid what we don't like. Then we suffer because we committed misdeeds.
4. **YENLAK 12** **Twelve Links of dependent origination.** Twelve pictures which describe the mechanism which triggers rebirth.
5. **TAMCHE MITAKPA NYI KYI SUNG**
whole thing impermanence in the clutches Draw everything in the clutches of impermanence. This monster represents the fact of your own impermanence which is killing you day by day, moment by moment, from the inside.
6. **DAWA** The Buddha should be outside the five realms, pointing to a white heavenly body, showing the way to nirvana.
7. **TSIKCHE** At the bottom of the painting add the two verses:
 1. "Take it up (practice) and give it up (samsara). . ."
 2. "Smash the Lord of Death like an elephant squashes a reed hut. Anyone who with proper care practices this Dharma which is vinaya/dulwa will be able to leave behind the wheel of rebirth and put an end to all their suffering."

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Class Three: The Vows of Individual Freedom: Prati Moksha

Opening Line of Je Tsongkapa's Commentary:

OM DE LEK SU GYUR CHIK

"May all living beings achieve temporary happiness and permanent Buddhahood."

OM is made up of three components—AH, U, M—and these represent in one sound the pure body, speech, and mind of the Buddha in one sound. OM is also a code word for "calling on all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas".

Buddha's Body includes His body in paradise, and His body that emanates in countless universes to help any being who has the karma to see Him.

Buddha's Speech is mainly those emanations that speak and explain Dharma to you.

Buddha's Mind is his omniscience, which knows every object in the universe—all past, present, and future in one moment all at the same time.

SO TAR GYI DOMPA
individual freedom of vows
prati - moksha

Individual Freedom Vows, Pratimoksha vows. This is the subject of vinaya: how to get the vows, how to keep the vows, how to fix the vows if they are damaged. Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra says, "They're called individual freedom vows because those *individuals* who keep them reach *freedom*, and those who don't keep them don't reach *freedom*."

Je Tsongkapa's Summary of the Essence of Individual Freedom Vows:

NGENJUNG SAMPE GYUJENE SHENMU SHIDANG CHEPA LE DOKPA
renunciation motivation reason why hurt other beings along with its basis from refraining

"Vows of individual freedom are refraining from hurting others and also from the basis of hurting others, and doing so for the reason/motivation of renunciation."

Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra says that "along with its basis" means the last three non-virtues which are the basis for the other seven: agreeing to refrain from the *thought processes* that make you hurt others. So the proper motivation for taking freedom vows is being totally fed up with the suffering of this life.

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Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Three, continued

Six Categories that Explain Individual Freedom Vows:

These are from Je Tsongkapa's text and will be covered in classes three through seven.

NGOWO DANG NI RABYE DANG SOSOY NGUNDZIN
basic nature and categories and individual sets

KYEWAY TEN TONGWAY GYU DANG PEN YUN...
arise, born basis how they're lost and benefits of keeping

- I. Their basic nature (mental or physical)
- II. Their categories (how many)
- III. Individual sets of vows
- IV. What kind of person can grow the vows
- V. How the vows can be lost
- VI. Benefits of keeping the vows properly

Basic Nature of the Individual Freedom Vows:

The basic nature of the individual freedom vows is presented in terms of how each of the four schools of thought explains them.

...DE YANG LU NGAK LE SUKCHEN YIN SHE DUPA...
those vows body & speech karma something physical it is they believe

"Some believe the vows are physical":

Four Schools of Thought

1. **Detailist** (*Vaibashika* or *Abhidharma* schools) is the first, and the lowest, of the four ancient schools of India. They believe that vows are untouchable, invisible physical stuff that permeates your body. Initially, the vows communicate sincere renunciation through tears, etc. But afterward, you have "non-communicating" physical vows (their presence isn't apparent to observers).
- 4b. **Implication School** (*Madhyamika Prasangika*) is the upper half of the fourth school (*Madhyamika* or Middle Way), the highest school of Buddhism. They believe the vows are made of physical conceptualizations, that your visualizations are a kind of form with colors and shapes existing as an object outside your mind, and that this is where the vows are; form that is pictured in the mind. The vows are the conceptualization of seeing yourself not thinking, saying or doing anything bad. (Schools 2, 3, and 4a are on the next page.)

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Class Three, continued

This is the view of the other two and a half schools:

...PONGWAY SAMPA GYUNCHAKPA SABUN DANG CHE YINNO SHE...
to give up the intention stream of mental seed continuation of some people say it's

"Some people say the individual freedom vows are the [mental] intention to give up bad deeds/words, along with the seed/propensity of that intention which resides in the mental stream."

