

Thirty-Seven Bodhisattva Practices

- 1. At this time when the difficult-to-obtain ship of leisure and fortune has been obtained, ceaselessly hearing, pondering and meditating day and night in order to liberate oneself and others from the ocean of cyclic existence is the bodhisattvas' practice.**

First of all to be able to obtain this precious human body containing the eighteen qualities is not easy. But we would say, "There are so many people on earth, how can obtaining a human body be difficult?" To understand this we must compare with the number of sentient beings in the six realms, and then we would be able to see the true picture. Human beings are only a small fraction of all the beings in the six realms.

To be precise, it is not really difficult to be a human being. One only need to have looked at a Buddha statue and have generated a strong sense of devotion and this devotion have not diminished, then this person would have created the cause to be reborn as a human being. But to be able to obtain the eighteen qualities is much more difficult. We should be aware that only one or two sentient beings in a hundred would be able to obtain the eighteen qualities to be born as a human being. What are the eight qualities and ten endowments? These have been taught previously and for those who are knowledgeable should understand these points.

Everyone should know to possess these eighteen qualities are treasures that are extremely difficult to obtain. However, just understanding them is not enough, one must constantly ponder about these points and to meditate on them, then and only then can we truly benefit from them. Lets ponder on the fact that there are so many people in Taiwan, How many of them actually become a Buddhist? Very few. Out of all these Buddhists, how many of them actually practice. Even fewer yet. For those who actually undertake the practice of meditation, these are the rare ones who are really endowed with the eighteen qualities. Therefore, those who are able to come to the Dharma center and engage in meditation practice, these are truly the human beings endowed with the full eighteen qualities. As for those who are not able to practice due to lack of resources, or rich or with enormous amount of power, no matter what type of background they come from, they are not endowed with the eighteen qualities.

We should reflect: the innumerable amount of sand in the ocean is like the number of sentient beings with form in the six realms. The formless sentient beings in the six realms number even more than those with form. Therefore for those who are lucky enough to possess the eighteen qualities are so rare and precious that we should spend our precious lives productively and not to waste it on frivolous pursuits.

This precious human life is like a ship, if used correctly, this ship is like a precious jewel. If it is not used correctly, this ship will float aimlessly until life is over and again subject to ocean of Samsara. For those who know how to use this ship correctly, they can attain

Buddhahood as a result. For those who do not know how to use this ship correctly, they will continue to float aimlessly in the ocean of Samsara.

This body is very important to us, therefore we must feed and clothe it; when there is sickness we must treat it with medication. But we must not over indulge in it; we must understand that this body is like an empty house. It is used during this lifetime so that we can attain the next life. So we are only borrowing this body for that purpose. It's a passing thing. We borrow this body to complete our Samsaric affairs so that we can gain the benefit for the next life. Therefore we must not be overly protective of this body. If we fall into this habit of appreciating this body then we will be trapped by the five poisons and the enjoyments of this lifetime. The result of that would be rebirth in the three lower realms.

So the advice is to use this body correctly. How should we use this body? For example, do full prostrations. While you are doing prostrations, your hands may hurt, your waist will hurt, and you will have back pain etc, but this will help us in our meditation practice at the same time, benefiting yourself and others in our pursuit for Buddhahood. Otherwise what is the use of taking care of this body? This is like spending a lot of money on a car, the purpose of which is to use it in business to make some money. If this car is not used properly, why should we buy this car? Therefore we have already borrowed this body, and then we must use it properly, discipline it and use it for meditation purpose. Just like using the car to make money, we must use this body of ours to gain positive deeds, and Bodhicitta both which we can use for our next life.

Therefore when we have this “difficult-to-gain ship of leisure and fortune” we must nurture this ship and use it correctly. How do we use it correctly? Like what the next sentence says “liberate oneself and others from the ocean of cyclic existence”. This is because all sentient beings have been our past parents and we must constantly remind ourselves that we should help them to be liberated from the sufferings of rebirth. How can we escape this suffering of rebirth? We must generate loving kindness and compassion; we must constantly work for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Many people would think: “I have been so busy at work today that I simply don't have time to work for the benefit of other sentient beings and don't have time to engage in meditative practice.” Actually, the real situation is like this, for those who work day and night, their practice time is especially long. What is the reason for this? If one works for an employer and at the end of the day one gets a certain amount of money as return for their effort. Then this money is used to support one's children and family. One must remember that the employer, children and our family members have been our parents in our past lives and when we generate this aspiration to benefit them, and then we are generating Bodhicitta. At the same time, we receive repayment for our work would mean that we have completed the part where we are benefiting ourselves. As long as we generate this motivation to help others for their benefit with any actions that we perform, then we are practicing. This is the reason why I say for those who work day and night are actually practicing day and night.

The sentence “hearing, pondering and meditatingare the bodhisattvas’ practice”. When we receive teachings from our teacher at a center or listen to a tape of Chenresig’s mantra or Tara’s mantra while we are driving, this is considered to be forms of “hearing”. When we hear the sound of Chenresig’s mantra, we must consider the inner meaning of the mantra. The inner meaning of the mantra is loving kindness and compassion. It is because we, sentient beings, lack compassion that Chenresig is the giver of compassion to all sentient beings. This is the view that we should have.

What do we do when we visualize? We must visualize all sentient beings can be free from suffering and achieve liberation; at the same time they can eliminate all causes and results of suffering. When we can visualize like this, then we can truly generate compassion. Constantly be mindful of the pain and suffering of all sentient beings and always think the method to eliminate all suffering is to have loving kindness and compassion. If one can help sentient beings to generate loving kindness and compassion, this is the true method to eliminate their pain and suffering. When we can carry this out, then we are practicing.

While we are practicing, we are not engaged in thinking about our pain and suffering, but we are thinking of the pain and suffering of all sentient beings. If we are able to think of the pain and suffering of all sentient beings then we will realize how infinitesimal our suffering is. When we fervently wish for the early elimination of the pain and suffering of all sentient beings, then we would realize that our pain and suffering really does not amount to anything. If one thinks like this, then it is a sign that this person is generating Bodhicitta. While thinking of the pain and suffering of all sentient beings and one begins to cry, this is also a sign that this person has generated Bodhicitta. Many people asked “How to visualize and practice Bodhicitta? To visualize and practice, would these actions have any power?” The answer lies within oneself. For example, when in the past, a large earthquake hit Taiwan and we felt the pain and suffering of those people in the disaster. Because of their suffering we shed tears, and wish for their early recovery then this is a sign that we have generated Bodhicitta.

Therefore constantly listen to teachings and the sound of mantra, then after having listened to these, we constantly ponder the meaning of the teachings at the same time constantly visualize the inner meaning of these teachings and mantra, aspiring that all sentient beings can end their suffering and achieve liberation. These are the three methods of hearing, pondering and meditating. It is difficult to visualize and practice loving kindness and compassion. What is the reason for this? It’s because there are many destructive forces involved. What destructive forces are involved in the practice of loving kindness and compassion? The explanation is in the next phrase.

- 2. The mind of attachment to loved ones wavers like water. The mind of hatred of enemies burns like fire. The mind of ignorance, which forgets what to adopt and what to discard, is greatly obscured. Abandoning one’s fatherland is the bodhisattvas’ practice.**

We normally love our children, parents and family members. This is a kind of loving kindness. But this type of loving-kindness cannot be sustained for too long because this type of love will transform into desire and attachment. For example, when someone hurt our family members, we will very quickly generate hatred towards these people. At that time the loving kindness within our hearts would immediately change to that of hatred. Therefore, if we have the mind of desire and attachment then the opposite of that would be hatred. So if we have the mind of desire and attachment towards our children, parents and family members then this is not true loving kindness and compassion. Because desire and attachment thoughts will change to hatred at any given moment.

If a friend had always helped you, but one day this friend did something to hurt you, then you would forget whatever assistance this friend had given to you. This is because of the mind of desire and attachment can change to hatred.

When we have strong feeling of desire and attachment, we will fall into darkness. This is like the sun being covered by dark clouds. When this feeling of desire and attachment become stronger, then we will further fall into the grips of ignorance. Therefore, we should not have strong desire and attachment for those whom we care for. Actually, very often these are our karmic debtors. They are here to look after our money, live in our houses and use our possessions. Aren't they our debtors? Towards external enemies, we should not act with hatred because they have been our past children as well. In the past they have helped us. Therefore we should treat enemies and friends with equal loving kindness and compassion.

If we are not able to do this then we will be preoccupied with right or wrong and good or evil. Then we will be trapped in ignorance. If we can have equanimity, our mind will be like the sun being far from darkness. Therefore, it is very important for us to be free from desire and hatred. What is the meaning of the phrase "abandoning one's fatherland"? If we stay in one place long enough, we would gain some enemies who would constantly hurt us. This would make us develop hatred in our mind. At the same time, we would develop attachment towards our friends and relatives; this will make us develop attachment in our mind. That is why all Buddhas abandon "fatherland" and wanders all over as a form of practice.

However, if we all just abandon our "fatherland" and practice, this type of thought is useless. This is because if we just wish to leave the comfort of home without getting rid the thoughts of hatred and desire from our mind; our practice will not be successful. This is like someone leaving Taiwan for the USA but while he is there harbours hatred thoughts for those he dislikes and generates desire thoughts for those he likes. So going somewhere else would not be an effective practice. That is why a true practitioner should not concentrate on whether to leave home or not but to concentrate on eliminating desire and hatred thoughts from our mind. Treat all friends and relatives with equanimity. If we develop strong attachment thoughts towards our relatives and friends; this will be a strong obstacle during our death moment and we will not be able to be liberated. At the same time we will not be able to go to Buddha Amitabha pureland. Although the

teaching is for us to abandon our fatherland in order to practice, however, the true meaning is for us to abandon our desire and hatred thoughts from our mind.

Every one of us has loving and caring thoughts towards our friends and relatives, if we cannot expand this to include all sentient beings, then this will lead to desire thoughts. This type of desire thoughts cannot be sustained, once there are obstacles, these thoughts will turn into anger. For example, we planted a tree; everyday this tree grows a little. But if we chop down this tree, will it grow anymore? This is not possible.

Similarly, we only have a little loving kindness and compassion in our heart; it is our desire and hatred thoughts that constantly harm the loving kindness and compassion in our heart. So our Bodhicitta will not be able to grow. For example when two children fight and quarrel, the parents of each child will try to blame the other child. But if we think further, the other child was our parents before and the main point is not to hurt the children but to teach them so that they will grow up to be good adults. Sometimes we observe fights between boyfriend and girlfriend, and take sides. This is simply siding with the ones that we know. We should wish both sides to remain good to each other. We should wish that every sentient being would remain happy and stable. That is why we should have loving kindness, but can this loving kindness be expanded to include all? We should search inwardly within ourselves for the answer. We should try to expand this loving kindness and compassion thoughts to include all in order to eliminate the ignorance from our mind.

3. When harmful places are abandoned, disturbing emotions gradually diminish. Without distraction, virtuous endeavors naturally increase. Being clear-minded, definite understanding of the Dharma arises. Resorting to secluded places is the bodhisattva's practice.

This verse advises us to leave harmful places. Harmful places are place where we can easily generate hatred thoughts in our minds. This is in fact very difficult to leave such places, because we must understand that it is not the places that are harmful. It is our minds that are in question. When we are in the harmful place, yet we do not generate the hatred thoughts in our mind, then whether the places are harmful or not really do not matter. We must understand that the mind of hatred is our true enemy. The thing that needs to be pacified is not the external environment, but the hatred within our mind. Therefore, how to remain unmoved within our mind when we encounter these harmful places is the key issue. This is our target to practice and vow to obtain experiential understanding of this transformation thus gaining wisdom.

When we are able to gain the experiential understanding of this practice, our afflicted emotions will diminish. We will normally not notice the lessening of our afflicted emotions. For example, when we are reading a very thick book, and everyday we can only read one page. Naturally we cannot complete reading this book in one day. But if we persist then finally we would have finished reading this thick book. Similarly, if we persist in eliminating one afflicted emotion each day, then after a long while, these

afflicted emotions would be eliminated. We can attribute this to the persistent daily practice.

