

Study Group - "Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand"

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by Samdup Tsering

ལྷོ་ལམ་རིམ་རྒྱུ་ལ་ལག་བཅུངས།



14 April 1998

Cultivate the right motivation by thinking, "I wish to achieve full enlightenment in order to benefit all beings, and for this reason I am receiving these teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment. Not only shall I receive these teachings but I shall put them into practice to remove all my self-cherishing attitudes."

Our Self-Potential: We can develop Bodhicitta

We have virtually finished discussing the method of generating bodhicitta - the altruistic mind of enlightenment wishing to attain full enlightenment for the sake of all beings. In very simple terms we understand that this bodhicitta or bodhi mind means having a good heart towards all other beings, and there is no doubt that everyone would wish to have such a good heart. The question is whether it is possible to produce such a wonderful mind of bodhicitta or a good heart? Or do we give up even trying to produce this mind, on the grounds that we cannot possibly cultivate such a mind of love and compassion for all beings?

We have to understand very clearly that this bodhicitta mind about which we are talking is the source of all those excellent qualities we want to achieve for ourself, as well as being the source of all those excellent qualities we want to achieve for the sake of other beings.

With a bodhicitta mind we have strong motivation to achieve full enlightenment for the sake of all beings. If, at the same time, we have the full understanding of our own potential, then we can see that this desire can be fulfilled. When we see the possibility of achieving this ultimate goal for ourself and for others, then we can see that the other goals we pursue in our daily life are all small and very easy. We have to value the wonderful and extraordinary situation in which we live. When we realise this then we understand our own self-potential: what we can achieve, and what our capacities are.

In order to know our own self-potential we have to recognise all the favourable conditions that exist in our life. At the moment we enjoy a human life which is very special, because it has some special extra advantages. Then we think of our opportunity to study Dharma, or anything else we wish. In terms of Dharma we have this opportunity of studying the Dharma taught by the Lord Buddha. Not only that but we have the opportunity to study the higher teachings of the Lord Buddha - the Mahayana. Not only that but within the Mahayana we have the opportunity to study both the highest teachings of Sutrayana and Mantrayana. We are fortunate indeed.

If we consider all the other favourable conditions which

support our life, then we can see there is tremendous potential. If we take full advantage of this, then there are no difficulties in solving the temporary problems that we face in this life. We also have the opportunity to create the causes of temporary happiness for ourself in this life. Not only that but we also have some potential to eliminate suffering and create happiness for the sake of other beings. Our potential is not just to achieve the goals of this lifetime, but to also achieve the goals of happiness and eliminating suffering for oneself and other beings in future lives.

Recognising this favourable situation and our potential, then our time becomes very important for us. How we use our energy is very important, because we do not want to misuse this wonderful opportunity on something meaningless, which does not even bring happiness in this life. When we realise our own potential then naturally we shall become more conscious of time and how we use it, and of making the right choices in our life.

What is the point of studying something if it does not solve our problems or if it does not bring happiness? Before we do something we have to see very clearly, that let alone in future lives, will it even bring benefit in this life? This benefit is seen in terms of eliminating problems or bringing happiness to our life. As we study and practise Dharma it is very important to see how it helps and benefits us in this life as well as in our future life.

Practical Benefits of Bodhicitta

We should also remember all the benefits of generating bodhicitta which we have studied and discussed in the past. This should then be related to the amount of love and compassion that you have for other beings - even if it is a minimal amount. This small amount of love and compassion that you show if not to all, then to some beings, is the equivalent to bodhicitta for you.

Therefore, we have to see that the benefits of bodhicitta which we learn are the benefits of the qualities of love and compassion in one's own mind. Bodhicitta brings happiness and removes all the suffering from the minds of all beings. We have to see that our own qualities of love and compassion also have the potential to solve all our problems, and to bring personal happiness.