2. **Sutrists** (*Sautrantika*) say the vows exist as a continued intention; when you're about to act you think, "Oh no, I shouldn't do that."
3. The **Mind-Only School** also says the vows exist as the mental seed, because the vows can be broken during deep meditation.
- 4a. **Independents** (*Madhyamika Svatantrika*) say the vows are the physical conception, the physical restraining of body and speech as you conceive of them in the mind.

Eight Categories of Individual Freedom Vows:

1. **NYEN NE** One day vows (there are eight components); these last for twenty-four hours. When the sun rises the next morning and you can see lines on your palm, the vows are lost.
2. **GE NYEN PA** Lifetime Layman's Vows
3. **GE NYEN MA** Lifetime Laywoman's Vows
4. **GE TSUL PA** Novice Monk's Vows
5. **GE TSUL MA** Novice Nun's Vows
6. **GE LOP MA** Intermediate Nun's Vows
7. **GE LONG MA** Fully-ordained Nun's Vows (364 vows)
8. **GE LONG PA** Fully-ordained Monk's Vows (253 vows)

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Class Four: One Day, Lifetime Lay, and Novice Monk Vows

Sets of Individual Freedom Vows: Je Tsongkapa splits the eight vows into two groups: vows that relate to householders, and vows that relate to non-householders:

1. **KYIMPAY CHOK KYI DOMPA** Three sets of vows relate to those living the
householder type that vows family life: the lifetime laypersons' vows for
men and for woman, and one-day vows.
2. **RABJUNG CHOK KYI DOMPA** Five sets of vows relate to those who have left
left family life type that vows family life (ordained monk and nun vows).

One Day Vows:

NYEN NE One-Day Vows. Eight separate commitments: four primary and four secondary. You are trying for a single day to live like a person who doesn't have any bad thoughts.

Four primary vows:

1. **MI TSANG CHU** **Sexual activity;** adultery is the most serious.
not clean activity
2. **MA JIN LEN** **Stealing;** taking anything that has not been given which is of
not taken given any noticeable value.
3. **SOK CHU** **Killing a human or human fetus;** Buddhism teaches that
life to cut consciousness enters when the sperm meets the egg, and
abortion therefore is a serious misdeed.
4. **DZUN MA** **Lying;** especially about your spiritual life, and in particular
false to speak about seeing emptiness directly.

Four secondary vows:

5. **MEL CHE TE** **Luxurious furniture;** using, or enjoying big comforts; not
seat,bed expensive lofty living simply.
6. **CHANG TUNG** **Drinking alcohol, using intoxicants;** anything natural or
beer to drink chemical that lowers your inhibitions.
7. **GAR SOK TRENG SOK** **Dancing, singing, playing music; wearing flower garlands,
perfumes, jewelry, cosmetics;** these things lower your
inhibitions and disturb your meditative concentration.
8. **CHI DRO KASE** **Eating after noon time;** makes you feel heavy and disturbs
after noon eating meditation.

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Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Four, continued

The reason for taking one-day vows or any other individual freedom vow is to escape samsara, which is a mental state. The goal (in vinaya) is to reach nirvana.

TEKCHEN SO JONG mahayana repair purify **One-day Mahayana vow of purification.** This is a Mahayana practice. The goal is to get bodhichitta. This Mahayana one-day vow should not be confused with the other one-day vow.

Lifetime Laypersons Vows:

GE NYEN Lifetime Layperson's Vows. These are easy to keep, and include five serious bad deeds. The five vows are the same for men and women.

1. **Killing a human or human fetus.**
2. **Stealing** anything of worth, taking what was not given; includes cheating on taxes, etc.
3. **Lying about your spiritual life**, especially saying that you saw emptiness directly.
4. **Committing adultery**, being unfaithful to your spouse or partner, or having sex with another married person.
5. **Taking intoxicants.** Lord Buddha said that anyone who drinks or serves the amount of alcohol that fits on the tip of a blade of grass is not a Buddhist. This vow includes any type of intoxicant.

Additional part: Never breaking the advices on going for refuge; most specifically not giving up the dharma refuge, the dharma jewel, which refers to hurting other people. The essence of all the advices on refuge is to give up hurting other people.

Anytime you instigate anybody to do the above five things it is equal to doing it yourself. The vows actually change your sensitivity to Dharma and your spiritual capacity.

Novice Monk Vows:

GE TSUL 13 Novice Monk Vows. Lay people cannot be told the individual ordination vows. They fall into three categories:

1. **TSAWA SHI**
root four **Four Primary:** sex, stealing, killing, lying (same four as One-day Vow).
2. **YEN LAK DRUK**
secondary vows six **Secondary Six:** handling money; luxury; intoxicants; dancing, etc.; flowers, etc.; eating after noon.
3. **LANG DE SUM**
take transgress three **Three Transgressions:** disrespecting the person who gave you the vows; keeping your lay appearance; failing to take up a monk's appearance (wearing robes and keeping short hair).