“Without distraction, virtuous endeavors naturally increase.” This sentence refers to the fact that because our mind is not influenced by afflicted emotions, then the loving kindness and compassion as well as our good deeds would naturally increase. This is like when a tree is planted and no harm has come to this tree, then it will naturally grow to become a big tree. When our mind is full of loving kindness and compassion and not influenced by afflicted emotions, at the same time we are engaged in activities to increase this, then we will be able to see the true nature of our mind. This is the meaning of “Being clear-minded, definite understanding of the Dharma arises.” When that happens, we would have the experiential understanding and obtained wisdom. After we have gained this wisdom, we will understand clearly the duality of good and evil, and truly realize the true view of the Dharma.

The true views, which include, precious human rebirth, impermanence of life, causes and effects and the danger of rebirth would be clearly imprinted in our mind. Not only would we understand these views, we would deeply know them to be true. This is the result of having increased our positive deeds. At that time we will never waver from believing that all sentient beings are our parents and having the utmost trust in the Three Jewels. All these we gain from having the experiential understand of the true nature of our mind. It is also the result of having the unshakable believe from having received the teaching from Buddha.

We should retire to quiet places to practice and gain this experiential understanding. External quiet place refers to remote places where we can go and retreat in order to engage in practice. This is like Milarepa retreating into secluded caves to practice. From this secluded place one can practice to lessen the conceptual thoughts. When the conceptual thoughts lessen, we would be able to abide quietly. Most people say that they do not have the chance to be able to abide in quietude. But we must appreciate the concept that abiding in quietude or calmness has a purpose and we must abide in calmness to achieve its purpose. If we are able to remain calm or abide in calmness where we are not affected by external influences, where our conceptual thoughts have diminished and where we are firm in this calmness and most of all remain with our true nature of mind. If we are able to do this where we are, then there is no difference if we were located in some remote caves or not.

When we are deluged by conceptual thoughts, we must supplicate to our root guru and ask for his blessings so that we can lessen our conceptual thoughts. If doing this can lessen our conceptual thoughts, then we would have achieved the same result as though we were locked away in some secluded place for retreat. If we are locked away in secluded places but our mind is full of conceptual thoughts and they affect us, then even going into close retreat would not have any beneficial effects. Therefore, our target is to be able to remain in calmness. How do we sustain this calmness? Most people have to work. When our workload increases; sometimes we would lose our temper. When anger thoughts arise we must remind ourselves that it is due to our conceptual thoughts that we

lose our concentration. We should then immediately eliminate those anger thoughts by using the proper view and mindfulness. We must realize that the targets of our anger thoughts were our past parents. How can we lose our temper towards our parents? Was it our faults? Have we failed? Have we tried our best? Therefore no matter whether the other person had performed action that is detrimental to us or not we must immediately think that it doesn't really matter, not really important. We must remain in this state of mind and not give in to our impulsive thoughts and refrain from hurting others.

If we can constantly generate this type of thoughts, then this is a sign that our Bodhicitta is increasing. The loving kindness and compassion within our mind will not be lost. If we remain in this loving kindness and compassion then our wisdom will be sustained. Not to be lost in the turmoil of conceptual thoughts. If we are not able to maintain this state then doubt will begin to arise in our mind. Thinking whether the other person is going to hurt me or not? Whether he will take advantage of me? These types of thoughts will permeate our mind and destroying its calmness. To achieve the good points described above we must be able to remain in calmness.

According to the foundation practice, the previous is to describe the preciousness of having gained this human body. The following is to describe the impermanence of life. How do we practice and ponder on the impermanence of life? The fourth sentence states:

4. Long-associated companions will part from each other. Wealth and possessions obtained with effort will be left behind. Consciousness, the guest, will cast aside the guesthouse of the body. Letting go of this life is the bodhisattva's practice.

Will our relatives and loved ones be with us always? They will not. No matter how much wealth and properties gain with our hard work, they will never remain in our hands. No matter riches and possessions or relatives and friends, we will never own them forever. Our body is like a hotel, our mind is like a guest, in the next morning, and the guest has left the hotel. Do you think the guest would carry the hotel on his back when he checks out? This is not possible. If you can understand this point then you will know that friends, relatives and possessions are not ours to have and own, not even our hotel like body belongs to us. Therefore the fourth phrase says, "Letting go of this life is the bodhisattvas' practice."

So it says, "Letting go of this life is the bodhisattvas' practice." then we would question whether abandoning our properties, children, possession and money, and throwing everything aside, is this the best method? If a person really does this then he would have brought a lot of difficulties onto himself. He will not be able to accomplish anything. What we said above was mentally abandoning everything. We should not have the thought that this property is mine, this money is mine, these are my children, and this is my body. We must realize that everything is only lent to us, that they are with us only on a temporary basis. If we have attachment to these objects, then when death moment arrives, we will have to face the difficult task of separating from them. None of these can be brought with us at that moment.

If we truly do not need these objects, then what do we truly need? What we really need is loving kindness and compassion, that is to say we need Bodhicitta in our mind. This is what we can bring with us after death. At the time when this life ends and we are on our way to the next life, the true friend who can help us is Buddha Amitabha. The true riches that we can use for ourselves are Bodhicitta. We also need a true body, male will need the body of Avalokiteshvara and female will need the body of Tara. These are what we truly need. These can truly be ours and can be brought with us when we die. So in the future when we depart from this life, males can bring with them the body of Avalokiteshvara and female can bring with them the body of Tara. The riches that we can bring will be our Bodhicitta, loving kindness and compassion. Our best companion will be Buddha Amitabha.

It's like coming to the United States. Prior to going, a lot of people would help in preparation of our luggage etc., so the journey to the United States was very smooth. So, what does it mean when we say, "Letting go of this life is the bodhisattvas' practice." It means during our life, we are planning for our death moment. Therefore we are preparing our body to be Avalokiteshvara or Tara as our daily practice, we develop and nurture our mind to have loving kindness and compassion and Bodhicitta as our riches, and we supplicate to Buddha Amitabha so that he will be our companion when we walk the path of death. If we can make these preparations then our journey to Buddha Amitabha Pureland will be very smooth.

We toil all our life in order to live, that's why we have to go to work to earn some money. What do we use to keep us alive in our next life? The money for our next life is the Six Syllable Mantra or Buddha's precious name or Tara's mantra. Therefore when we can complete our Foundation practices each 100,000 times and have recited mantras many times. Where will these recitations of mantra disappear? They will become riches that we can bring with us to our next life. How do we use these recitations of mantra? We need to offer them to the Three Jewels as well as offer them to all sentient beings. How do we offer them to all sentient beings? We can visualize the beings residing in Hell's realm, and offer the mantras to them so that they will get the benefits of these recitations. Actually, there are many methods and practices that we can engage in to benefit sentient beings. Someone asked me that if every morning they would choose a mantra and recite it 100 times, would this method be acceptable? My answer would be as what I just talked about previously.

- 5. When evil companions are associated with, the three poisons increase, the activities of listening, pondering and meditation decline, and love and compassion are extinguished. Abandoning evil companions is the bodhisattvas' practice.**

No matter whether it is boy friend, girl friend or ordinary friends, after we have known them our desire, hatred and ignorance will increase. For example, if we picked up the habit of drinking and smoking from a new friend, then without knowing, we have engaged in unwholesome activities. Under this situation, these friends can be called bad

influences and we should stay away from them. This does not mean that we should fight or argue with them; we simply do not agree with their habits and they would naturally stay away from us.

If we continue to be associated with this type of people, the habit will detract us from hearing, pondering and meditating on Dharma. For example these friends would be engaged in killing and other negative activities, then eventually we will also be engaged in this type of activities and consequently end up in the hells realm. These friends would say that to steal or to rob is acceptable; we should know that the consequence of stealing or robbing would bring us into poverty in our next life. Or these friends would comment that Buddha Dharma is false, if we slowly believe in this then we will not be able to have any contact with Buddhism in our next life. Consequently our ignorance will be so great that we will not be able to distinguish what is good or evil.

If we constantly listen to their saying that there is no cause and effect, no karma and there is no Buddha Dharma, then eventually our listening, pondering and meditating will slowly deteriorate. When we give up the belief in Buddha Dharma, the Bodhicitta in our mind will be hurt.

Most people would have very strong jealous thoughts. Because of these jealous thoughts, fights would develop between a man and woman and harm each other. These are common occurrences. We should not listen to other people's gossip. We should clearly observe and judge whatever we see and hear. If a person has harmed us and another has spread many bad things about us because of jealousy; at this time we must ponder what I had taught previously: everyone has good and bad points. This person and I have been friends for a long time, even though this person has done me wrong, it doesn't really matter. In the past he has helped me a lot and we should not be swayed by others to have anger thoughts against this person. We should use our wisdom to observe clearly what is happening.

This type of things happen quite often between our masters and other learned friends. When we go for an empowerment; receive some teachings, the next day someone would tell us something bad about this master. Then we would go to another master and receive empowerment, receive another teaching. Again someone would tell us something bad about this master. Very soon we will lose confidence in the masters. Because we don't have confidence in the masters, our Bodhicitta will decrease. To spread bad things about a master is a very bad deed. Even though this master is not good, but we may have confidence in this master. Because of this confidence, the Bodhicitta in our mind will grow. When this Bodhicitta grows, this will be very beneficial to us.

No matter what, as long as our confidence is intact, we will reap great benefits. Conversely, those who influenced our confidence to diminish and lose merit are truly the wicked ones. Therefore after receiving teachings from a master, we must retain our confidence in this master and never let it diminish, and then the blessing power will always stay with us. This is because the blessing is directly transmitted from the Three Jewels. Therefore it is very strong. We should also be loyal to our old friends. Don't

listen to others' gossip. Remain unmoved and retain the relationship. What is spoken above is very important. Hope everyone will understand.

6. When sublime spiritual friends are relied upon, one's faults are exhausted and one's qualities increase like the waxing of moon. Holding sublime spiritual friends even more dear than one's own body is the bodhisattvas' practice

After we befriended someone and we find out that our jealous thoughts are less strong compared with before and our proper thoughts and knowledge increased, then this is because a sublime spiritual friend has influenced us. The reason why our merit can increase is due to the teaching from our masters. But the increase of merit in this and future lives depend largely on our root gurus and sublime spiritual friends. Therefore our root gurus and these teachers are the kings of jewels in this world. Like our eyes; they are precious. When our parents gave birth to us these eyes allow us to see during our lifetime. But our gurus and teachers gave us a pair of eyes not only to see this world but also the next life. Therefore we must never spread bad rumours about our gurus and teachers.

The following has to do with masters and spiritual teachers. You not only need to listen clearly, you also need to ponder seriously afterwards. Why do we need to have constant confidence in and supplication to our masters and spiritual teachers? To the point that even our own body is not as important? Why is this? It is because when we make offerings or use our body to supplicate to our masters and spiritual teachers; because of this they will generate joy in their minds. Because of their joy, it will eliminate the negative karma accumulated in our minds. At the same time, because of their joy, the merits and power stored in their minds will be transmitted. When we learn and practice, we will be able to gain these merits and power. Conversely, if we were attached to our body and wealth, then we would not think of learning and receiving our masters' merit and power. Naturally we will not be able to gain their knowledge and power.

It's so happen that what we are doing is the opposite. If you are attached to your possessions and riches, it is in fact a form of self-love. You are able to enjoy your food, wear your fine clothing, have enough money to use for your body, but when death moment arrives and our body will be buried in the ground or being burnt in a fire until nothing is left. If we are able to learn from our masters the methods to obtain and practice Bodhicitta. We then, we practice and gain experiential understanding of the Bodhicitta; even if we are cremated, the Bodhicitta in our mind will never be destroyed. In fact this Bodhicitta will stay with us life after life and never part from us. This is the most important wealth.

