

News

July 2021



The Best And Most Useful Simple Practice That I Do

I have joked in the past that if we were to verbalise all our many, varied and absurd thoughts, people would definitely think we were crazy! Although I have said this in jest, the idea is a serious consideration. I share these ideas because I think they have a straightforward truth worth

contemplating. I tend to conduct myself through really considering what may seem simple or obvious because the essence of these points are significant and valuable. I cannot claim to do profound and high levels of spiritual practice. But I do try my best to apply these simple practices. While I cannot claim I have gained great personal experience from them, I do take the initiative to familiarise and acquaint myself with simple sentiments because these easy practices reap great benefits.

The best and most useful simple practice I do, and have shared with you in the past, is to familiarise my mind again and again with this sentiment – ‘I will not intentionally harm any living being, and do whatever I can to help others’. I have encouraged you to familiarise yourself with this thought as well by saying



it to yourself at least once a day, such as in the morning when you wake up. You could have the following thought for just a few moments: May all living beings be happy and free from all suffering; may I personally do whatever I can to benefit them so that it contributes to their

happiness; and may I in no way intentionally hurt others or cause them the slightest suffering. Everyone has the ability to generate this thought and think about it for a few moments. It is such a simple thought and resolution, and can be developed to have far reaching benefits. I find this thought brings me great solace, and gives me a strong sense of internal wellbeing and peace. I can confidently share with you, based on my own experience, that this simple practice is a way to gain great benefits for yourselves. I consider the positive state of mind this simple practice develops to be my best friend.

Excerpt from August 31 2016 teaching given by Venerable Geshe Doga

Online Teachings

with
Geshe Lobsang Dorje



Livestreaming
from the
Tara Institute
Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/TaraInst/>

~ Online teachings are available on our YouTube channel after the livestream event ~
~ Please note it is currently not possible to attend the teachings in person at Tara Institute ~

WEDNESDAYS ~ 8.00pm

37 Practices of Bodhisattvas

Gyelsay Togmay Sangpo wrote the Thirty-Seven Practices of Bodhisattvas in the 14th century. His succinct and simple verses of advice summarise the quintessence of the Mahayana path to perfection. Geshe Lobsang will continue to lead us through the essence of this text. The Livestream event is open to everyone, and you are most welcome to attend with no prior knowledge of Buddhism.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions during the Live Streaming on Facebook, or if you prefer send them via email to the Tara Institute office (admin@tarainstitute.org.au). Geshe Lobsang will answer them on the night or in a future class.

The benefits of learning a simple breathing meditation

A breathing meditation not only helps us to study and practise the Dharma more effectively, but it helps us in mundane activities where it is also important that we feel mentally and physically relaxed and happy. For example, if our mind is overpowered or bothered by a strong force of anger or hatred, then whatever we do will not be enjoyable and our actions won't be effective. So we apply a breathing meditation to overcome any feelings of unease or restlessness we may have, which makes it easier to engage in our activities.

Extract from the February 17, 2021 teaching by Geshe Lobsang

FRIDAYS ~ 8.00pm

Abhisamayalamkara The Ornament of Higher Realisation by Maitreya

Maitreya composed *The Ornament for Clear Realizations* to clarify and make explicit the teachings composed in *The Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*. It is composed entirely of verses and is divided into eight chapters. Each chapter presents one clear realization.

Although it is not compulsory to view every live-streamed teaching as it happens, all online teachings (which begin on June 11th) are made available on our youtube channel after the event, so you can view them whenever it suits you. Geshe Lobsang has advised that in order to gain a good understanding of the topic it would be very beneficial to make a personal commitment to view as much as possible, and to put effort into studying the text.

Geshe Lobsang encourages anyone wishing to participate in these teachings to join from the first teaching.

If you have any questions or would like to register for these teachings please email Amelia – spc@tarainstitute.org.au



Auspicious days are calculated according to the lunar calendar. On these days, the benefits of actions are greatly multiplied, so are especially good for spiritual practice.

Sunday 4	Tibetan 25	Tsog Day	Guru Puja
Tuesday 6	Tibetan 27	HH The Dalai Lama's 86th Birthday	
Friday 9	Tibetan 30	New Moon	Precepts
Wednesday 14	Tibetan 4	Lord Buddha's First Teaching	Precepts
Saturday 17	Tibetan 8	Tara Day	Tara Puja
Monday 19	Tibetan 10	Tsog Day	Guru Puja
Saturday 24	Tibetan 15	Full Moon	Precepts

You are welcome to contact the Tara Institute newsletter editors Allys Andrews and Sandra Kinread at allys.andrews@gmail.com for issues relating to the newsletter



Celebrating Saka Dawa at Tara Institute. A very joyous occasion indeed despite the difficulty of chanting with a mask on and observing social distancing.