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Class Five: Vows of Full Ordination

Six Steps for Reaching Full Ordination Vows:

The proper reason for taking the individual freedom vows is renunciation. You are tired of suffering, fed up with being unhappy, with having a sick mind. You want to get rid of the mental afflictions forever. This class covers the ideal progression from first taking the layperson's vows up to taking the full ordination vows. The example is for a woman progressing to fully ordained nun's vows.

NYE NE PUNTSOK **Faultless.** The ideal, excellent way of getting to your full ordination problem no perfect vows. This progression occurs in six steps for women:

1. **GENYEN MA** **Lifetime Laywoman's Vows.** Includes five vows and keeping the advices on going for refuge. You are putting all your hope, all your faith and trust in ethical living. The main point is to understand emptiness and why you need to live an ethical way of life.
2. **BARMA RABJUNG** **Commitment to leave the home life.** This is not an individual freedom vow per se, but is a step taken before the ordination vows.
3. **GE TSUL MA** **Novice nun's vows.** Four primary, six secondary, and three transgressions.
4. **GE LOB MA** **Intermediate nun's vows.** Generally taken for two years only. In addition to the 13 GETSULMA vows, includes 12 additional commitments:
 - 4a. **TSAWAY CHU DRUK** More serious; relate to contact with a man, etc.
primary things six
 - 4b. **JETUN CHU DRUK** Less serious; for example, proper diet, digging in
secondary things six the ground, etc.
5. **TSANG CHU NERNE KYI TSULTRIM** **Observe celibacy purely.** This
pure activity keep of morality is not an individual freedom vow, but
it purely is a commitment taken before receiving
the fully-ordained nun's vows.

Fully Ordained Nun's Vows:

6. **GE LONG MA** **Fully ordained nun's vows.**
TUNGWA DE NGA Five categories into which fully ordained nun's vows (364) and
fall down group five monk's vows (253) fall. They are in sequence from the most
serious to least serious, and are grouped into five categories:

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Class Five, continued

1. **PAMPA** (8 for nuns, 4 for monks) **To lose, be defeated** (by the mental afflictions). These are very serious and dangerous.
to lose
2. **HLAKMA** (20 nuns, 13 monks) **Remainder**, left over. You still have something leftover that you can repair, to get back on track.
remainder
3. **TUNG JE** **Downfall**. These make you fall down to the lower realms.
to fall makes you There are two categories of downfalls:
 - 3a. **PANG TUNG** (33 nuns, 30 monks) A downfall where you have to give up something to make amends, to fix it.
give up downfall
 - 3b. **TUNG JE BASHIK** (180 nuns, 90 monks) A downfall where you don't have to give up something.
downfall simple
4. **SOR SHAK** (11 nuns, 4 monks) **Must confess individually**.
individually confess
5. **NYE JE** (112 nuns, 112 monks) **Did a bad thing**, which was not excellent.
bad did it

SO JONG **Confession ceremony**. Confessing your broken vows to your Lama and to other good people is very powerful, very liberating. The quicker you confess it the better, so that the bad seed doesn't fester and grow. It functions to purify your bad deeds.
repair purify

Morality is the basis of your spiritual success. *Avoiding the ten misdeeds is the engine that drives all spiritual progress.* You should examine your vows and ethical conduct every day. You must make a continuous effort to improve in order to progress beyond your present state.

The energy of taking a vow to avoid a certain behavior and then deliberately avoiding it, is much more powerful than simply not doing it because it's your natural inclination at the moment. Your current natural goodness comes from your past ethical living, and it's easy to lose this goodness as you get older and the karma that created it wears out.

The quality of your meditative concentration is directly related to keeping your morality purely. If your life is not noticeably improving, it is most likely because you are not regularly focusing on improving your ethical living.

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Class Six: The Ten Non-Virtues and their Karmic Results

The Ten Non-Virtues:

The Ten Non-Virtues, or paths of karma, comes from the *Great Book on the Steps of the Path* (LAM RIM CHEN MO), by Je Tsongkapa. The *Chapter on the True*, and the *Sutra on the Ten Levels*, describe the results, or "consistent consequences," associated with each of the 10 Non-Virtues. These consequences are explained in this class.

Avoiding the ten Non-Virtues is the basis of all ethical living. Leading an ethical life can bring you to nirvana. If there's something in your life that you don't like, you can figure out the karmic cause and remove it by cleaning up your thoughts and behavior. You focus on removing the causes (unethical conduct) that create future consequences. We constantly do all ten non-virtues. The understanding of the relationship between the ten non-virtues and the resulting quality of your life should run your life, based on a rational analysis of your current sufferings, what caused them, and how to stop them in the future.