A lot of people learn English, Chinese, Science subjects etc. and some would be able to learn these subjects very quickly. This is because in their past lives, they showed deference towards their teachers and had practiced diligence in their studies. That is why in this life they possess strong learning ability. On the other hand, if they had treated their teachers without respect, didn't care about studies. At the same time they were lazy

in their pursuit for knowledge, and then in the present life, these people will find it very difficult to study. They will also be disrespectful towards their root guru and teachers; this is the result of habitual obscuration. Therefore, in this life we treat our masters and teachers with respect, as well as make offerings to them, this will result in benefits that were mentioned earlier in this text.

How should one, who seeks teachings, engage in practice? The seekers should emulate Marpa and the students should emulate Milarepa. We should study how these past masters practice. Marpa taught Milarepa and after having learnt from Marpa, Milarepa practiced diligently. Milarepa was able to achieved Buddhahood in one lifetime. This is all because of Marpa's great gift to Milarepa. That is why we must have unlimited gratitude towards our root guru, parents and teachers. We must have similar gratitude towards lay teachers and geshe. Our root gurus, geshe, and parents are our three honoured benefactor. We should always treat them with deference, and practice with high esteem; using Marpa and Milarepa as example for our practice.

In our daily work we should use the Six Paramitas as our guideline. When we receive teachings, we should encompass all the sentient beings of the six realms, when we teachings, we should make offerings. These offering are actually the first of the Six Paramitas, generosity. When we receive teachings, we should pay attention, this is skilful conduct. When our root guru scolds us or we encountered difficulties during our practice then we must have forbearance. After we have received teachings, we should constantly remind ourselves of the lessons and practice, this is diligence and meditation. The fruits of our learning and practice would be our wisdom. This is how the Six Paramitas apply when we receive teachings.

At present, what our guru gives us is the preciousness of words, not wealth or jewels. When we say Bodhicitta is precious, our guru needs to explain how it is precious? Where does it come from? How to acquire Bodhicitta? How do we let this Bodhicitta grow? The answer to all these questions is that we must know that all sentient beings have been our parents in our past lives. Therefore we must have loving kindness and compassion towards all of them. If we are able to generate loving kindness and compassion to all sentient beings then its like drops of water dripping into a bowl; with constant drips of water, this bowl will become full very quickly. Like this method, each day, if we are able to generate loving kindness and compassion to every one we meet, then our loving kindness and compassion will grow. When our guru teaches us with these words, then we will all know the actual method to practice. Therefore these words from our guru are precious. Even though one cannot see the words; they will not vanish. Even after death; this teaching will not disappear. Conversely, our material things will disappear after our death.

Why are the teachings from our guru precious? Because these teachings can decrease our past negative karma and allow the chance for our merit to increase. Therefore the sixth verse states "When sublime spiritual friends are relied upon, one's faults are exhausted and one's qualities increase like the waxing moon." What are faults? These are the desire, hatred, ignorant and jealousy. What are the qualities? Bodhicitta is the quality.

When we constantly ponder the views of mahamudra, and/or Dzogchen, the qualities will naturally increase. The faults will decrease. Why do we say the faults will decrease? When we examine the desire, hatred and ignorant deeds in our mind, and can understand their occurrence, then we can purify past misdeeds. Then qualities or merit will increase. Milarepa said that if we understand within our mind the afflicted emotions is a sign of the successful practice of mahamudra. Therefore we must use our awareness to examine our mind; this will eliminate the faults within our mind.

We should really examine our mind and cleansed the faults from it. For example, if a person scolds us, at that moment we should think of our root guru's teaching that this person was our past parent; therefore we must not lose our temper towards this person. At the same time our root guru also taught us that if we accumulate negative karma due to our anger thoughts, this would lead us to be reborn in the three lower realms. If we can ponder about the point that our root guru has taught and the views of causes and effects, then we will not lose our temper. This is forbearance. If we exercise forbearance towards others and the other person also recognize that you have this quality, then the other person would have respect for you and this is the reason for the increase of merit. On the other hand if we have not learnt the above from our teachers. Then we would give in to our anger thoughts. Our actions would blow up like a thunderclap and have a humungous fight with the other person. In the end we would be put in jail. We would have to spend money to get us out of this trouble and to take care of our wounds. All these faults would result. In that situation, we should reflect clearly. If you have any points that are not clear then you must ask your questions as soon as possible. We should then have a good discussion on this issue.

Since our teacher had taught us these precious teachings, we must have the utmost respect for him. We must constantly ponder on what our teachers have taught us. We should remember and appreciate our teachers' merit in doing this; and at the same time our merit will also increase.

7. What worldly gods, himself also bound in the prison of cyclic existence, is able to protect others? Therefore, when refuge is sought, taking refuge in the undecieving triple gem is the bodhisattvas' practice.

The following is about taking refuge. Why do we need to talk about taking refuge? Because the previous phrase talked about depending upon our root guru and learned friends so that we can learn from them. The first thing that our root guru and our learned friends would teach us is to take refuge with the Three Jewels. There are two types of taking refuge. The pure refuge and the impure refuge. What is impure refuge? This is in the first sentence of this seventh phrase; taking refuge with worldly gods. These kind of worldly gods are plentiful; they can give us temporary benefits and relief. However, they are not able to give us the ultimate liberation and lasting benefits. That's why they cannot be the true liberator because, they, themselves are also bound by this samsara subject to rebirth. They cannot liberate us from the suffering of death and rebirth.

Only the Triple Gem can liberate us from the suffering of taking rebirth. Even though we practice Tara or Avalokiteshvara by reciting their mantra or engage in meditation; we still suffer from sickness and experience obstacles in our lives. We may feel that this type of practice is not useful. We must understand that the sicknesses and the obstacles are the results of our negative karma accumulated from previous lives. Not to mention us, many gurus, learned friends, monks also experience a lot of sicknesses and pain. So, it is not necessary to dwell on this. Remember, precious Tara is the yidam for wisdom. Precious Tara is the Triple Gems who can grant us temporary relief as well as lasting liberation. We should take refuge with Tara and continue diligently to practice. The worldly gods can only give us temporary relief; hidden behind the temporary relief is the long term suffering.

The text states “Therefore, when refuge is sought, taking refuge in the undeceiving triple gem is the bodhisattvas’ practice.” Which means the true liberator is the Triple Gem. They bring true relief and benefits. Taking refuge with Triple Gem has many levels. First of all is the outer Triple Gem. The first Gem, Buddha, refers to Buddha Sakyamuni. Second Gem, Dharma, refers to his teachings. This includes the methods to practice loving kindness and compassion; the methods to practice Bodhicitta. This will allow us to learn about the two types of Bodhicitta. Which leads us from being ignorant of it to having it born within our minds, to nurturing it and never let it deteriorate at the same time allowing it to ever increase. The above is the meaning for the prayer “Bodhicitta, the excellent and precious mind. Where it is unborn, may it arise; where it is born, may it not decline and may ever increase, rising higher and higher” This is the meaning of Dharma. Then the people who practice according to Buddha’s teachings are the third Gem, Sangha. Nowadays, people refer to the Gurus and the monks and nuns as Sangha. One must be aware of the meaning of these words. How do we take outer refuge? After having taken refuge to Buddha, we must treat Buddha statues of all sizes as though we our different teachers. Or when we come across any monks, nuns or lay practitioners, no matter whether they are from Hinayana, Mahayana or Chinese Monks; irrespective or the outer appearance, we must view them with the thought that they represent Buddha to save all sentient beings. At this time we must think that we actually see Buddha and because of that we must generate within our mind the utmost respect and trust. This is what we must undertake when we take refuge with Buddha. When we come across a piece of paper which has words regarding Buddha’s teachings no matter whether it is in English, Chinese or Tibetan we should always remind ourselves of that these are Buddha’s teachings. All these teachings are for sentient beings who had been our past parents. Using loving kindness and compassion; all these teachings originate from Bodhicitta. In the end when we can view all sentient beings as our past parents and can generate loving kindness and compassion as well as Bodhicitta, then for those who can achieve this level of practice, this person is the true precious Sangha.

Therefore, in taking this outer refuge, we must know that the body of our worldly gurus is the precious Sangha. Because they possess loving kindness and compassion in their mind; their speech is precious Dharma; and their mind is the same as Buddha therefore their mind is precious Buddha. In taking outer refuge we must understand that the Guru has

the qualities of the precious Three Gem. We only need to have full confidence in our guru then the stream of our fortune and merit will not be broken.

What is taking inner Refuge? At the time when we take refuge, we examine our mind. We will find that there are many conceptual thought flowing in and out. When these conceptual thoughts stop coming, we will be able to observe our mind is like the empty sky, the total clarity is its quality and this sky like experience is the precious Buddha. This is the true nature of our mind. What is the effect of seeing the true nature of our mind? How do we use it? The answer is to generate loving kindness and compassion towards all sentient beings. Although we can see our true nature of mind, there are many who cannot see it. That is why they are trapped in samsara, this cyclic birth and death. What is being trapped in Samsara? It is unending suffering. Therefore we must generate loving kindness and compassion towards all sentient beings; this is precious Dharma. When we use our body, speech and mind and unceasingly perform good deeds. Use our body to perform deeds of generosity. Use our speech to spread the teachings on the effects of karma, cause and effect, of the importance of generating loving kindness and compassion. We must constantly ponder Bodhicitta. Thus we use our body, speech and mind to benefit all sentient beings; when we can do this then we are truly on the path and have become the Conqueror. Therefore our mind is Buddha, our speech is Dharma and our body is Sangha. This is the true meaning of possessing the three jewels within ourselves; the true meaning of taking inner refuge.

I have completed explaining the meaning of taking inner and outer refuge. We should constantly review and ponder on the details of this teaching. This is also the reason that we should constantly read the thirty seven bodhisattvas' practice and understand its meaning. When we see one verse today or another verse tomorrow, it will remind us of its meaning. Without this book, we will not be able review its teachings. After having been here, heard the teachings and very quickly will forget it. So one must read this book frequently and review within our mind.

8. The Subduer said that all the unbearable suffering of the three lower realms is the fruition of wrongdoing. Therefore, never committing negative deeds, even at peril to one's life, is the Bodhisattvas' practice.

The negative karma derived from afflicted emotions will lead us to extreme suffering. Sometimes these suffering can cause us to come to a point where we simply cannot bear it anymore. The 84,000 afflicted emotions are generated from our ignorance; from this ignorance we generate afflicted emotions of desire, hatred, jealousy, envy and pride. The suffering that we experience mainly derives from the negative karma of having the three poisons of desire, hatred and ignorance. But a lot of people do not know of this connection therefore they will not believe it. Actually, according to Buddha's teaching recorded in all the Sutras, these sufferings actually exist. The pain and suffering within the six realms are very difficult to endure. We must understand the reason for us to return to six realms, and then we can avoid falling again into the trap of being in the midst of suffering again. This is like someone suffering from Diabetes knows that the cause of this disease is from eating too much sugar, so when people offer him sweets in

the future, he will refuse in order to avoid the suffering of the disease. Similarly, the cause for falling into hells realm is hatred; the cause for falling into hungry ghosts realm is being stingy; the cause for falling into the human realm is desire; the cause for falling into the gods realm is pride; the cause for falling into the asura realm is jealousy; the cause for falling into the animal realm is ignorance. The six realms are gradually formed from these six different types of afflicted emotions.

When we examine the nature of our mind, we will notice the afflicted emotions in it. When anger thought explodes like thunder, we would feel like killing the other person. It will make us wanting to give the other person a huge scolding. At that time we will feel our anger afflicted emotion burning like a raging fire. Every afflicted emotion has its own power; we can visualize and feel their effects. We are now in the human realm and experience its pain, we only need to ponder on this and will understand. The suffering of all sentient beings in the six realms exists in this manner. If you have never heard of this teaching then you must listen carefully. This is because if you don't know the pain and sufferings of the sentient beings in the six realms then you will not understand the faults of the afflicted emotions. Consequently, you will not wish to cure these afflicted emotions. Now we only understand the pain and suffering of the human realm; this is not enough. This book has not covered the sufferings of the human realm, it has only mentioned the sufferings of the three worlds, (desire, form and formless) and we should read it carefully.