Even if we cannot produce a fully-fledged bodhicitta we can still be very appreciative of all the teachings on bodhicitta, and at least wish for such a mind of bodhicitta to be born in ourself. We can see that this mind, or the good heart, stops all unnecessary problems that arise in our mind in relation to other beings - their possessions,

their physical outlook, their skills or their qualification.

Unfortunately, because of this lack of good heart towards others all the wealth and possessions we see in the outside world stimulate desire, jealousy, pride and competitiveness, and these all bring problems or unease into the mind. We have to ask ourselves why we feel bad when we see another who is more beautiful, more qualified, more knowledgeable, or wealthier than ourself. It even happens with our own closest friends, and we feel jealous, which causes us mental pain. Some people who admit to this problem of jealousy find it difficult to see that this is in fact a bad feeling. This bad feeling is all caused by our own mental attitude to all these things we see in the outside world.

In this modern world technology is developing so fast, that more and more things come in contact with our eyes or ears, more and more frequently. If our mental attitude and way of seeing is not properly adjusted and established, then there are more sources of problems arising in our mind because there are so many new outside things. So we have to see that we need to adopt a different mental attitude, akin to what parents have towards their children. When their children progress or have success in life, it does not bring jealousy and competitiveness in the parents' minds, rather it brings joy. The joy of the children is also the joy of the parents, because of their true love and care for their children. If we also cultivate this same very caring and loving attitude for all beings, there is no way that we shall be jealous of their bodies or wealth, nor look down on those who are poor and weak. We shall feel love and compassion rather than jealousy or pride.

We have to see that we can benefit ourselves by cultivating more good heart, love and compassion in our minds. It is not like receiving a material gift of money or clothes, but rather it changes our mental attitude towards other beings, and through this change we prevent many unnecessary problems arising in our mind, and so we increase our happiness.

When we talk of cultivating love and compassion, 'cultivating love' means genuinely wishing for other beings to have happiness, and 'cultivating compassion' means genuinely wishing for other beings to be free from suffering and problems. Therefore, love and compassion does not just mean helping others and solving their problems, but it also means we are talking about solving our own problems, and bringing more happiness to our own mind as well.

If we train our mind with meditation practice and through this develop some love and compassion for others, this love and compassion exists only in our mind. It is just in our mind that we wish for others to be happy and free of suffering. Of course wishing alone does not directly benefit others to bring them happiness, nor does it free them from suffering, but it does directly benefit yourself. Suppose you cultivate love and compassion for some being who dislikes (or even hates) you. Then even if they see you as an enemy you are still able to control your mind, and not be overpowered by anger and hatred, and this is achieved through cultivating love and compassion for other beings.

We have to realise that in most instances when we feel bad or bitter about other beings, it is not because they came at you with a knife or something to physically hurt you, but it is what they say and do which hurts your mind, and so you become angry with them. Love and compassion is a shield which protects our inner peace and happiness.

Of course we also have to realise that the effort we make in trying to show more love and compassion for others implants a seed for true bodhicitta to arise in our mind. When such bodhicitta is produced there are tremendous benefits for ourself and other beings. We can understand this if we examine our own mind: there are states of mind which protect and secure peace and happiness in our life, while there are other states of mind which destroy that peace and happiness. However in our normal life we are not aware of how within us there are these different types of mind that can serve as causes to bring happiness or suffering in life. Whenever something goes wrong in life we must first point the finger at ourselves to find the cause, rather than always pointing it to outer factors. We also have to be aware how important it is to gain knowledge of our mind, and through this to see that cultivating the bodhicitta mind brings more happiness, and prevents a lot of unnecessary suffering in our life.

Headings with outline numbering are derived from the Text. Headings without outline numbering are derived from Geshe Doga's commentary.

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Note on authentication

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28 April 1998



Before tonight's lam rim teaching, please set up a state of mind where you want to bring peace and kindness to all living beings.

The Benefits of Bodhicitta

We are at the point where we have finished the teachings on bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment, and the benefits of generating this thought by it bringing happiness to both your own mind and to the minds of others.