To get the full bad karma from these ten misdeeds, you must be doing them intentionally, to the point of completion, with clear understanding of the error, and with harmful thoughts in your mind (the strength of the result depends on all four factors being present). In the U.S., we generally refrain from misdeeds either because of an external authority like God, parents, social norms, or the law; or because of the embarrassment of doing it in public. These are irrelevant myths or bases of ethical conduct. Our proper motivation should be to stop planting bad seeds in our mind so that we can reach nirvana.

Je Tsongkapa states, "Great Lamas of the past have expressed the position that the '**Consistent Consequence**' is where, even if you do manage to take birth as a human, you enjoy killing things, etc.; and that experiencing the various results listed below is a '**Ripened Consequence**.'" Finally, "**Environmental Consequences**" relate to the land and the surroundings in which you live.

The following presentation defines the misdeed, and for each misdeed lists the "**consistent result**" (the personal consequence you experience because you have done that specific misdeed), and the "**environmental result**" (the characteristics you perceive in your environment because you have done the misdeed).

Results of Doing the Ten Non-virtues:

1. **Killing** any living being. It includes abortion, suicide (ruining a body that could have reached nirvana in this life), and participating in the military (even being a cook; it's as if you shot the gun yourself).

Personal Result:

Environmental Result:

Your life is short; and you get sick easily, have little energy. Food, drink, medicine, crops, have very little effect, are always inferior, are not nutritious; are hard to digest, cause disease in you. Most beings around you die before reaching the end of a full life.

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Class Six, continued

2. **Stealing** anything of value; includes shady business deals, cheating on rent, taxes, or bills, underpaying what's due to local government or society, etc.

Personal Result: You don't have enough to live on or to make ends meet; and what you do have is all just common property with others.

Environmental Result: The crops are few and far between, they have no power to remove hunger, they spoil or never come up; dry spells stay on too long; it rains too much; the crops dry up or die off.

3. **Sexual Misconduct.** It mainly means adultery—cheating on your partner, a person to whom you are exclusively committed. It also includes some specific secondary behaviors.

Personal Result: The people who work around you are "inconsistent" (unreliable); and you find yourself having a lot of competition for your partner.

Environmental Result: You live in a place where there is urine and feces all around, and mud, dirt, filth; everything stinks, and everywhere seems unpleasant and distasteful.

4. **Lying**, giving someone else a wrong impression about what you've seen, believe, or know; unless it would save someone's life or prevent real suffering. If you lie and get something, the benefit comes from past good deeds, not from the lie.

Personal Result: No one believes what you say, even when you're speaking the truth; others are always deceiving you.

Environmental Result: Your work in cooperation with others fails to prosper and people around you don't work well together; everyone generally is cheating one another and is afraid, and there are many things to be afraid of.

5. **Divisive Talk**, splitting people up with your talk; saying things to alienate or separate two different people, (regardless of whether or not your words are true); causing one person to like another person less; it's usually subtle, like in your tone of voice.

Personal Result: You lose friends easily; people around you are always fighting one another; and people around you have an undesirable character.

Environmental Result: The ground you live in is split up, uneven, covered with crags and gullies, highs and lows, so travel is difficult and you are always afraid and there are many things to be afraid of.

6. **Harsh Talk**, with bad intent and effect; it includes sarcastic "nice" words and swearing.

Personal Result: You hear many unpleasant things, you hear things as bad sounds; and when others talk to you it always seems to you as if they want to start a fight.

Environmental Result: The ground where you live is covered with obstacles like fallen tree trunks, thorns, stones, sharp broken glass; it's rough, dreary, no streams or water springs; the ground is parched and poisoned, burning hot and threatening; there are many things to fear.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Six, continued

7. **Idle Talk**, meaningless chatter; criticism, disputes, useless joking, whining, complaining, speaking out of the motive of attachment or craving; gossiping about politics, sports, etc., or about people engaged in wrong livelihood; reciting prayers while not thinking about their meaning. Gossiping about other's values or spiritual practice. Dharma is sacred and should be discussed in holy private whispers on special nights, not causally -- talk in hushed tones, very beautiful sacred speech, talk about inspiring things. As an aspiring bodhisattva, you may need to discuss mundane topics with others for their benefit, but keep the ultimate goal in mind, and don't be drawn into worldly conversations.

Personal Result: No one listens to you; no one respects what you say—no one thinks that what you say has any particular value; and you are afflicted with a lack of confidence, and self-esteem.

Environmental Result: Fruits refuse to grow, or grow at the wrong times, seem ripe when they're not, have frail roots; there are no leisure places around like parks, or pools of cool water; many things around make you afraid.