We must study the pain and suffering of the six realms. Many people study Mahamudra or Dzogchen directly without pondering the pain and suffering of the six realms. We sometimes are able to abandon desire, attachment and hatred thoughts from our minds. At times we will catch a glimpse of the true nature of our mind. However, when our afflicted emotions appear and because of the strong power of these emotions, whatever experiential understanding of the true nature of our mind would vanish. This type of situation is very common. If we understand the pain and suffering of the six realms as well as knowing the nature of the afflicted emotions, then we will get rid of these afflicted emotions are like poison. When we detect slight thoughts of desire, attachment or hatred, we must eradicate them so that our mind will remain pure and unblemished. If our minds are pure and unblemished then practicing Mahamudra or Dzogchen will be very easy. This is like using a clean receptacle to hold pure water; whatever experiential understanding we gain from the practices, we will be able to retain firmly in our minds and will not be lost.

The first pain and suffering in the six realms is that of the hells realms. This mainly deals with the pain and suffering of hot and cold. There are eight cold hells and eight hot hells, plus lonely hell and outer hell; together they make up eighteen hells. The pain and suffering of the hot hells is to be consumed by raging fire to be reborn in the same hell and experience it again and again for tens of thousands of years. We can observe this type of situation on earth when there is a fire and people perish in the flames. This is like the pain and suffering in the hot hell. The pain and suffering of the cold hell is like winter in Tibet where the wind and snow would bury the whole world around you. Some families would perish in this manner. I have witnessed this.

The hungry ghost realms are like some countries in Africa where often there is famine the people are without food and water. This causes extreme pain and sufferings, this entire happening is because the result of our karma of the past which denotes where we are reborn to suffer different types of pains. The pain and suffering of the animal realm can be seen in the human realm. Some people do not know how to respect the Triple Gem and do not know how to respect our teachers and consequently having been born as a human, would engage in stealing, robbing and cheating. This type of behavior is similar to that of an animal. The suffering of the human realm is mainly, to be born, to grow old, to get sick and eventually die. If we look closely at the pain of being born, then we wouldn't even be able to stand it for five minutes.

The pain and suffering of the Asura realm is war. In the human realm the large country would wage war on another large country. Small country would wage war on small country. Even within one country there is fighting between its own people. Fights occur within societies and family. Even to the smaller unit where family members would fight with one another. Boy friends would fight with girl friend. Why is there such a phenomena? This is because of jealousy is pervasive.

Just now we mentioned about the pain and suffering of the human realm. Gambopa once described the situation when a child is born; he described the feeling is like someone has tied you up very tightly and thrown you in to the fire to be roasted for an hour. Isn't this very painful? To deprive you of air for an hour; wouldn't it be very painful? The child while in the mother's womb; suffers from extreme heat. At the time of birth, the child is nearly suffocated. Isn't that painful? The darkness within the womb is also a form of suffering. Therefore the pain and suffering of the child is great. If we ponder in this manner then we will know that to be reborn in the human realm is a very painful thing to undergo. So from now on, don't be reborn in this realm. The pain and suffering of being old and being sick are well known to us all. We must teach the young ones of the pain and suffering of getting old and being sick. Most people would think to eat medicine and watch out for our health then we will not die. The fact is when death comes; we are powerless to prevent it.

The pain and suffering of the gods realm is like a situation where you are extremely rich. But these riches are the result of having made generous offering to the Triple Gem and have been philanthropic to the poor in your past lives. But the shortcoming is that while you gave generously, you did not do it with Bodhicitta. Also while you were giving you wanted return and was wishing for the riches to last forever; this led to being born in the gods realm. One day these riches will vanish just like an oil lamp will go out when the oil runs out. When our merit run out, bad luck will descend and the riches will disappear. This is what it is like being born the in gods realm. When you are living in gods' realm enjoying your riches, being very satisfied and happy, but when the time comes, everything will disappear and not a cent will remain. At that time you will be reborn in other realms.

When we can realize this type of pain suffering, we must avoid the causes of the pain and sufferings. Therefore the text says, "Therefore, never committing negative deeds, even at

peril to one's life, is the bodhisattvas' practice." We do not willfully accumulate negative karma; negative karma is caused by our afflicted emotions, which led us to commit the negative deeds. These afflicted emotions are dormant in our mind, therefore when they appear; we must understand that these afflicted emotions are the true enemies that cause us pain and sufferings. No matter what, we must never slacken in our guard against them, not even at the pains of death will we give in to these afflicted emotions. We must vow never to give in to hatred thoughts, to quarrel, to steal or rob. This is the true meaning in the text. At the same time it also means that we know that the pain and sufferings is the result of our negative karma, therefore we must eliminate the afflicted emotions within our minds.

The afflicted emotion is like a seed in our mind, this seed will cause us to generate karma. When the karma is unborn, it is very easy to eliminate this seed. When we detect the afflicted emotions in our mind, we must supplicate to our root guru and ask for his blessings and that of the Three Jewels, and understand that the true enemy is the afflicted emotions and to eliminate them from our mind. If we do not eliminate the afflicted emotions from our mind and because of them we accumulate karma then it will be like spreading the seeds on the ground. After watering them and being in the sun light, grow up to be a big tree. This is how the pain and suffering is born. If you want to eliminate the pain and suffering at this time, it will be very difficult. Therefore we must be diligent in our practice; if we are not then we will not be able to eliminate the afflicted emotions. That is why we must understand the best time to eliminate the afflicted emotion is when it first appears in our mind. This is the easiest time to get rid of them at this stage.

Why do we say even at peril of death will we not commit negative deeds? This is a very important point. Past Bodhisattvas when they practiced, they would very often meet with others (non believers) who opposed their beliefs and they were killed for it. Even at that time they would not generate hatred thoughts. Why have they not generated hatred thoughts? Because the people who used knives to hurt only their body and not their mind. If they have generated hatred thoughts in their minds then what the others have killed would be the Bodhicitta. Death of the body is like throwing away old clothes. That is why previous bodhisattvas use the killing of their body as an actual practice for endurance and patience. Their minds would not waver. Because their minds are stable therefore they did not generate hatred thoughts towards the others (non believers). Not only that, they would treat them with Bodhicitta, and cause the Bodhicitta to ever increase. If we are not able to perform according to this teaching then we should at least understand its meaning. Therefore, we must, at all times refrain from generating hatred thoughts. But if we became angry then we must immediately eliminate this thought.

9. The pleasure of the triple world, like a dewdrop on the tip of a blade of grass, is imperiled in a single moment. Striving for the supreme state of never-changing liberation is the bodhisattvas' practice.

Where does negative karma come from? Why would one become angry? This is what is being discussed in the ninth phrase. The answer to the two questions is because of attachment to the happiness within the three worlds. The happiness of the three worlds

is like morning dewdrop, very temporary. Behind this happiness is a lot of pain and sufferings. The happiness may exist now but very soon will disappear. This is the nature of the happiness in the three worlds. Many people have the opinion that their present body is very good, very young, at the same time quite knowledgeable. That is why they develop pride in their minds. This pride is actually attachment thoughts. If we have this type of thoughts then we must ponder. Will these conditions remain forever? For example we are now quite young, and then will we grow old in the future? Then we should observe older people, and then we will realize that one day we will also grow old. If we do not ponder on this issue now then in the future when we are old, we will feel very painful. If we know that one day we will grow old, when we are actually get to that age, then at that time we will not feel so bad.

The same principle applies to riches. When we are richer than others, we would not think that we might lose it all? If you have thought of it, then at the time that you lost it, you would not feel too bad. All other matters are the same. One cannot depend on it remaining constant. Because we cannot depend on it, we should not have any attachment and desire thoughts so that when it is lost; there will not be any pain and suffering.

Although our surrounding is small but our habits are many. When we received some food, we would think whether it is good to eat. When we received some clothing we would think whether it is good looking or not. Whatever we like is good and whatever we dislike is not good. Therefore when we are wearing something that we think is nice, we become very happy. When we are wearing something that we dislike then we think it's not comfortable. Because of this dualistic thought we would generate likes and dislikes towards our wealth, the things that we use, our belongings and our friends. All the merits, our attachments to joys, our desires are all full of these dualistic thoughts. In actual fact clothing is only there to keep us warm, whether it is nice looking or not is only because of our dualistic thought. When we think it is nice looking the opposite would be ugly. When something is good to eat the opposite would be bad taste. All these thoughts are formed because we have this dualistic mind. For example, those who dislike hot pepper would think this is bad to eat. Smoking and drinking to some would be bad but to others would bring different opinion. So we must understand that these daily objects that we come into contact, if it is enough to satisfy our basic needs then it would be enough. Don't generate any attachment thoughts towards these objects. If you could constantly think like this then it would be very beneficial to you and all. It would also lessen a lot of pain and sufferings.

To expand on this issue and to learn more from this lesson, we must ponder; who needs the happiness derived from the five senses? Happiness from the five senses is joy derived from sight, smell, taste and touch. Pleasures derived from seeing, pleasures derived from hearing. Pleasures derived from smell, pleasures derived from touch by your body. If we ponder further, when we wear soft clothing on our body we would feel happy. When our eye, ear, nose, tongue and body receive its appropriate senses these would generate pleasure in our mind. The real reason for the cause of this pleasure is that we are attached to the sensual pleasure derived from the five senses. But then what is the inner true nature of this pleasure? The true nature of mind is empty, actually it doesn't

need anything. After our death, our body would not exist anymore, why would the mind think that we need clothing? Naturally we would not need it. This is because the true nature of the mind is empty. If we can observe the true nature of our mind, by using this method to constantly practice and gain experiential understanding of this emptiness; then our attachment to the pleasures derived from the five senses would decrease. Thus we will be able to go after the unchanging results. That is the realization of the mind is actually empty.

10. When mothers who have been kind to one since beginningless time are suffering, what's the use of one's own happiness? Therefore, generating the mind of enlightenment in order to liberate limitless sentient beings is the bodhisattvas' practice.

This phrase talks about the origin of Bodhicitta. Where does Bodhicitta come from? It comes from the wish to help and benefit others. Where does this wish to help and benefit others come from? This wish to help and benefit others exists between mother and child. This feeling is especially strong from a mother towards her children and the respect and honour from the children towards their mother is similarly strong. We have been taking rebirth since beginningless time for innumerable number of times. Therefore all sentient being had been, at one time or another, our parents. Where are they now? We all would want to find out the situation. We know that all sentient beings are suffering in the six realms and amongst them are our parents. Therefore a small ant is also our parent. These sentient beings are going through pain and suffering. If we are only thinking about ourselves and going after our own pleasures and not caring about our past parents, wouldn't it make us feel ashamed?

How many sentient beings are there? Sentient beings occupy the whole emptiness. As long as there is an empty space, sentient beings would be there. These sentient beings had been our parents. Thus the number of sentient beings is like empty space which is without border and limitless. Therefore we must have loving kindness and compassion towards all these sentient beings that permeate space. Our loving kindness and compassion must encompass all sentient beings. If our loving kindness and compassion can encompass all sentient beings then we can say we have Bodhicitta. That is why the tenth phrase says: "Therefore, generating the mind of enlightenment in order to liberate limitless sentient beings is the bodhisattvas' practice"

What is this type of Bodhicitta? Bodhicitta is divided into two, awareness mind and realized mind. Awareness means to remain in tranquility. It also means having eliminated selfishness and the wish for self-liberation. Realized means having arrived or achieved. It also means having achieved the mind to work for the benefits of all sentient beings. Therefore, if we can eliminate our selfishness and work only for the benefits of all sentient beings; to generate the wish for the good of all sentient beings then this is called the realized mind. What is the benefit of having giving birth to Bodhicitta? First of all, it can benefit oneself because we will gain peace of mind. Secondly, we can benefit all others so that others will also gain peace of mind. Therefore to quote the sutra; "there is only one source of happiness, that is Buddha's dharma" Happiness and benefits

of all sentient beings emanate from the one source of Buddha's Dharma. If lacking Bodhicitta, the effects of 84,000 different methods would be useless. If we can grasp Bodhicitta then we would have all 84,000 methods to benefit all sentient beings.