Beautiful photos of the meeting of Geshe Doga, Geshe Lobsang Dorje, Geshe Rabten and Geshe Konchog taken prior to the most recent Victorian lockdown. This took place at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion and Atisha Centre Bendigo



Thank you to Damien for taking the photos

Eleven ways of benefitting others

There are eleven ways of benefitting others

The first is to be helpful to visitors. This means guiding travellers in the right direction, supporting them with whatever they need, supporting those who are handicapped – such as guiding the blind – supporting those who are sick with medicines, supporting those who are caught in a famine, floods etc., as well as teaching skills to those who lack skills in their livelihood.

The second is to benefit those who are ignorant. This means showing other beings what actions to accept and reject so that they know the right path. For example, explaining to those who hold the view that desire and anger are positive mental attitudes that this is not correct; that it is a wrong view. In this way, you benefit them by helping them to overcome wrong views and by helping them to prevent unknowingly engaging in misdeeds. Another example here is using sign language with those who are deaf and in that way removing ignorance from their mind.

The third is benefitting those who have helped you. This means showing that you have not forgotten their kindness and help, by acknowledging and repaying their support.

The fourth is benefitting those at risk. This is similar to the giving of protection against fear. As to those at risk, there are animate or inanimate objects. Animate at risk are, for example, innocent people who are wrongly accused and at risk of being charged with a crime. Likewise, helping those who are lacking basic human rights. Helping such helpless innocent beings at risk is an act of benefitting those at risk. Inanimate objects at risk refers to the endangered environment including plants and forests. Since living beings depend on their environment to survive, the protection of the environment is a very important act of benefitting other beings.

The fifth one is benefitting those afflicted with sorrow or grief. This includes acts of helping those who are experiencing sorrow, depression and sadness because of the death of or being separated from their parents, partners, children, relatives, or because

of financial or material loss etc. You help them by extending your love, being with them, listening to them, giving them a word of inspiration, consoling them, and making them aware of the truth of death and impermanence etc.

The sixth is benefitting those who are impoverished. Here there are many ways we help others. For example, we may give people who are poverty stricken the money or material things that they need. We can offer water to those who are thirsty, food to the hungry, shelter to the homeless. We can offer a lift in our car to those people who need help with transportation. All of these actions fit into the category of this way of benefitting.

The seventh is benefitting those whose livelihood is dependent on you. For example, as an owner of a large firm you should not treat the employees as your serfs, exploit or abuse them; rather treat them with dignity, respect, kindness and fairness.

The eighth is benefitting others by adjusting yourself to their wishes and needs. In order to effectively benefit others, first they must trust you and accept you as their friend. So, as part of cultivating a spirit of friendship, we must understand them and respect their wishes and needs. Without achieving this we cannot fully benefit them even if we are very sincere and wholehearted in wanting to benefit them.

So, to benefit others we sometimes have to put aside our views and needs and go along with others' views and needs.

The ninth is benefitting those who are on the right path. There are those who are enriched with the excellent qualities of faith, morality and listening etc. You need to admire these people for their qualities. In that way, you will cause them to further increase their qualities. Then there may be others who are on the right path. If they are slow in learning, you need to be patient and never do or say anything which would discourage them. Rather, you only make positive comments to help them stay motivated

and inspired.

Relating to this, let me share with you a story about two of Atisha's disciples, Dromtonpa and Jangchup Rinchen. Jangchup Rinchen was the cook. One day he said to Dromtonpa, 'I really want to practise meditation, but I never get an opportunity because cooking uses most of my time.' Dromtonpa perfectly understood his friend's frustration and wanted to help him. So Dromtonpa said to him, 'Actually, I also have the same sort of problem that I too really want to practise meditation. But most of the time I am serving my master as a translator.' They became very close friends. Then, Dromtonpa said to his friend one day, 'Actually, I find it more beneficial to serve my master than practising meditation.' This statement hit the nail on the head for Jangchup Rinchen who found it very beneficial, and later he felt that cooking for his master gave him joy rather than being boring. In this story, we find how skilful Dromtonpa was in fostering a close friendship and then guiding his friend.

The tenth is the alternative way of benefitting those who don't admit their mistakes or who don't accept any other suggestions to correct their mistakes. There are some people who commit various types of misdeeds. Whether you complain or try to compromise or take any other measurements, it makes no difference. They will not try to change. So, how can you benefit them? Rather than the usual methods, such as scolding or threatening them, engage with them purely out of warm-heartedness and an intention to benefit them.

The eleventh is benefitting those who can be subdued by using miraculous powers. To perform this act of benefit, you display miraculous powers, such as showing the consequences of negative actions by taking the offenders to the hell realm or instilling faith in the existence of life before and after death, by narrating stories of past and future lives. This we can't do!

Excerpt from 12th May 2021 teaching given by Venerable Geshe Lobsang