8. **Craving/Coveting** is similar to coveting in the ten Commandments. Wanting others' possessions and personal qualities, like their intelligence, health, fame, youth, spiritual achievements. It comes in five stages: you're attached to your own possessions, desire to accumulate more than you have, discover another's possessions, like to make them your own, and the desire becomes unmanageable and you "lose shame" (then you act).

Personal Result: Your personality is dominated by desire; and you are never satisfied with what you have.

Environmental Result: Every good thing you manage to find starts to get worse, decrease as days, months, and seasons pass.

9. **Ill-Will** is to wish bad things upon others; being pleased when others fail or have misfortune; competitiveness, like, "Oh, how did they mess up? Tell me more..." not feeling as bad for an unfortunate person as you would feel for yourself if you were them.

Personal Result: Your personality is dominated by anger; you are always finding yourself without help, or never find the help you need; and you are always hurting others, or always being hurt by others.

Environmental Result: You live in a world of chaos, diseases spread, evil is everywhere, plague, conflict, fear of harm from the military, dangerous animals, you're surrounded by harmful spirits, thieves or muggers, etc.

10. **Wrong View**, "Incorrect world view" means not regarding karma as being the direct cause of every microsecond of experience we have. This leads to doing misdeeds #1-9.

Personal Result: Your personality is dominated by stupidity; you are a person who keeps harmful views; and you are a deceitful person.

Environmental Result: You live in a world where the single highest source of happiness is steadily disappearing from the earth; where people think that unclean and suffering things are actually nice and happy; where there is no place to go, no one to help you, nothing to protect you.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Six, continued

Four Types of Karmic Results: Committing the ten misdeeds leads to these four types of karmic results:

1. **NAM MIN** **A ripening result**, (as in the ripening of fruit or a blister). It means "to be ready, inclined to experience the result," and refers to the realm in which your rebirth will occur:
 - a. Big bad deeds lead to birth in the hell realm.
 - b. Medium bad deeds lead to birth in the craving spirit (preta) realm.
 - c. Small bad deeds lead to birth in the animal realm
2. **GYU TUN** **A result consistent with the cause**, consistent with the karmic cause you have personally created. The great scriptures list two consistent causes for each misdeed. For example, if you killed other beings, your own life will be short, and/or you will get sick easily. Based on your knowledge of these cause and effect relationships, you can determine the specific causes and design a future that is free of these sufferings.

cause consistent
3. **Consistent** **Consistent karmic result.** Je Tsongkapa says that great Lamas of our lineage have described another kind of consistent cause, which is the tendency to do the same misdeed over and over again in the future, to be attracted to doing the misdeed. It means attraction toward ingrained habits.
4. **Environmental Result** Environmental results relate to how you experience the physical earth and society in which you live—the world around you.

The karma of committing not to do these ten misdeeds is an exercise of renunciation, not just something cool to do. There is no way to fundamentally change the external world around you; rather, you should have intelligent self-interest and eliminate bad karma in order to change what you don't like about your own experience. The vows are the way to remove your unhappiness. You will notice how your life changes, and it's great fun, makes your life charmed, magical, special, beautiful. Forget about shamata, vipashyana and other tricks for the time being; you must be purified first.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Seven: Taking and Keeping the Vows

The Kind of Person Who Can Grow the Individual Freedom Vows:

TEN Something upon which something else rests, or is based upon. In vinaya, **Foundation** refers to an appropriate body and mind with which to take the individual freedom vows. Those who possess any of the following seven characteristics are ineligible to take the vows:

1. Beings who live on the Northern Continent of Unpleasant Sounds. These beings always live a secure 500-year life, and therefore can't have renunciation (we live on the Southern Continent).
2. Those who are impotent and unable to engage in sexual relations; the male/female energy gives you strength to practice.
3. Neutered persons, who lack sexual energies.
4. Hermaphrodites, who lack pure sexual energies.
5. Anyone who has committed one of the five immediate bad deeds (killing your father, mother, or an arhat; trying to hurt a Buddha; and causing a schism in the sangha during the time that Lord Buddha walked on this earth.)
6. Imposters, who pretend to take the vows, from curiosity, or any other insincere reason.
7. People who doesn't believe in karma, rebirth, or the Three Jewels.