11. All suffering without exception comes from wishing for one's own happiness. The perfect Buddhas arise from the altruistic mind. Therefore, completely exchanging one's own happiness for the suffering of others is the bodhisattvas' practice.

“All suffering without exception comes from wishing for one's own happiness. The perfect Buddhas arise from the altruistic mind. Therefore, completely exchanging one's own happiness for the suffering of others is the bodhisattvas' practice.” To practice Bodhicitta we must remember and recite this verse as often as possible.

All suffering originates from selfishness and self interests. This arises from our attachment to self. What is the origin of a perfect a Buddha? The origin is the mind to place the benefit of all sentient beings above all else. Whoever generates the mind to benefit all sentient beings; this person will become a Buddha. This mind to benefit all sentient being is the Buddha mind. Where does this attachment to self, which gives us our suffering, originate? This attachment comes from innumerable rebirths since beginningless time, like non-stop falling of snowflakes, ever increasing and accumulating. Due to this incessant accumulation, it is very difficult for us to detect this attachment. For example, when we see a cup of tea on the table, we would think, “I want to drink it” At this time, the “I” is born. At the end of this teaching and on our way home, we would think “my home”, “my son”, “my daughter” this “I” pervades our mind in an ever-increasing manner. Therefore, when we want to drink this cup of tea, we must offer it to the Triple Gem. When we first offer it to the Triple Gem, then we drink the cup of tea, this idea of “I” will lessen. We use this skillful means of offering to the Triple Gem in order to lessen our preoccupation of self. Do you think the Triple Gem feel thirst or hunger? Certainly not. This is because we want to eliminate our attachment to self that we offer to the Triple Gem. When we make offering to the Triple Gem, our mind would not be preoccupied with “I”, otherwise this “I” will constantly appear.

When we observe a beautiful flower, we should think “What a beautiful flower, we must offer it to the Triple Gem” But many people would not think in this manner. They would think “What a beautiful flower, I must buy it and bring it home. Then put it in a vase. It would make my home look more beautiful.” In this process we are allowing this self-attachment to increase and accumulate.

Buddha has many skillful means to help us eliminate our self-attachment; therefore he taught us “Mandala Offering”. The practice of Mandala offering can fulfill our merits requirements. When utilizing riches as an offering, one would get wisdom merits in return. Mandala offering can benefit all sentient beings. Why is it that by offering Mandala, all sentient beings are benefited? One must reflect upon this in detail.

Most of us are doing our Four Foundation Practices. Many people have questions regarding the Mandala offering part of the practice in this Ngondro Practice. The question is “Why do we need to offer Mandala?” Normally when this “I” is formed, it doesn’t happen once or twice, but millions upon billions of times. When we practice Mandala Offering, we are accumulating our merits in riches, we must think, “Where do these riches come from?” If we ask ourselves “How much money do you have?” We would think “I have one dollar, ten dollars, one hundred dollars, one thousand dollars, ten thousand dollars, ten million dollars etc.” We would know we have so much money. In actual fact in every single dollar there is an “I” attached to it. When we have hundred thousand dollars, we would have hundred thousand “I”s in our mind. Hundred “I”s weigh very heavy and cannot easily be lifted from our minds.

That is the reason when we practice Mandala Offering, we take all our riches and benefits offer them to the Triple Gem. After you have offered them to the Triple Gem, these possessions do not belong to us. Then the weight on our mind would be lessened at the same time eliminate a lot of the attachment to “I”. That is why we must practice Mandala offering often, then when we will view our home and possessions not as ours but they actually belong to the Triple Gem and we are just using them. Then gradually our attachment to self will slowly diminish. When our mind become calm with clarity, then we have become Buddha. Just like this cup of water, when it is still, it will become very clear and stable. When the turmoil within our mind subsides, the clarity of our mind will appear; this is the hidden treasure, which is Buddhahood. This is also wisdom merit. Using this method we accumulate wisdom, also allow the practitioner eliminate the attachment to self. You must constantly ponder on this point.

In the past most of us is very selfish and have not thought about benefiting all sentient beings. In this manner we are not able to reap the fruits of Buddhahood. That is why this phrase says “Therefore, completely exchanging one’s own happiness for the suffering of others is the Bodhisattvas’ practice”

Past Buddhas have taken their happiness and given them to all sentient beings, at the same time taken their sufferings onto themselves as an exchange. Only true Buddhas can take their life and body and offer them to sentient beings. We, as human beings, are not able to do this. Then what method should we use to practice exchange or give and take? This is what I must teach you all.

To our parents, children, teachers, gurus and spiritual friends, we offer to them our good possessions. This is a small form of give and take. These possessions were ours and we have given them to others; this is called exchanging. When we arrive at a place where there is war, killing, and quarrels, even though we are not involved in these types of activities, we must empathize by thinking that if we were born amongst them, we would experience this type of suffering. Allow this thought to arise within our mind, thus experiencing the pain and suffering of these people. This is also a form of give and take. Although we are not suffering as those people but if we constantly pray to our guru and recite the six syllable mantra, then we will be able to truly understand the suffering of sentient beings. This is a method of give and take (Tong Len) ^{Tib.}

In certain circumstances when we are faced with difficulties such as without money and sick with pain; even under this type of situation we are able to give to the poor, take care of them, this is also give and take. I have witnessed in Tibet, where people were desperately poor yet offer to beggars much less fortunate than themselves. Although the offerings were small in comparison but at that time one should offer the merit and to vow that in future we will benefit more sentient beings. Thus achieving the give and take practice.

Parents will always take care of their children under any circumstances. Even though they are faced with difficulties, the parents will find all means to look after their children. The children may not treat their parents in like manner. Whether the children will repay their parents depends upon the karma between them. No matter what, the parents will do their best to look after their children. If we can treat all sentient being as though parents treat their children. If we could treat all without distinctions and selflessly benefit them as though we are treating our children then this is a true sign of Bodhicitta. This is a mind where one never thinks of repayment, selflessly, unconditionally works for all sentient beings.

In Taiwan, most people have heard of Buddhism. The unfortunates often receive help. This is a very good. However, when helping our friends we must think that if we come across someone totally unknown to us, yet we can assist him, then this is more meaningful because we would not think of return from him. In helping friends, it is difficult not to think of return. But if we can, then the merit will be much greater.

Milarepa said: “Helping others with thoughts of return and sweet talks with hidden purpose, the merits derived is very little. This is because one is thinking of rewards. Therefore we should practice give and take (Tong Len) with strangers.”

Now you have received this book on 37 bodhisattvas’ practice, if you have two, you should give one to you Dharma friend. Because this book is very precious. A fully realized master wrote this in the past, he was a true bodhisattva. This book also contains a mantra by sight where one only needs to have seen it then one can be liberated. It has tremendous blessing power. If you practice together on Sundays, I wish you could all read it once together. If there are points that you do not understand, you could ask each other. Those who are not clear can ask those who understand it and those who understand it must patiently explain it to others. This way all your merit, knowledge and practice will continually increase. Don’t feel shy if you do not understand, because after you have understood it your merit and power will increase. To teach one or two phrases of this book to someone far surpass giving him a hundred dollars, a thousand dollars or ten thousand dollars. Because this person’s benefit from one or two phrases of this book will have taught him Buddhist views and meanings which will benefit him for many life times to come. The benefit is unlimited. That’s why you should view this book in this light and strive to understand its deeper meaning.

Whether I am here or not, you must know that this book is me. This book represents me. In future after my death, when you see this book you are seeing me. There is no

difference. Because of this I have asked benefactors who possess loving kindness and compassion to print this little booklet and give it to friends so that they can actually practice it. That's why I hope you could have one more with which you can share with other friends.

This little booklet is very important, because if you have read it once, it's the same as having read the Kanjur. Do you know how big the Kanjur is? It has more than 100 volumes. It is difficult to read it once. But I can assure you today that if you have read this little booklet once, it's the same as having read the Kanjur once.

Before each teaching, if we could read this booklet once, it will benefit all of us. Especially, when we don't have a lot of time, while we read it we can ponder on its meaning would be very beneficial to all of us. If we have understood it and then recite it together, the meaning would be much deeper. If we could constantly read it the benefit and merit would definitely increase.

When we read it aloud, human and non-human will benefit. Why is this? Because the cause of pain and suffering of all sentient being is the lack of loving kindness and compassion. After having contemplated on this then read it aloud, then aspire all sentient being can generate loving kindness and compassion. If all sentient being can have loving kindness and compassion; if we could treat all other as mother treating her children, then everyone will feel complete happiness. That is why we must wish all sentient beings could generate loving kindness and compassion. We've talked about phrase 11, which mainly deals with give and take. The next is the 12th phrase.

12. Even if others, influenced by great desire, steal all one's wealth or have it stolen, dedicating to them one's body, possessions and virtues (accumulated in) the three times is the bodhisattvas' practice.

There are many instances of stealing, for example there are little thieves, or robbers. There are many such cases brought before the justice system. What is the cause of stealing and robbery cases? Perhaps, in our past lives, we have taken other people's possessions without permission or we have been a thief and stolen or cheated others of their possessions. Another case would be that we did not repay our parents for using their possessions. Thereafter they have become our karmic debtors. All these are our karma accumulated from past lives.

Therefore, in this lifetime we experience being robbed or things stolen from us. In actual fact it is like having borrowed possessions from others without returning it, thus establishing debts for this lifetime. If we can understand this point then when we are being robbed or things stolen from us we will not have hatred thoughts in our mind. We will not have hatred thoughts directed towards the thieves or robbers. Naturally we will not be angry, at the same time we will dedicate the merits to them. Why do we need to dedicate merits to them? It is because we already understand the cause and effect and that they may be our past life debtors coming to collect what are truly owed to them. Or they are our past life parents coming to collect their time and efforts to bring us up. All

these debts we need to clear and at the same time dedicate the merits to them. Hoping that they will quickly attain enlightenment. Also hoping that their riches will increase and their lives without obstacles. If we can truly perform this dedication of merit, then we would have carried out the most precious form of giving. The possession that was lost would not be wasted.

This is especially true at present; people engaged in commerce often borrow money. Many people are not able to repay their loan and because of this, suffer pain and suffering. We should contemplate on this in detail. On the one hand we wish to repay all debts, so that we will feel happiness in our mind. If we are not able to collect debts owed by our friends; we should forgive them. Because if we did not incur any debt in our past life to these people, in future we could, through legal means, collect what is owed. If we owed them in our past life, this amount of money, no matter what methods we employ, we will not be able to get repayment. Even though in their heart they want to repay the money, somehow you will not be successful in retrieving your money. Therefore in these matters we must not feel agitated or get angry.

We must understand that the above method is very good and will lessen your pain and sufferings. If we do not have this type of attitude, when we lose our possessions we would suffer the initial loss of the possession, then we will suffer the anger thoughts that follow. Anger will lead us to the hells realms. Can you imagine how you can withstand the pain and suffering of the hells realm? Therefore when we lose a lot of our possessions we must not feel pain. Because we still have Bodhicitta in our mind. If we lose our Bodhicitta then every day you would just think of the loss of your possessions. One day when Buddha Amitabha wants to take you to pureland you would not be able to go. Because you will still be in the hells realm. Why? Because after your loss of possessions, each day you have anger in your mind and in the end you will end up in the hells realm.

If after we lost possessions, we only think that we should repay this debt and not generate any anger thoughts. Then after repayment of this debt, we should also practice giving. In the future we will enjoy the karmic fruition of giving paramitas. To contemplate a little further, if you are able to meet a thief it is fortunate because you are able to repay your debts and at the same time practice the giving paramitas. Therefore we should give thanks to this thief. If you can think like this, we will be able to stop your own pain and suffering as well as those of others. Isn't that a good thing to do? The thirteenth phrase follows.