There are a number of analogies that have been used in the teachings to describe the importance of this thought of bodhicitta, and how it can be best expressed in our behaviour. One of these is that once upon a time there was a family who lived in an area which was stricken with drought and famine. It eventually came to the point where only one piece of roast meat remained: if it were to be distributed equally amongst all the family members, then there would not be enough for each to survive. Therefore, the father of the family decided to eat the lot in order to make himself strong enough to go and seek more food for the family.

Perhaps the father was very clever in justifying his decision not to share with his family! Never mind, the point of the story is that out of his compassionate thought for his family the father ate the food, and by making himself strong he went out, and found enough food so that all of his family were able to survive. This form of bodhicitta is one that helps others by helping yourself first.

What makes the thought of caring for others a *bona fide* state of bodhicitta or enlightenment? It is not necessarily determined by outward behaviour which could seem highly selfish on the surface, but which is, in fact, an immense act of compassionate bodhicitta practice. As a matter of fact if one fails to love oneself first, or fails to put one's own house properly in order, then the notion of achieving things for the group is very, very unlikely and probably impossible. Therefore, when we are talking about the benefits of bodhicitta, or the thought of enlightenment, our reasoning must not be restrictive and we must always check the motivation. If the motivation is to look after oneself in order to become strong and fit enough to help others, then even though it might look selfish it is not. It is also an act of bodhicitta. In other words it comes back to generating a very warm caring heart in which one feels a sense of love for oneself, and for others. This can only lead to the generation of the grander state of mind, that of achieving full enlightenment.

Therefore, achieving full enlightenment does not depend upon outwardly strict interpretations of what we should do. It all comes down to the state of mind which propels certain actions: they may look like achieving grander things for others, or they may look self serving. As in the analogy used earlier, even though the father looks highly selfish in eating all the meat, it is the act of an enormously caring mind, because he has done it to care for his family. So we have to interpret the teachings in ways which really help us

to clarify our motivation, then everything we do becomes an act of compassion.

The Quality of Bodhicitta

The quality of bodhicitta, or the thought of enlightenment has a strict definition: it is a thought which seeks to achieve enlightenment. However achieving that kind of *bona fide* or fully qualified state of mind might be very difficult for all of us. Even though this is a very, very precious mind, if we are not careful about it we may become overly focussed on the quality or the definition, and fail to pay attention to the sporadic sense of compassion that we do experience. Caring for others, or feeling good about them, may not necessarily qualify as the thought of enlightenment, but while we are on the path these thoughts are much more important for us. They are the breeding ground upon which the genuine thought of enlightenment will later develop.

Whether our action is for ourself or for others, if we could somehow develop the presiding thought, "Whatever I do is in order to bring happiness or benefit to others", then that state of mind becomes highly precious, and will only lead to the kind of achievement for which we are looking - the state of full enlightenment.

We need therefore to learn to pay attention to these small thoughts that we generate. At least we can say a prayer or try to have some kind of semblance of motivation of doing things to bring happiness for others and free them from their suffering through our actions. This gives us the opportunity for our day-to-day life to become a practice of spirituality.

Two Types of Presentation of the Bodhicitta Mind

Jang chub sem (Tib), or the thought of enlightenment is presented in two possible ways.

1. The generation of bodhicitta through effort. In other words, experiencing a state of passionately wanting to achieve enlightenment for others as a consequence of applying specific meditative techniques: the mental exercise through logic and reasoning which begins by considering and recognising all living beings as being kind as our mothers, then thinking about their kindness, and then to repay that kindness, leading to feeling a sense of love, and feeling a sense of compassion and a strong determination to do something about it which leads you to feel that the only way you can do that is to achieve your own enlightenment. So that is what we call bodhicitta experienced through effort.
2. The natural experience of bodhicitta which is when you naturally experience the tremendous sense of wanting to achieve enlightenment for others without having to rely on meditative technique or mental exercises, or having to go through logical reasons. Instead, the mere sight of a sentient being naturally and effortlessly makes you feel you want to achieve enlightenment, so that you can bring happiness and peace to them, and

free them from their suffering. When you do find yourself so hopelessly feeling such love and bodhicitta then you have become a bodhisattva: you have become the son or daughter of the buddhas, and you have entered the first path of accumulation from the Mahayana point of view. You have become a *bona fide* Mahayana practitioner. When you have that kind of feeling happening naturally to you, do not have any doubts – you are a bodhisattva.