How You Lose the Individual Freedom Vows:

TONGWAY **GYU** **How you can lose the vows.**
lose vows what makes you

A. General causes of losing all the individual freedom vows:

1. **LAPPA** **PUL** **Formally give back, return the vows;** the vows are taken for life
precepts to offer for reasons of renunciation.
2. **SHI PU** **To die and move on.** You automatically lose all individual freedom
vows at death.
3. **TSEN** **NYI** **JUNG** **If the opposite sex organ emerges.**
sex organ two if they appear
4. **LEN** **SUM** **GYUR** **If you change gender three times or more.**
times three change
5. **GE** **TSA** **CHE** **If you destroy the root of your accumulated virtue.**
virtue root of cut

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Seven, continued

B. Specific causes of losing specific individual freedom vows:

1. **NYI SHU MALUN DERSHE** You lose your full monk vows if it's discovered that 20 years old didn't reach found out you weren't twenty years old when the vows were taken, and you are still not twenty.
2. **TEN CHIR KE LANG** You lose your intermediate nun's vows if you agree to have sex with a man.
have sex agree to do
3. **NYIN SHAK DE** The one-day vow ends after 24 hours.
24 hour passes

2 additional ways to lose vows, according to Sutrists and the Under-the-Sun School:

1. **TSA TUNG JUNGWA** If you commit one of the defeats you instantly lose your vows.
defeat if you break
2. **DAMCHU NUPPA** If the holy Dharma disappears in the land.
Buddha Dharma if it declines

However, the Tibetan "Kashmiri-Detailist" school, which we follow, believes:

BULUN NORNDEN SHIN Having the vows is like being a very rich man, and breaking the vows is like owing a debt which is huge but smaller than the riches; the vows can be irreparably damaged, but not lost, by committing one of the defeats.
have a debt be rich metaphor

The Benefits of Taking and Keeping the Individual Freedom Vows:

1. **NEKAP DREBU HLA MI** You avoid rebirth in the three lower realms.
short-term result deva human
2. **TARTUK DREBU JANGCHUB SUM** You will reach the three enlightenments
ultimate result enlightenments three (Listeners, Self-made Buddhas, Mahayana.)

JE TSONGKAPA His name comes from the TSONG river which runs through the Tibetan province of Do Kam.

The Meaning of the Name, "Essence of the Ocean of Discipline":

Essence: The individual freedom vows are the most extraordinary, essential core of vinaya; more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel.

Ocean: Understanding in detail the principles of vinaya, and its great structure, is similar to the ocean's great depth and richness, from whence comes precious jewels.

Discipline: You tame (dulwa) your sense organs and mental afflictions.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Eight: Introduction to the Steps of the Path

Lam Rim:

LAM RIM Steps of the Path. The last three classes will cover the Lam Rim which was path steps taught by Lord Buddha in the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras, and later revived by Master Atisha. Lam Rim study grounds you in the essence of all Buddhist teachings. It's a presentation of all the steps you need to get to Buddhahood.

LAM RIM DUDUN Short Book on the Steps of the Path, by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419.) path steps brief He wrote several versions of the Lam Rim, including his masterpiece presentation the LAM RIM CHEN MO. The brief and very personal version of the Lam Rim is also called:

JEY NYAM GUR Song of My Spiritual Life
of the personal song
lord experience

The Lineage:

The continuation of the Buddhist lineage is extremely important as the means of passing down the authentic essence of the teachings from heart to heart, mind to mind, through the ages. You have to be a receptacle, and the Lama has to pour water into you, and then you keep that water purely and pour it into the next person that you teach.

1. **SHAKYA TUPPA Shakyamuni Buddha,** "capable one of the Shakya clan," Gautama Buddha (500 B.C.). Buddha knows the words to help every being reach nirvana and paradise, and has the power to emanate in order to teach us.

SHING TAY SOLJE The inventor of the horse-drawn carriage, a simple but wooden horse inventor elegant device of ancient India, is used as a metaphor for the two great commentators of Buddha's sutras: Maitreya/Asanga and Manjushri/Nagarjuna.

2a. **JETSUN JAMPA Maitreya.** He mainly taught love, "widespread behavior," spending your whole life thinking about and helping others. Caring only for others automatically makes you happy.

2b. **JAMPAY YANG Manjushri, Gentle Voice.** He mainly taught wisdom, "the vision of emptiness."

3a. **Asanga (350 a.d.)** Taught mainly bodhisattva behavior, as dictated by Maitreya; Asanga transmitted the teachings to Atisha through Serlingpa.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Eight, continued

The Lineage (cont.)

- 3b. **Nagarjuna** (200 a.d.) Taught mainly the view of emptiness, dictated by Manjushri; he transmitted the teachings to Atisha through Vidyakokila.
4. **Atisha** (982-1052) Wrote the *Lamp on the Path*, the first Lam Rim book. It systematically combines the lineages of the teachings on bodhisattva activity and wisdom.
5. **Subsequent Lamas** From Atisha up the present day, and following. Prophecies in the sutras say that Buddhism will continue for another 2,500 years by Western people; we are a conduit to pass along the teaching to others perfectly, purely, clearly.
- NYINPO DORDU SELWA** *Illumination of the Essence*, by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup
essence brief illumination (1675-1748). It emphasizes the importance of the unbroken lineage of bodhisattva behavior and wisdom. This lineage is a fragile thing which can only be transferred from teacher to student, and not through books alone.