13. Even if others are going to cut off one's head when one is utterly blameless, taking upon oneself all their negative deeds by the power of compassion is the bodhisattvas' practice.

This phrase says even if we are not at fault and have not harmed anyone, and we are in a situation where they want to hurt us to the point of cutting of our heads, how should we conduct ourselves? This type of situation happens because in past lives we may have killed the other person; so today they are here to kill us in return. Then should we lose

our temper? We should read this phrase carefully and reflect upon it. We must realize the negative karma accumulated in our past lives coming to fruition at this moment. Even if we lose our temper and commit revenge, then we would have lost our Bodhicitta from our mind. Then not only you would lose your body, you would have lost your Bodhicitta as well.

If you do not wish to lose your Bodhicitta then you should practice patience at this very moment. Because the body is only a material body, losing it or having it damaged isn't very important. The most important part is that you should never lose your Bodhicitta. If you haven't lost your Bodhicitta then you will be able to have a better rebirth. Your Bodhicitta will also be stronger because of this. As to the point where we killed others in the past life then in this life we must bear the consequences of the other person killing oneself. We must view it as repayment of a debt. So when you are faced with this type of situation, you must vow to repay all your debts and hope that the negative karma of the other person killing oneself will not come to fruition, but wish that it will turn into positive karma. We must use loving kindness and compassion towards the people trying to kill us.

We must constantly contemplate the meaning of the above. Why? If tomorrow, or day after tomorrow it really happens, will we be able to keep calm and not lose our temper? This is how important that we should reflect constantly and practice often. If we do not practice normally, when this type of situation happens, we will immediately take out our gun and kill the other person. In the case where we are killed we would have lost our Bodhicitta as well. It would be a great pity, so we must reflect and practice what is taught in the thirteenth phrase.

Normally, when faced with this type of situation, we would want to get rid of this perpetrator. But this is not the correct way to think. We must have loving kindness and compassion towards the victim as well as the robber. We should have loving kindness and compassion within our mind. We must understand that this type of things happens because of karma coming to fruition. If there is no such karma then it will not happen. The killer will not be able to escape the law of the land; therefore he will not be in a good position. After his death he will have suffer the extreme pain and suffering of the hells realm. The relatives of the victim will also hate the killer, making him feel that there is no place where he can find comfort. Irrespective of this life or the next, the minds of killers will always be in turmoil. We should treat them with loving kindness and compassion because we know that they are like this because of past life negative karma. Towards the victims we should think that they have just repaid all their debts. This is how we should practice and visualize and treat both parties with Bodhicitta.

14. Even if someone broadcasts throughout the billion worlds all sorts of offensive remarks about one, speaking in turn of that person's qualities with a loving mind is the bodhisattvas' practice.

This is a very important phrase that deals with samsara. It is very important to the Dharma Center, it is also more important to the practitioner. It seems very insignificant

but why is it so important? Whatever we hear, no matter whether it is good or bad, it's just like wind. Its nature is empty. But when it reaches our mind, its like a hurricane and tidal wave, we would feel all kinds of strong emotions such as desire and hatred. For example, someone says something bad about you in your face, and because it triggered anger thoughts in our mind, we would draw our gun and kill this person. In the end we will be apprehended and suffer being locked up in jail for many years. As well as being fined a huge sum of money. All these can happen as a result of someone scolded us. It's that simple and we should reflect upon this.

If someone says you are not good, then you have to think; although he said I am not good, but many people have said the opposite to me. Therefore, let him say what he wants to say. We have to judge whether it is his fault in doing so. If we have done wrong then whatever this person says is correct and we should treat it as good medicine. Also treat it as true Buddhist views and teachings. We should then feel happy and welcome the teachings. If we are not at fault, then whatever he says is incorrect. From now on we do not need to be associated with him. Isn't that a pity? Therefore whatever this person wants to say let him. It doesn't really matter. Our mind should remain calm and unmoved. We should first observe the true situation before taking any actions.

When others are speaking ill about us, we have to say to ourselves that this is caused by momentary birth of thoughts in their mind. Then we have to vow not to be like them and speak such words. This is especially true after having received empowerment in Mantrayana; all sounds are the sounds of Mantrayana, which is no different from vows or commitments that we utter. The sounds emanated are empty, without substance, which is no different from its true nature. If we think that sounds have substance and are real, and generate desire and hatred thoughts then this will damage the speech and vows that we utter. Therefore we must understand that sound is emptiness, and we must not be affected by it. Our mind must rest in its True Nature.

If others have said something that is not good to hear, after we have heard it we must think about it in detail. It may be because this person is jealous about our relationship with another person and trying to use words to separate us. This type of speech is called "Two tongue" or "malicious speech". This is the action of a very bad person attempting to break up a friendship. The karmic result of this action will cause the person to have no relatives or friends in their future lives. We have to understand this and vow not to speak ill of others. We must keep this vow and let our mind rest in tranquility.

This is especially true between Vajra brothers and sisters in a Dharma center where everyone gossips. This causes hatred amongst each other and the desire to leave the Dharma center. This type of situation is very common and is a serious fault. If we come across someone in the center spreading rumour and gossips about another person we must approach this person and say, "I am actually a very good friend of his, in fact his ability is quite good!" Then praise the gossiper. These praises will embarrass him. He will realize that he is finding faults of the other and speaking ill about him, yet someone is praising him. Then he will not commit the fault of spreading rumours and gossips thus creating turmoil in the community. That is why we should use loving kindness and compassion to

praise the others efforts. In front of others we should say “I am his good friend, he will not hurt me like this.” Or show that “Even if he had hurt me, he didn’t do it intentionally.”

In this manner, the turmoil between the people will slowly change into that of good intentions and merit. If the other person persists in speaking ill about us and we persist in praising him then when he hears this he will reflect and eventually change his attitude. His opinion about you will change for the better and this way both will benefit from the increase of merit. The damage will lessen. The following is the fifteenth phrase.

15. Even if, in the midst of a public gathering, someone exposes faults and speaks ill of one, humbly paying homage to that person, perceiving him as a spiritual friend, is the bodhisattvas’ practice.

If in a public gathering someone runs up and shouts abuse at us and publicly denounce us as scoundrel. In this situation we will normally be very angry. When our temper is at its height, we must immediately reflect on Bodhicitta and realize that dangerous events may happen. This is because of the other person’s enraged speech will incite our anger and this will lead us to commit negative deeds. Therefore, to be angry is our true enemy. That is why at this very moment we must practice Bodhicitta. Resolve that even at the pain of death we will not reply in similar angry speech. We must practice patience and endurance as an antidote.

When we are angry, it is like when we are sick. To practice patience and endurance is like having an operation that can cure this anger illness. Therefore, when others treat us with anger, and we can remain unaffected, then this is like having performed an operation where the illness is removed. We should treat this person who tried to hurt us as a true and accomplished master; we must give thanks to him, it is because of him that we are able to subdue our anger. Therefore we must vow again that we will ceaselessly practice patience and endurance. We should practice like this normally. Why do we need to practice this normally? Because we are normally searching constantly for methods to pacify our anger. Then one day when it happens, we can conquer our angry thoughts in our mind. If we do not constantly practice then one day when an event occurs, we will be consumed by our anger.

We should reflect upon this carefully. What we are talking about is the method to turn suffering into happiness. Then you might doubt whether it can really turn suffering into happiness? The answer is yes. Using this method, we can really turn suffering into merits. When you have free time you must read this text, reflect upon its meaning. I have been reciting this for 14 to 15 years and continue to recite it everyday. At the same time I reflect on its meaning. Now all of you have this little booklet, you must treasure it. The following is phrase sixteen.

16. Even if someone for whom one has cared as lovingly as his own child regards one as an enemy, to cherish that person as dearly as a mother does an ailing child is the bodhisattvas’ practice.

What this phrase describes is very common. It is happening now. For example children would kill their parents, or kill their boy friends or girl friends or their close friends. When this happens one should think: I am a Buddhist and have learnt the Buddhist views and have learnt and practice Bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is the method and practice to transform pain and suffering into happiness. When we are faced with this situation we must think: The other person is like a sick person, embroiled in negative karma and afflicted emotions at the same time do not know of the seriousness of hatred and ignorance. Therefore doesn't have any means to change it. Padmasambava said, "Someone overwhelmed by afflicted emotions" or like a group of doctors who are helpless when faced with a dying person. We should treat this person with extreme loving kindness and compassion. Have to think of ways to benefit him, wishing that he could eliminate desire, hatred and ignorance.

When we visualize and practice in this manner, our loving kindness and compassion will increase a hundred million fold. If we are able to continually visualize and practice in this manner, this will pacify the other person's desire, anger and ignorance. If the other person were unchanged then we would not lose our Bodhicitta. We should then practice patience knowing that our Bodhicitta will ever increase. Even though the other person continues to accumulate negative karma, we will still help the growth of our Bodhicitta. In this present society, many boy friend and girl friends part company. We should think that if it is the fruition of karma then there is nothing that we can do. In another situation the problem is caused by our afflicted emotions. For this reason, most people are helpless when consumed by afflicted emotions. When the other person is angry, we should use loving kindness and compassion in dealing with the other person. This will strengthen our Bodhicitta.

This type of visualization and practice must be use towards non-Buddhists. We must use these methods with people who are against Buddhism, and to those actively damage Buddhist views and Dharma. We must treat these people with added loving kindness and compassion. The text says, like parents treat their sick child with immeasurable amount of loving kindness and compassion. We should treat those who are against Buddhism with this type of mind. Its like the Bodhicitta mind is like fire and these happenings are like fire wood. Add the wood to fire will only make the fire stronger; it will not hurt the fire. The following is the seventeenth phrase.

17. Even if, influenced by pride, an equal or inferior person treats one with contempt; respectfully placing him like a guru at the crown of one's head is the bodhisattva's practice.

This phrase says if someone's abilities or wealth is equal or worse than ours, but this person constantly looks down upon us, or bullies us. When we are faced with this situation we should think whether the other person is reaction is due to us showing off our possessions or that we carry ourselves with pride? If this is the reason then the other person's reaction is like that of a doctor, coming to cure our sickness. From this we

should know that we are not that important. The other's abilities may surpass that of ours. Because of the other person's behavior we can eliminate our faults then the other person would be like a doctor or teacher. We should not treat this person with anger but we must gratitude in our mind. The following is the eighteenth phrase.

18. Though one may have an impoverished life, always be disparaged by others, afflicted by dangerous illness and evil spirits, to be without discouragement and to take upon oneself all the misdeeds and suffering of beings is the bodhisattvas' practice.

In this phrase describes the situation as such, there are many people learning about Buddhism. They come and practice Bodhicitta. They hear that learning Buddhism will make this life more comfortable. In future lives, happiness abound. Therefore, when we learn and practice Buddhism, we hope that, we in this life the lives that follow will immediately enjoy happiness. But this type of situation will not happen as expected. This is because we simply impossible to know what karma we have accumulated through past cause and effect. What negative deeds have we committed? That will bring us unexpected pain, suffering, sickness, being destitute etc. When this happens, we must understand that this is a sign of the end of our negative karma coming to fruition. We can observe there are many very highly realized masters suffering from very serious illnesses or being locked up in jail, what is the cause of all these?

This type of situation is like when we have to go on a long journey but we have not completed our duties or cleared our debts. How can anyone go on a journey without clearing all debts? Naturally, one cannot. At this time then one must clear all debts very quickly. For this reasons these masters have to clear all their debts in a great hurry to eliminate all their negative karma.

So when we are plagued by sicknesses, we must have the following thoughts: there are a lot of people with similar disease, there are more people whose conditions are worse than mine. For them we must practice take all the sufferings onto ourselves. This is because all sentient beings had been our parents in the past; we are willing to take on all their pain and suffering. Hoping that the sickness can ripen in our body and wish that they will be without disease and be happy. We should have this thought and joyfully practice Tong Len (the practice of taking onto ourselves all pain and suffering of others and giving to them all our goodness.)