Your job now becomes to reflect on the qualities and characteristics of bodhicitta to somehow bring them closer to your consciousness or mind, which becomes the practice of Dharma.

Having reached this point of the Mahayana path of accumulation through directly experiencing bodhicitta, or the thought of enlightenment out of compassion, one can make it even faster, closer, more real and more practical, through the esoteric practice of Buddhism or Tantra.

Bodhicitta Classified According to Nature of the Mind

The development of bodhicitta can be classified according to the viewpoint of the nature of the mind. It is often described using the analogy of a traveller who is thinking about travelling, as opposed to one who is actually getting on with the job, or who is actually on the path.

1. The first is called desire, aspiration or wishing bodhicitta, which is achieved through such meditative practices as recognising all living beings as one's kind mother and so on, then thinking that "I would really like to achieve enlightenment so that I can bring happiness to all others". Now that state of mind of bodhicitta, or the thought of enlightenment is called wishing bodhicitta.
2. The second is engaging bodhicitta which is obviously a bodhisattva who is no longer thinking about it, but who is actually practising it, such as with the practice of the six perfections and so on. This person is actually in the thick of the action of practising it, and that is what we call entering bodhicitta, or practical bodhicitta.

Bodhicitta According to One's Location Upon the Path

We can recognise the state of bodhicitta through the stage of the development of your bodhicitta.

1. Wishing mind generation of bodhicitta. When you are experiencing wishing bodhicitta you are either on the path of accumulation, or the path of preparation.
2. Pure bodhicitta. This evolves from the first *bhumi* (or level of bodhisattva) to the seventh *bhumi*.
3. Ripening bodhicitta. This is experienced during the paths of eighth, ninth and tenth *bhumis*.
4. The bodhicitta that is completely free of obscuration. Needless to say, this is found at the stage of complete or full enlightenment.

Bodhicitta According to the Mode of Development

Bodhicitta is described in three ways from the point of view of how one approaches its development. There are three analogies used:

1. Like an oarsman
2. Like a shepherd
3. Like a king

These are three possible angles that can be used to develop the true sense of caring which is bodhicitta.

In the first case achieving enlightenment for the sake of all other living beings is approached in a simultaneous fashion, that is, like the oarsman who rows the boat and arrives at the same time as the passengers. The analogy makes clear that one wants to become enlightened along with all other

living beings.

The second approach is as a shepherd would do. First the animals are driven to their destination, and the shepherd then follows them. Similarly the approach to enlightenment is to first of all put all other living beings in the state of enlightenment.

A monarch has first to be enthroned, and then he or she is able to look after his or her subjects. With this third approach one first achieves enlightenment so as to then be able to benefit others.

So there are these three approaches with which one can pursue the development of bodhicitta.

Bodhicitta is also often described by using twenty two examples or models. Geshe-la is not going to go into the twenty two. You can do that for your homework. This pretty much takes care of the generation of bodhicitta through the technique of six causes and one result.

At this point you should reflect that you have the opportunity to talk about such a precious state of mind, one that brings happiness not only to yourself but also to all other living beings. We all seek that state of happiness. So if you do have a reasonable experience of bodhicitta, that is fantastic. If you do not yet have that type of bodhicitta, at least make a mental effort to think that you will do so at some time in your lives.

The next topic in the text is the generation of bodhicitta through exchanging self with others, which we shall begin next week.