If you study only a brief summary of the Lam Rim, you have basically covered all 3,500 works of the Kangyur and Tengyur.

Four Special Qualities of the Lam Rim Teaching:

1. **Realize all the teachings are free of any inconsistency.** You realize that some incredible genius has set up this huge system that all fits together perfectly. Although the different Buddhist schools present disparate views from one another based on the capacity of their students, all the schools are a perfectly interlocking puzzle designed to help people reach enlightenment.
2. **Every teaching strikes you as personal advice.** Your personal contemplations and meditations will relate to each and every sentence of all the Buddha's teachings if you're connecting with your Lama and purely practicing the Lam Rim.
3. **Easily grasp the intent of the Buddhas** (of their teachings). You will come to understand why the Buddha taught every specific point, and why they are all a necessary part of the Lam Rim.
4. **Save you from the great abyss.** You will avoid the great mistake of outrightly rejecting one of the teachings. This doesn't mean you should blindly accept a point which you don't believe right now, but rather that you should set aside the point for later consideration instead of permanently rejecting it.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Nine: Description of the Lower Scope

Finding and Relating to Your Teacher:

SHE NYEN Your Lama; your blood relative, your friend.
relative friend

DE NE DI CHIY LEKTSOK JINYEPAY
and then this & later all the good how ever many
life lives things in life

TENDREL LEKPAR DRIKPAY TSAWA NI LAM TUN SHE NYEN
get off to get it right exactly right pivotal path who blood friend
a good start moment shows you relation

Your Lama is your blood brother, your close friend. **Your relationship with your Lama is the great pivot of your escape from samsara. Your most important job is to find your Lama. If you mess up one tiny bit of the chemistry it's destructive;** if the vibe is just right, this life and all of your future lives will be excellent. Finding a Lama with the following ten qualities is very important, but you must also trust your heart. You give your whole life to your Lama (and you get it all back). Your Lama doesn't want anything from you except for your own happiness, for you to learn and practice well. Your offering to your Lama is your Buddhist practice.

10 Characteristics of a Qualified Teacher:

1. **DULWA**
discipline **Controlled**, keeping the three sets of vows (pratimoksha, bodhisattva, and secret). If they are not living an ethical way of life, they will only hurt you or waste your time.
2. **SHIWA**
peace **Peaceful**; they have have the ability to concentrate deeply.
3. **NYER SHIWA**
really peaceful **Have wisdom**; they have a broad and deep understanding of emptiness.
4. **YUNTEN HLAKPA**
spiritual excessive qualities **Far exceeds the students' spiritual qualities** (in having compassion, wisdom, etc.)
5. **TSUN CHE**
effort has **Dedicate their life to the two goals**: ultimate enlightenment for themselves and for others' benefit. All their energy is focused upon saving themselves and others from continued suffering.
6. **LUNG GI CHUK**
scripture in wealth **Mastery of the scriptures**: of the vinaya, sutra, and abhidharma collections of scripture.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Nine, continued

7. **DE-NYI RABTOK** **They have perceived emptiness directly**, and can explain the true emptiness great realization relationship between morality, karma, and emptiness.
8. **MA KE DEN** **A master teacher**: they can grasp the students' capacity, and teach at the appropriate intensity and speed to benefit the students.
teach master possess
9. **TSEWAY DAKNYI** **Have the right motivation**: they have love and compassion for the students' ultimate benefit; not money, respect, fame, etc.
love embodiment of
10. **KYOWA PANG** **They never get impatient with students**, are infinitely forgiving; they never tire of giving repeated explanations or difficult teaching.
distaste gave it up

Connecting with Your Teacher:

This is critical: Your Lama is your only connection to the Buddhas. Being in their presence wears out enormous karma, so you must think of them and treat them as special in order to continue their appearance to you. The emotion you feel toward them generates great new karma; to venerate, bow down to them is very holy. Take advantage of the holy moment. When your virtue is good enough, you'll find your Lama. They are empty and your karma is creating them. Your perception of them as a holy teacher is based on your karma, and their perception of themselves as a holy teacher comes from their karma. The highest good deed is to find your root Lama and give yourself to Him or Her. This is the first and most important path; don't have ignorant attachment to them, but give your heart to them with wisdom.