The text states: "to be without discouragement and to take upon oneself all the misdeeds and suffering of beings is the bodhisattvas' practice." Refers to the strength of our resolve. What is this strength? We are now learning Buddha Dharma, learning and practicing Bodhicitta. But now we are faced with sickness and full of pain and suffering. At this time if we feel that Buddha Dharma is useless and lack confidence in it, then this is a sign of losing hope. If you could understand that because one practices Buddha Dharma which generated the effects to arrive, sooner which is a sign of the quickening of the fruition of karma. If one abandons Buddha Dharma, not only would one not able to

clear one's debts but also would increase it. This is like having taken ill, one refuses to eat medicine. How can one recover? It will only make one's illness more serious.

Once you understand this point, when faced with difficult situations, even though in the face of death, we must treasure our Bodhicitta, treasure Buddha Dharma. We are partnered with Bodhicitta to do battle, it is extremely strong, and can eliminate all obstacles. If we can think like this, it will increase Bodhicitta to benefit even more sentient beings.

If you think Buddha Dharma is useless, then you will not be able to extricate yourself from the difficult situation. This type of thinking is like taking Buddha Dharma as a temporary method. At present many people adopt this attitude towards Buddha Dharma and think that it cannot alleviate the difficult situation or the pain. Then they form the opinion that Buddha Dharma is useless. This is an incorrect view. Buddha Dharma teaches us to understand cause and effect as well as karma. The quote is "If one wants to know past life causes, just observe your present predicaments" At present a lot of things take effects and karma ripening this is due to causes that we incurred in our previous lives. If we can understand this point then we must diligently practice Buddha Dharma.

The following is linked with phrase 17. When we observe a master practices Buddha Dharma and teaches many followers would give praise and donations. Then we would think that this is what we must do also. Then when we become a monk or nun or when we actually practice, others don't really look upon us with such respect nor do we receive any donations. At this time, we would think that Buddha Dharma is useless and think of abandoning it. This type of thinking is to treat Buddha Dharma as a temporary method to help oneself. This will give us only temporary relief.

Whether we can have the respect of most people or whether we can receive donations from all are due to past life accumulation of merits. This many not have direct link with your practice in this life.

Milarepa was very poor and received a lot of ridicule from others. Many great masters were unknown to the public so they often were subject to equally bad treatments. So when you truly practice, you must not mind whether others respects ourselves or not, or whether they look down on us. You only need to increase your merits and never lose your Bodhicitta. If you still retained you precious jewel then whether others look down on you or praise you, it is only an empty phenomena. It doesn't have any meaning. When other people look down on you, you should not be disheartened; the most important thing is never abandon Buddha's teachings.

A Buddhist practitioner will sometimes fall ill or bothered by bad spirits. You must realize that only Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the Triple Gem, can help you. Other people or worldly gods cannot help you. From now on we must recite refuge prayer, recite the precious Tara mantra. You must recite with full confidence. As for the negative spirits, you must realize that they are not real. It is only you have fear in your

mind that they appear. Their nature is similar to emptiness and does not exist. Simply recite with confidence and never fear.

Normally when disturbances occur, this is a sign that our negative karma is being purified. One can read about this in Milarepa life history. Milarepa possessed great powers, many things happened to him, we could all learn from his story. Many people approached me and asked what they should do when such disturbances occur. When you are in this situation, you must recite Milarepa mantra or Tara mantra or Avalokitesvra mantra. If you could concentrate and recite then all these problems will disappear.

We should normally visualize and practice then we will develop strong power in our mind. If you only recite Tara mantra for one day, you will not develop strong power in your mind. Your mind is like a mirror, you must learn how to control it, and if your mirror can reflect your yidam then no spirit will appear. If your yidam does not appear in your mind then the negative spirit will appear. This is because there is only one mind when one appears then the other will not appear. This is the reason that we should visualize and practice often to form a habit of continuous practice. The previous text talks about what happens when faced with difficult situation. The nineteenth phrase deals with pleasant situations.

19. Though one may be famous and revered by many people or gain wealth like that of Vaishravana, having realized that worldly fortune is without essence, to be unconceited is the bodhisattvas' practice.

If we are famous, people will say you are a very good master. Or people will recognize that you are a great scholar, or you very wealthy. You should reflect that these things are without substance or meaning. If you can stabilize your Bodhicitta, that is of substance. Do worldly riches, friends, position, and reputation etc. exist? At the time of death, the wealth has not been use as offering to the Triple Gem, or given generously to the needy, then these are all wasted, have not been used. The thing that is useful and can be taken with you is your Bodhicitta. Other than this, all worldly riches, friends and family are useless because after death, you cannot bring them with you.

If we can normally reflect on this point then we will be able to separate our mind from the worldly enjoyment and riches. Why do we need to separate them? If your mind is still attached to worldly riches, then at death, it will be very difficult for you to go to pureland. This is because your mind is so attached to the wealth that it would be very difficult to let go. If we can understand that these worldly enjoyments are useless, and then our mind will not grasp at these things thus going to pureland will be easy. Therefore one must understand that the things in the desire, form and formless worlds are without substance. Do not form any attachment to them. This is the meaning of the text “that worldly fortune is without essence, to be unconceited is the bodhisattvas' practice”

There are two faults associated with attachment to wealth and fame: the first fault is when the desire thought increase; it is difficult to achieve liberation in your later years. The second fault is when you have strong attachment to wealth, and then you will give birth

to strong jealous thoughts in your mind. Why is this so? Because when you have gained wealth and fame you will feel very happy. When you find out that the other person has more fame and wealth than you then you will generate anger thought in your mind. This is the reason that brothers, sisters, relatives and friends can turn into enemies. When you see other people are happy and yourself are suffering, jealousy will arise in your mind.

This jealous feeling will tighten our mind to the point that it will kill the mind. Then when you see others are suffering you will derive joy in their misery. When this type of situation happens, it is a sign that our merits are fast coming to an end. We should not generate desire and attachment thoughts towards worldly riches or fame, because without such thoughts we will not generate jealous thought. We should understand the worldly fame and riches do not have any substance then we will be able to refrain from generating desire and jealous thoughts. The following is the twentieth phrase.

20. If outer foes are destroyed while not subduing the enemy of one's own hatred, enemies will only increase. Therefore, subduing one's own mind with the army of love and compassion is the bodhisattvas' practice.

If you have not pacified your internal hatred thoughts as the enemy, then the number of outer enemy will increase. At the beginning may be only 5 enemies, then 10, in the end the whole village will become your enemy. This is because your hatred thoughts are very strong in your mind, which causes enemies to ever increase. When you hate, its like your leg had been stabbed, the person who is hurt is you yourself. No matter whether it is between boyfriend girlfriend and parent with children, when they lose their temper, their face is like that of a coffin. Very unpleasant to look at. When the other person is angry, no matter what nice things you say to him, he will not listen to you. To be angry is painful; therefore, the angry person is generating pain and suffering.

Some parents when they get angry, the children won't dare approach them. When the children see their parent with such a look on their faces they won't come near them. The parent would think why their children dislike them and won't be close to them. The children are always running away from them. Actually it is because the parents are constantly angry, that the children are distancing themselves from their parents. This is the fault of being angry and caused the number of external enemies to constantly increase. Therefore, anger and hatred thoughts give us pain and suffering and secondly, the surrounding people will dislike us. In the end we will be reborn in the hells realm. Therefore there is only one enemy and that is hatred in our mind. To cure this hatred mind we need to have loving kindness and compassion.

Where there is loving kindness and compassion in our mind, there will be no room for hatred. Conversely, where there is hatred in our mind there is no room for loving kindness and compassion. Like this chair, it can only accommodate one person. Loving kindness and compassion cannot coexist with hatred. Therefore we must practice and nurture the loving kindness and compassion in our mind, and eliminate the angry thoughts.

In the past there was a monk who was constantly angry, others would help him but he would not change. This is because he often dreams of killing people and setting fire to buildings. Then after having been taught how to practice Bodhicitta, then gradually all these dreams subsided and the suffering stopped. We must understand hatred thoughts generate images and these images became real, that is how hell is formed. Hatred thoughts are formless, but hell has form. When there is hatred in the mind, even in dreams we have visions of fighting and killing, shooting at people etc. Just like that monk who constantly practiced Bodhicitta, his dreams of fighting and killing subsided and finally eliminated.

The situation in this world is the same. Someone prone to anger would not have any friends in Taipei this is because he had driven them away by his angry actions. Then he would move to Tai Chung, the same thing happened. In the end, he has to move constantly. This is because there is only one enemy and that is the hatred thoughts in our mind. If we can pacify the anger thoughts then we will not have any external enemies. Therefore, patience is very important. Buddha said patience would change all enemies into friends. If a person is often angry, all the friends will turn into enemies.

If a person often practices patience then good friends surround him. The images in the dreams are also happy and cordial. This type of people after death they will go to pureland, because all the beings in pureland are happy and cordial. Why is an angry person take rebirth in hell? Because all the beings in hell are enemies to each other and want to kill each other the moment they meet. Therefore, images generated from Bodhicitta actualize as pureland and images generated from hatred thoughts actualize as hell.

Once you understand this, you must promise that we must refrain from talking when we are angry, whether it is between husband and wife or boy friend and girl friend. After the anger had subsided then we should explain our position. Let the other person know what had happened and our point of view. This way we can avoid a lot of problems.

Why did the phrase say “subduing one’s own mind with the army of love and compassion”? This love and compassion army means that we should not only visualize loving kindness and compassion once of twice. You must practice it often just like an army where there is a large number. This way we continually practice Bodhicitta. For example if there are frequent quarrelling in a family, we should think that since innumerable number of rebirth, everyone had been our parent, so the karmic connection that we can be together again as family members is very rare and precious. Then we should not lose our temper and quarrel. We must also remind ourselves that the fruit of being angry is to land us in hell. If you can think like this then you will generate the mind to repent and never do it again thus eliminating the anger thoughts from our mind.

We must know that everything is impermanent and death can happen to us at anytime. We don’t know how long we can be together. Before death descends on us we should live happily together. If the other person harm us then we should be patient because everyone has his good and bad points, this is only a little difficulty and doesn’t really

matter. We should look for the good points of the other person and think of these good points. Then our anger thoughts will lessen and will be able to take care of each other. We should often reflect that we are surrounded by sentient beings who were our parents. Therefore when you see each one you should view them as your true parent. One after another you view them as your parent and each one you come across, your loving kindness and compassion will increase. Hold onto that thought when you see each person and let your loving kindness and compassion increase one after another, again and again. This will be like wish fulfilling jewel that can increase constantly. Your mind will be full of the thoughts of caring for others. The habits of the mind are accumulated bit by bit; in this manner your loving kindness and compassion will gather drop by drop. The outer world is formed by gathering of “dust” particles; bit by bit collected and formed. Present scientists are questioning whether the mind is like the outer world formed by a collection of dust like particles. They are still debating about this theory. No matter what, we have to remember the good points of our friends, if one only think of the bad points then one day will end up in a big argument.

In this talk, everyone can find suitable subjects that will satisfy their needs. If someone has very strong hatred thoughts in their mind then you must read this text in detail and reflect upon it to understand the deeper meaning. After you have listened, you must ponder and after pondering you must put it into practice. This is the process of listening, pondering and meditating. Now you are here listening to me, this is listening, and then you must think what is the good point about being angry? You should have a rehearsal first before any actions.

Actually anger is just like a gust of wind. It doesn't have any substance. At the time when it happens we must supplicate to our guru and ask for help. A moment later, the anger thoughts would have disappeared. Therefore if you have practiced listening, pondering and meditating then we will not be afraid of generating hatred thoughts. Because when it appears, all we need to do is to keep calm and it will disappear. As long as we constantly listen, ponder and meditate, we will reap the result very quickly. The following is the twenty first phrase.

21. Indulging sense pleasures is like drinking salt water – however much one indulges, thirst and craving only increase. Immediately abandoning whatever things give rise to clinging and attachment is the bodhisattvas' practice.