To summarise I would like all of you to feel a degree of satisfaction, and to rejoice in the fact that you had the opportunity to listen about something so precious, and so beautiful, as bodhicitta – a state of mind that passionately seeks enlightenment to bring happiness to others.

I received the oral transmission of this particular teaching in Tibet, from the late junior tutor to H.H. the Dalai Lama, Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche. It was very hard work, because every day in the morning I had to walk eight kilometres from Sera Monastery to where this teaching was given, and then come back the same distance without having a decent pair of shoes to wear. So it seems to me now that all that hard work has paid off, in that I have the opportunity and the privilege to be able to bestow this teaching upon you. This teaching thinks of bringing about happiness to others and through it we are all able to develop a certain sense of loving kindness and compassion, and this is the basis from which bodhicitta will grow.

Now the benefits of these qualities of loving kindness and compassion is something that I do not really have to describe to you. You know it yourself. How wonderful it is to feel the sense of caring for others, to have a compassionate mind for others which only thinks about bringing happiness. Happiness is what all living beings are seeking, and this particular teaching is only extolling the virtue of that. That makes me very happy and I hope that it makes you all happy too.

Question: Which of these three approaches to the development of the mind of bodhicitta is best?

Geshe-la: There is not much intrinsic difference to those three approaches, and perhaps it has more to do with what has personal appeal. For Geshe-la perhaps the second one seems like the way to do it: like Chenrezig, to first put all sentient beings in a nice comfortable position, then think about yourself. This seems somehow more to Geshe-la's liking.

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ཅུ་ལམ་རིམ་རྣམས་གྲོ་ལ་ལག་བཅུང་ས།



5 May 1998

As usual try to cultivate the bodhicitta motivation, which is wishing to attain enlightenment for the sake of all beings, and also generate the strong motivation to put into practice whatever you learn in this lam rim teaching.

422.321.2 Training the mind through Exchanging Self With Others

བདག་གཞན་མཉམ་བཞེད་སྒོ་ནས་སྒྲུབ་བ།

Having finished the means of generating bodhicitta using the method of seven-fold cause and effect, we now turn to the next technique of generating bodhicitta, which is exchanging of self with others.

This second method of generating bodhicitta is not taught because the seven-fold cause and effect method is ineffective, because following that method we can certainly generate the bodhicitta mind. However, the method of exchanging of self with others will help us to create a stronger, more intense form of bodhicitta.

These teachings on the method of exchanging self with others can be combined with the practice of giving and taking. The term 'thought transformation' was originally used to refer to this particular combination of methods. Shantideva's text *A Guide to a Bodhisattva's Way of Life* says that this very noble and secret teaching of exchanging self with others is taught for those who want to quickly protect themselves and others.¹

Lineage of these Teachings

We can trace the lineage from which this teaching on the method of exchanging self with others is derived. Manjushri taught it to Shantideva who passed it to Lama Serlingpa. It then went to Atisha.

Atisha had many famous Tibetan and Indian disciples but the instruction on this method was passed to Dromtonpa who is regarded as manifestation of Tara. Dromtonpa also had many disciples of his own including the "Three All Knowers": Geshe Potawa, Geshe Purchung and Geshe Chengawa. Dromtonpa passed this lineage to Geshe Potawa who had two principal disciples, Geshe Langri Tangpa and Geshe Sharawa. From Geshe Sharawa the lineage was passed to his disciple Geshe Chekawa.

It is said that up to Geshe Sharawa the teaching on this method remained very sacred, profound and secret, in that it was not written down nor given to the public. Geshe Chekawa chronicled this teaching because he felt that it would be a very great pity if it was not taught to the public, and were to be lost. So Geshe Chekawa taught the method of exchange of self with others to the public, and composed his very famous text *Seven Point Thought Transformation*.