Taking Refuge:

Taking refuge means trusting in the relationship between karma and emptiness. Refuge comes from two things::

1. You are afraid of something.
2. You think that something can help you.

We take refuge in the Three Jewels:

1. **Buddha Jewel**: symbolically, a statue of Buddha. The real Buddha Jewel is the dharmakaya, the emptiness of a Buddha, which you meet on the Path of Seeing when you perceive emptiness directly.
2. **Dharma Jewel**: symbolically, the books, and scriptures. The real Dharma jewel is:
 - a. **Cessations**: For example, of having to be reborn in the lower realms, or of believing intellectually in the self-existence of things.
 - b. **Paths**: For example, the five Paths, or the three Principal Paths.
3. **Sangha Jewel**: symbolically, ordained monks and nuns. The real Sangha jewel is all those who have perceived emptiness directly.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Nine, continued

The Four Powers:

The Four Powers, or Four Forces, can be used to wipe out your bad karma, if used with strength, on a daily basis. They are explained in Je Tsongkapa's *Song of My Spiritual Life*:

1. **TEN GYI TOB**
basis of force
Refuge and bodhichitta. Start with the basics.
2. **NAMBAR SUN JINPAY TOB**
totally wipe out force
Regret. The intelligent regret of an educated Buddhist; the logical knowledge that you've just planted a seed that will cause you suffering in the future.
3. **NYEPA LE LARN DOKPAY TOB**
bad deed karma restrain yourself force
in the future
Restraint. Not doing the bad deed again in the future based on your intelligent regret. Choose an appropriate and manageable time frame, like one hour, or one month during which you will be able to avoid the misdeed.
4. **NYENPO KUNTU CHUPAY TOB**
antidote some activity force
Antidote. An action to make up for the bad karma. For example, memorizing scripture, or doing a loving act that offsets the bad deed. The ultimate antidote is to study and meditate on emptiness, which naturally will lead you to avoiding bad deeds.

The *Diamond-Cutter Sutra* states that if you do these Four Powers well, a bad karma that otherwise would take you to the lowest hells could ripen as a mere headache.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Ten: Description of the Medium and Greater Scopes

The Four Arya Truths:

PAKBA DENPA SHI **The Four Arya Truths:**
arya noble four

1. **DUK NGEL DEN-PA** **The Truth of Suffering.** It includes:
suffering truth, fact
 - a. **Impure vessel of the world**, the suffering world we live in.
 - b. **Impure contents**, the suffering bodies and minds of living beings.

2. **KUN JUNG DEN-PA** **The Truth of the Cause of Suffering.** It includes:
everything truth
 - a. **Karma**, our impure actions of body, speech and mind.
 - b. **NYON MONG PA** **Mentally afflicted things.**

Anything that is truth number one, suffering, is also truth number two, the cause of suffering. It includes nearly everything around you, everything in your life except your meditation and pure practice during the day. Everything else in our lives is suffering.

3. **GOK DEN** **The Truth of the End of Suffering.** It includes:
cessation truth
 - a. **GAKJA which is stopped by the path**, for example, eliminating the intellectual belief in self-existent things, based on seeing emptiness directly.
 - b. **GAKJA "stopped" by Middle-Path reasoning**, proving the non-existence of something that never could have existed in the first place, which is emptiness.

4. **LAM DEN** **The Truth of the Path.** The cause of the end of suffering.
path truth
 - a. **The Paths of Accumulation and Preparation.**
 - b. **The Paths of Seeing, Habituation, and No More Learning.**

The Six Perfections:

1. **Perfection of Giving:**
 - a. **Giving material things;** food, money, pleasant enjoyable things, etc.
 - b. **Giving freedom from fear;** protecting beings from physical danger, anxiety, etc.
 - c. **Giving Dharma;** teaching people how to escape from suffering.

2. **Perfection of Morality.** It includes vinaya, bodhisattva and tantric morality.

3. **Perfection of Not Getting Angry;** patience. Restraining yourself from anger in any situation.

4. **Perfection of Joyful Effort.** Have a good time doing virtue, love it, have fun doing good.

CLASS NOTES

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Ten, continued

5. Perfection of Concentration.

SHI NEY
peace to stay

Meditative concentration, (skt., *shamata*) is the ultimate form of concentration. It is defined as: "Meditative concentration which is infused with the extraordinary pleasure of agility, brought on by being in deep one-pointed concentration upon the particular object of focus."

6. Perfection of Wisdom.

HLAK TONG
special, seeing,
extraordinary vision

Vision of emptiness, (skt., *Vipashyana*), the direct perception of emptiness. It's defined as: "A state of wisdom which is infused with the extraordinary pleasure of agility brought on by analyzing its particular object of focus, all based on a platform of quietude." You are analyzing the self-existence of an object of focus, and realizing that it doesn't really exist, but is a projection of your mind forced on you by your past karma.

The last two perfections in tandem are extremely powerful, and they must come together in order to perceive emptiness directly. **To do so, it is absolutely necessary to meditate one or two hours every day in order to reach a state of concentration where your focus on a holy object is not distracted by sense impressions or any conceptual thought.** You need to arrange your life to accommodate good meditation time for this purpose. And you must first deeply study the Madhyamika view of emptiness in order to understand what you're looking for.