

Teaching Outline from Lama Khedup

Date : 23/8/2025

Mode : Virtual Teaching (Zoom)

The Four Immeasurables



The Four Immeasurables are:

- 1) Immeasurable loving-kindness
- 2) Immeasurable compassion
- 3) Immeasurable joy
- 4) Immeasurable equanimity

The four immeasurables are four positive, beneficial thoughts: Lama Atisha states that the four immeasurable attitudes are a preliminary for developing an enlightenment aim of Bodhicitta.

LOVE or LOVING-KINDNESS



Love is the wish for others to be happy. There are different kinds of love: love between husband and wife, parents' love for their children, children's love for their parents, love between friends, etc. The best kind of love is known as "unconditional love," or love without strings attached.

Sometimes our love for others is conditional: we feel love for them as long as they are kind to us, do what we want them to do, don't do what we don't want them to do, etc., but then we stop loving them, and may even come to hate them, if they are not kind to us, don't do what we want, etc. This is conditional love, and is not pure love. With pure, unconditional love, we don't expect anything in return, and we don't stop loving even if the other person doesn't appreciate us or does something we don't like. We can develop this kind of love towards all beings.

How to develop it?

One way is by cultivating the wish for others to be happy, and gradually learning to extend this wish to more and more people and living beings.

Another way is by cultivating appreciation for the kindness of others, reflecting on how others contribute to our own well-being and happiness. For example, our parents brought us into this world and took care of us when we were small and helpless; other people provided us with food, clothes, houses, utilities, knowledge, skills, entertainment, etc. Realizing this opens our hearts and helps us to feel more caring and kind towards others.

Another way to cultivate loving-kindness is by thinking about how everyone, like ourselves, wants to be happy and to not suffer. Even when people do harmful or negative actions, it is because they are just trying to be happy and avoid suffering. The problem is ignorance: they do not know the real causes of happiness and problems.

Also, every being has Buddha-nature, the potential to become enlightened. Every living being will eventually become free from all negativities and faults, and become perfect, enlightened Buddhas.

COMPASSION



Compassion differs slightly from love: love is wanting others to be happy, while compassion is wanting them to be free from suffering. In order to have compassion, we must be aware of the suffering and problems that others experience. And the way to understand others' problems is by understanding our own. Therefore, it is actually beneficial to experience problems, because that enables us to understand others who are suffering, and to have compassion for them!

One way to develop compassion towards someone is by putting ourselves in their shoes. We can ask ourselves: “How would I feel if I were in that other person’s situation?” This is especially helpful when dealing with someone who may have hurt us, or is doing something we don’t agree with, or who we simply don’t like. If someone is misbehaving, it’s good to understand that it is due to the delusions in their mind, and then blame the delusions, not the person. Feel compassion for the person’s suffering.

Compassion is the basis of Buddhist ethics. It is because of the wish that other beings not experience suffering that we refrain from killing, stealing, lying, etc.

Compassion usually arises more easily for those who are poor, sick, hungry, downtrodden, etc., but we may not realize that rich and powerful people also deserve compassion. They have problems, too: for example, they experience sickness, aging, loss, worry, fear, death, etc.

Having compassion doesn’t mean we always have to say “yes” to everyone, do whatever people want us to do, or be passive when others are misbehaving.

Just as parents or teachers sometimes need to use strong methods to deal with children who are naughty, we may sometimes need to be strong when dealing with difficult people, but we should do so with loving kindness and compassion in our hearts, and not anger and hatred.

JOY/REJOICING



Joy involves wishing all beings to have pure happiness, both now and in their future lives, and wishing that they eventually attain the perfect happiness and peace of Nirvana and Enlightenment.

It also involves feeling happy when someone experiences something good: winning a lottery, getting a promotion or a raise in salary, meeting a new boy/girl-friend, going on an exciting holiday, etc.

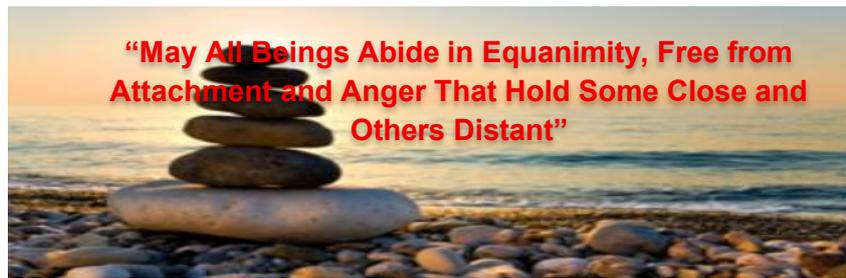
We sometimes feel jealous in such situations, but jealousy only hurts us – it makes us miserable while others are happy.