This particular lineage is called "The Lineage With Great Blessings" and is regarded as the third lineage, the other

two being the Profound Lineage Of View and the Extensive Lineage Of Deed. Atisha had three lamas: Lama Serlingpa, Dharmarakshita and Jampay Naljor. Of these three, he received the lineage of these teachings from Lama Serlingpa.

Seven Point Thought Transformation

Of the many works on thought transformation in the lam rim teachings, *Seven Point Thought Transformation* is regarded as the clearest and easiest to practice, and the most effective for training the mind.

As understood from its title, *Seven Point Thought Transformation* is based on seven main points of training the mind, whereas Geshe Langri Tangpa's *Eight Verses of Thought Transformation* is in eight parts, covered in eight verses.

Everyone should try to remember the seven points of *Seven Point Thought Transformation* which are:

1. Preliminary teachings on the type of life basis
2. Actual teaching on bodhicitta
3. Transforming adverse or unfavourable conditions into favourable ones
4. Explaining how to integrate the practice into one's mind and life
5. Measurement of having trained the mind
6. Pledges of thought transformation
7. Instruction of thought transformation.

As part of our daily practice of thought transformation it is good to memorise this *Seven Point Thought Transformation*. If this takes too long, then say the *Eight Verses of Thought Transformation*. Geshe-la says he recites the *Eight Verses* as his source of practice. So memorise this, and as you say it make some effort to suffuse the meaning of it with your mind, and thereby generate the good heart.

Before he found Geshe Langri Tangpa's teachings on thought transformation, Geshe Chekawa (the author of *Seven Point Thought Transformation*) was a very great and learned scholar in all the five fields of knowledge. However he was not satisfied so he investigated further, and discovered the work of Geshe Langri Tangpa, and in particular this verse:

Give the gains and victories to others;
Take the losses and defeats yourself

This verse particularly moved Geshe Chekawa's heart, so he tried to meet the author, Geshe Langri Tangpa, discovering that he had already died. Eventually however Geshe Chekawa met Geshe Sharawa through whose teachings Geshe Chekawa generated true bodhicitta and composed his own bodhicitta teachings. It is said that as a result he even cured lepers of their disease, so his thought transformation teaching was also called The Healing Teaching.

As said before Geshe Chekawa felt very strongly that if

¹ Editor: Chapter 8 Verse 90

these instructions on thought transformation were not preserved in a written form they might be lost, which would be a great loss. Inspired by this, and by how these teachings could benefit so many other beings, he wrote this *Seven Point Thought Transformation*.

The first line of *Seven Point Thought Transformation* refers to the lineage of these teachings from Serlingpa, who was the main lama from whom Atisha received them.

This instruction, the essence of nectar, comes in a lineage from Suarnadovipi (Serlingpa).

These instructions are called the essence of nectar instruction because the main subject of this teaching focuses upon generating bodhicitta, which is the “essence” of all the teachings. “Nectar essence” can also refer to the full state of enlightenment, which is the ultimate, eternal full state of enlightenment. This teaching is the means of reaching enlightenment, so it is called “essence of nectar”.

We shall continue this teaching on *Seven Point Thought Transformation* next week. Pabongka’s *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand* has a clear explanation of *Seven Point Thought Transformation*² so try to read it before the next teaching.

Next week is discussion night. For the coming written test the compulsory question is to explain this verse from Chandrakirti’s *Supplement to the Middle Way* :

Love is the seed for a magnificent crop -
The state of a Victor.
Like water, love makes that crop grow,
And much later it ripens
Into the thing most desired,
As if it had matured and were ready for use.
That is why at the outset
I praise compassion.

We missed one teaching session in this block, but we did cover two subjects in the discussion session. They were:

1. Differentiate between love in general, and the particular love you generate as part of the seven-fold cause and effect method.
2. In the seven-fold cause and effect method, superior intention is generated after great compassion. Why do we have to generate superior intention? Why do we not go straight onto the generation of bodhicitta, and not bother with superior intention?

The discussion session is a good opportunity not only to learn dharma from others, but also to gain the experience of discussing dharma issues and philosophy with others. So discussions are a very important part of your study and practice. Make sure that you always try to maintain a very positive mental attitude.

If a complex, technical issue comes up, those who have studied dharma for some time should try to explain it to the others, and share whatever you know. This is your offering to others. At the same time others may have difficulty in understanding the points of view of others, and may get upset or even provoke others. It is important on the one hand to do your best to explain things to others, but if doubts cannot be cleared up do not be too concerned, but remain very positive. Try to show a pleasant expression so as to make others feel comfortable and confident of entering the discussion.

Three Types of Pride

Question: What is the difference between pride and courage.

Shantideva’s text says “Bodhisattvas should abide in this pride”³. There are three types of pride.

1. Afflicted pride
2. Action pride
3. Ability pride □

1. Afflicted pride⁴ should be counteracted [as it is a delusion].

The other two, although labelled ‘pride’, are virtuous and are not delusions. Lama Tsong Khapa’s *Great Exposition* clarifies how these two types of pride are the same only in name and are not actually pride.

2. Action pride: Literally ‘pride’ in Tibetan is ‘nga rgyal’ meaning ‘I, victor’, which means wanting victory for oneself or to be on top. The bodhisattva who engages in deeds to serve others, particularly those in need, or who are destitute is driven by a determination to help those in need. This is ‘action pride’ and is within the literal meaning of ‘nga rgyal’.

3. Ability pride: The next type of pride is more like courage, self determination, spirit, or self esteem. It is this high self spirit and confidence in one’s own ability or potential which is so important in terms of counteracting the deluded mind. You have to have strong courage to be able to challenge delusions and gain victory over them. The bodhisattvas have this strong determination or willingness to undertake the task of benefiting others, a task which no other beings shoulder.

This determination is the opposite to the force of delusion – it is challenging delusion. The stronger the determination, the more that the delusions will weaken, and the more you gain control □

Shantideva uses the example of a crow⁵ which is a predator of snakes. It is normally scared of snakes, but if it sees a dead snake it becomes quite aggressive because its enemy is weak. (This shows how devastating delusions [the crow] can be to us [the snake] when our self confidence weakens).

There is apparent contradiction in the meaning of the word ‘pride’, so if people quote Shantideva’s text to show pride is positive, then it is important to know that although the term ‘pride’ is used, it is really referring to high spirit, self determination or willpower.

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³ Editor: Chapter 7, verse 49 “Pride is to be employed in three ways: in work, in opposition to passion, and in power. The pride of work (the second type of pride called “Action pride”) is in this knowledge: all is to be done by myself alone.”

⁴ Editor: The meaning of the first type of pride needs clarification. In the actual texts it refers to a “pride which is an overcoming of afflicted delusions”. This implies that the meaning of this first type of pride is actually to have pride in our ability to overcome delusions.

⁵ Chapter 7, Verse 52

² Editor: The text is reproduced as Appendix 5 in *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*

TARA INSTITUTE

STUDY GROUP TEST-2

19th May, 1998

Answer any **four** from question no. 1-6.

Question no.7 is compulsory

Time allowed one hour

1. Do we have the potential to develop true bodhicitta?
2. After developing great compassion, why is it then necessary to cultivate the superior intention first, before experiencing the bodhicitta?
3. What is the difference between general love and the love developed in the seven fold cause and effect meditation?
4. What makes the thought of caring for others a bona fide state of bodhicitta?
5. What is the difference between an aspiring bodhicitta and an engaging bodhicitta?
6. What are the main points of the seven point mind training?
7. **(COMPULSORY)**

Explain the meaning of the following verse from "The Supplement to the Middle Way" by Chandrakirti.

"Mercy alone is seen as the seed
Of a Conqueror's rich harvest,
As water for development, and as
Ripening in a state of long enjoyment,
Therefore at the start I praise compassion."