We can overcome jealousy by reminding ourselves of karma/the law of cause and effect.

According to karma, the reason that the other person is having this good experience is because of the good karma they created in the past, and if we don't have such an experience ourselves, it's because we didn't create the karma.

If we want good experiences in the future, we must create good karma now, and feeling joy/rejoicing is one way to do just that.

EQUANIMITY



Equanimity is the state of being free from attachment to people and things that please us, and aversion towards people and things that displease us.

In the prayer, we express the wish that all beings experience this, but before we can help others to have equanimity, we must develop it in our own mind.

The best way to do this is by remembering the impermanent, changing nature of all things. Nothing lasts – people and things come to an end, good and bad experiences also come to an end – so it's pointless to be attached to the good ones and hate the bad ones.

Another way to develop equanimity is to reflect on how all beings are the same or equal in wanting to be happy and peaceful, and wanting to be free of pain and problems.

Also, all beings are the same in that the real nature of their mind is clear, free of delusions, therefore they all have the potential to attain nirvana and enlightenment.

It is also helpful to reflect on the faults or disadvantages of anger and attachment:

- they disturb our mind.
- they can cause problems in our relationships, health, and other aspects of our life.
- they sometimes motivate us to create negative karma, and thus we will experience problems in the future as well.
- they are obstacles to making progress on the spiritual path, and attaining liberation and enlightenment.

When we understand that indulging in anger and attachment is harmful to ourselves and others, we can then work on them by applying antidotes or solutions.

The best antidote to anger is learning to be more patient and compassionate, and the best antidote to attachment is reflecting on impermanence.

How to practice

The practice typically begins with loved ones, extends to neutral persons, then to difficult people, and finally encompasses all sentient beings throughout space.

This systematic cultivation helps overcome the ordinary mind's limitations of partiality and develops the universal compassion characteristic of a bodhisattva.

For beginners, it is more suitable to meditate on equanimity first; otherwise, the other three attitudes will be partial and will not extend to everyone equally.

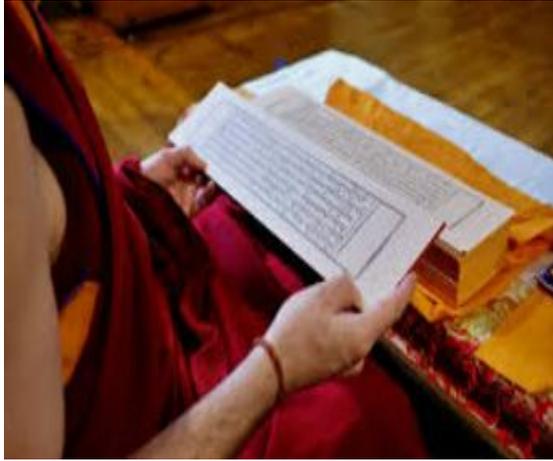
When that is the case, the four attitudes bring about only samsaric results.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were to abide in equanimity, free from hatred and attachment, not holding some close and others distant.
May they abide in equanimity.
I myself will cause them to abide in equanimity.
Please, guru-deity, bless me to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings had happiness and the causes of happiness.
May they have happiness and its causes.
I myself will cause them to have happiness and its causes.
Please, guru-deity, bless me to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were free from suffering and the causes of suffering.
May they be free from suffering and its causes.
I myself will cause them to be free from suffering and its causes.
Please, guru-deity, bless me to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were never separated from the happiness of higher rebirth and liberation.
May they never be separated from these.
I myself will cause them never to be separated from these.
Please, guru-deity, bless me to be able to do this.



This is why in each sadhana, there are the four immeasurable thoughts before you engage in any other practice, because this practice is so essential.

This is one of the main causes of being born as a wheel-turning king, and for that one has to collect inconceivable merit.

One collects so much merit by generating the four immeasurable thoughts.

The main thing is to meditate on the meaning and generate the mind.

This is a great practice to develop and strengthen bodhicitta, because you do this practice for all sentient beings.

Each time you generate the thought, it generates the cause of enlightenment.

- MAY ALL BE AUSPICIOUS -



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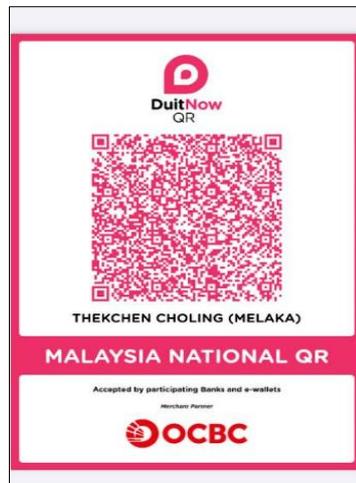


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