Our desire thoughts have five areas. Our eyes like to see beautiful things and scenes. Our ears like to hear nice sounds. Our nose likes to smell good fragrances. Our tongue likes to taste good food. Our body likes the feeling of soft clothing. Everyone has his own preferences. Some likes to eat extravagant foods but dresses very casually. Some likes to dress very well but does not mind about the type of food he eats. Therefore everyone's preference is different. Some masters will also like their fame, although some masters' abilities are quite good, their practice is also not too bad, but they crave for name and fame. All these are due to desire and attachment thoughts in our mind.

Because there are eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind consciousness, therefore we have sight, sound, fragrance, taste and touch as target for our desire and attachment thoughts. Are there any use for these objects of attachment and desire? Actually, they don't have any use at all. When we succumb to desire and attachment thoughts our Bodhicitta will be buried. When we have a body, we will think that the five sense objects of sight, sounds, fragrance, taste and touch are indispensable. But if one analyzes it, we will find that these five sense objects are form by man's opinion and without substance. Take food for example, some food is appreciated by someone but to another person, it is distasteful. Therefore the food itself does not contain the essence of good taste; it is only the personal opinion of the person eating it. Enjoyment of the five senses depends on the individual's likes and dislikes.

In our actual practice we must choose which one of our desires are the strongest and visualize it at the same time conduct our practice. During the practice we must determine how much pain and suffering we can get from having strong desire for a certain type of objects. If we do not have this desire, how will we benefit from it? Some people must have meat with their meal. Some people must drink wine with their meal. With wine everything would taste good. Without wine then even the best food would not be interesting. At this time one must think, how much money are we spending for this meal? All these food are empty without substance.

Actually any food that can satisfy our hunger will be good enough. Any clothing that can keep us warm will be good enough. Other than that, we observe grown ups drink and children wear expensive clothing, all this money is wasted. The money generously given to the poor would be much better. When we waste it on frivolous things and actually we have wasted our merits. When we die, at the moment when our four elements dissolve, our body will not be able to possess any of these material things. The only thing remaining will be the desire thoughts in our mind. These thoughts will land us in the hungry ghost realm. All the pain and suffering can be attributed to the desire for the pleasures of the five senses. There are some more instances of desire that we have not observed.

We need to understand that the worldly desires for pleasure are like a mirage without substance. We should not be attached to food, clothing and enjoyments of the senses. If we can eliminate these desire thoughts, then whatever food or clothing we have is sufficient. We can see that some people would die from over drinking or have to undergo an operation. Those who smoke are also subject to the same conditions. We should refrain from these bad actions before they become a habit. If we have a habit to indulge in these activities then it would be difficult to correct in the future. If you already have these habits then you should visualize today; what harm can come from having the desire for them? What benefit can we derive from not having desire for them? How would they harm our present life? How would they harm our future life? If we can ponder in this manner, it will benefit our present life as well as future life.

Disciples in the dharma center like me very much; the reason is they have strong faith in the Triple Gem. It is not because of my level of practice and it is not because of my

knowledge or merits. It is only because everyone here possesses positive karma and merits as well as faith in the Triple Gem. Not only does everyone treat me with respect and trust, you also give very generously and assist me in every way. That is why I constantly think how I can help everyone. Therefore I made arrangement and printed the 37 Bodhisattvas' Practice in the booklet form to be given to everyone. Actually, it is useless if I only stay in the Dharma Center all the time. My responsibility is to tell everyone about Bodhicitta. Then after you have listened to my teachings, you all should practice it. In the end you will reap the benefit of the actual practice. In this way I would have completed my responsibilities and everyone have their just reward. This is the method that both will benefit. If everyone like me and listen to my teachings, provide me with a lot of donation but fail to practice Bodhicitta then it would not be good for both parties. On my part, I have failed and committed a serious infraction. For everyone, you go away empty handed at the same time the money in your pocket had also disappeared. Isn't that being hurt seriously? I have come from afar and everyone also come from different places. To be able to assemble here to talk about the practice of Bodhicitta is very fortunate and hard to come by. Please do not waste my and your time.

Today when everyone here can practice the 37 Bodhisattvas' Practices is very meaningful. Because all of Buddha's teachings are included in these practices. That is why we should recite it as often as possible then dedicate the merit to all sentient beings. When you make a wish or vow, you should not only think of just Taiwan, you should include the whole world, wishing that human, non-human alike and all sentient beings can generate loving kindness and compassion in their mind. When we can dedicate in this manner then everyone will benefit.

When you recite you must visualize your self as Avalokitesvra, while you are reciting you visualize Avalokitesvra dispensing loving kindness and compassion to all sentient beings, wishing that all sentient being will develop loving kindness and compassion in their minds. If everyone on earth can generate loving kindness and compassion wouldn't that world be very different? If the sentient beings in this world do not have loving kindness and compassion, then even if gold would fall from the sky, what use would it be? Therefore we should recite the six-syllable mantra as often as possible and visualize Avalokitesvra; we should practice in this manner.

Because of the previously state reason that is why I have printed these little booklets of the 37 bodhisattvas' practice for everyone. I do this in every country that I go to. In your Dharma center you should also do the same. If you could distribute this booklet to as many people as possible, I personally will feel very happy. You must know that this booklet is I. In the future after my death, this booklet represents me. When you see this booklet, it will be like coming face to face with me. There is no difference between the booklet and I.

Everyone should recite the contents of this booklet as often as possible. When you recite or read it aloud, you have to think that to spread dharma is not easy. Especially if you could spread dharma in a dharma center, this is because all the people working in the dharma center are emanations of Bodhisattva. Those who support the center are also

bodhisattvas. You must appreciate their work and dedication and refrain from criticizing them or their work.

Each year I would teach this little booklet. Only if you are willing to listen and can practice Bodhicitta then coming here to talk about the contents of the 37 Bodhisattvas' Practices will be my duty. If on the one hand I can fulfill my duty and on the other hand everyone can practice Bodhicitta then isn't this a very joyful thing?

22. Appearances are one's own mind. From the beginning, mind's nature is free from the extremes of elaboration. Knowing this, not to engage the mind in subject-object duality is the bodhisattvas' practice.

In our mind there are many good thoughts and bad thoughts. Good thoughts are Bodhicitta mind; bad thoughts are ignorance and afflicted emotions. But these two are only thoughts. In Samsara many appearances emerge. Such as clothing, food and the objects of the five senses. When we view these samsaric pleasures, objects and develop attachment thoughts, we will want to possess all these objects. Does our mind want these objects? No, it is because we have a body and this body needs clothing and food. As for our mind, it does not need anything.

Everything that appears good or bad originates from our mind. What is the true nature of our mind? The true nature of our mind is empty, devoid of anything. There will be good and bad thoughts that appear in our mind, but if we let these thoughts pass, our true nature of our mind will appear and the emptiness will emerge. All these good or bad appearances will disappear. At that time your mind will be so full of joy! If you can practice like this then you would have achieved the stage where there is no suffering and no happiness.

For example, when you see a flower and think how pretty this flower is! At this time your mind developed an attachment thought. This is also the reason for suffering. When you observe the flower and are attached to its beauty, but this beauty only exists in your mind, in actual fact it is without substance. When we see this flower and recognize that this flower is very beautiful; is the beautiful quality really exists in this flower? Actually the perception of beauty only exists in our mind. If we could eliminate this judgmental quality from our mind, wouldn't it be so good.

It is because we have this judgmental quality in our mind that generated so many contradicting thoughts and caused us such a lot of suffering. For example there is a death in the family, and then we would think "Oh!! He was my father or mother. We have lived together for so many years. Thinking back on the times that we have had together. The pain and suffering in our mind is then born. But if you examine it closely, it is nature. Every life is like this; therefore you don't need to think about it. Then wouldn't your pain and suffering disappear? The following is twenty third phrase.

23. When encountering pleasing sense objects, though they appear beautiful like a rainbow in summer time, not to regard them as real and to abandon clinging attachment is the bodhisattvas' practice.

There are plenty of pleasant views, which include the sight, smell, taste and touch etc. senses. For example, young men and women have good-looking bodies. But when they get old, the body will change to ugly. But it is the same person. Therefore you cannot trust the appearance of a beautiful body, it is not reliable not stable. The input that we receive from the sight, smell, taste and touch senses are the same. For example, look at how we judge good tasting food or bad tasting food, no matter what happens; after we have eaten them in the end they all turn out to be the same. So the judgment as to whether it is good to eat or bad to eat is unreliable. Similarly, this applies to our clothing. We like expensive and good cloths. We also treat them with such care because we are so attached to them. This is the meaning of the text “abandoning cling attachment is the bodhisattvas' practice”

At present we suffer from the dualistic views of likes and dislikes. We form strong attachment for the worldly feelings, and when feeling of happiness suddenly disappears. We would feel a very strong sense of loss therefore the suffering is equally strong.

24. Diverse sufferings are like the death of a child in a dream. By apprehending illusory appearances as real, one becomes weary. Therefore, when encountering disagreeable circumstances, viewing them as illusory is the bodhisattvas' practice.

For example if someone who is used to eating good tasting foods, when he eats ordinary food he will feel discomfort. But if a person does not have strong opinion about what type of feed he eats and treats good or ordinary food the same, then he will not suffer from this discomfort. Similarly we associate with our father, mother and friends and develop attachment; when the time comes that we need to part then we would feel the pain and suffering. The nature of this type of pain and suffering from loss is the same.

Pain and suffering is actually the mind not being calm. The causes to disturb the mind are many. Some people would suffer because of lack of money, some from lack of friends; some suffer from a strong sense of jealousy. All these painful situations appear to differ but from the point of view of turmoil in the mind, there are no differences. There is only one cause.

But the feeling of pain and suffering will change. If a person's father dies and feel the pain of loss; then whatever pain he had felt in the past would have disappeared. A few months later the pain that he feels now when his father passed away would have disappeared. The text says “death of a child in a dream” after you wake up, the dream would have disappeared together with the pain and suffering that you endured. Therefore you must understand pain and suffering are only a form of thought in your mind. If they are only thoughts then they are empty without substance. If we do not hold onto the pain

and suffering as real then the pain and suffering would disappear. Just like losing a child in a dream, it does not have any substance to it.

But if you feel that your pain is real and hold on to it then this pain will get stronger and stronger. It will get so strong that you will commit suicide. This type of situation actually happens. So you must not hold onto pain as real, must understand that it is empty, illusory and without substance. If you are in a difficult situation, you have to think that in this world there are many people with similar predicament. It is not only you who are in a difficult situation; at the same time don't regard the present pain and suffering as real. You must understand that it is a phenomenon and is unreal. If you can do this then you are really performing bodhisattva practice.

Why do we generate such pain and suffering when our parents, children or relatives die? It is because we would normally care and love them, therefore when we experience this loss we generate this suffering. So the cause of this suffering is the desire and attachment to a certain situation and relationship. When this situation or relationship disappears then we naturally generate the pain. Instead of allowing ourselves to fall into the painful condition, why not allow our mind to settle on another object. At this time think of Buddha Amitabha and pureland. Don't dwell on the person's death; instead think that this person has already gone to Amitabha pureland. In this condition we recite Buddha Amitabha's mantra. If you could do this it will generate tremendous amount of benefit. If you continue to think of the death of the person and generate a lot of attachment then bad result will follow.

25. If it is necessary to give away one's body while aspiring to enlightenment, what need is there to mention external objects? Therefore, practicing generosity without hope of reciprocation or (positive) karmic results is the bodhisattvas' practice.

Past Buddhas in their practice of bodhisattva ways had often given their arms, legs, body and had used their liver and brain to paint the floor as an offering of generosity. Buddha, in Nepal, had given his body to feed a hungry tiger; you can appreciate how Buddha views everyone without distinction as object of his offering. But, can we do similar things? At this present time is difficult because we regard all our possessions and wealth as ours and have formed strong attachment to them. This kind of thinking will bring us a lot of harm. We place a lot of importance in this "I"; if you want to lessen your burden then you must practice generosity. This is the great benefit of generosity. There are three type of generosity: when we give food and clothing to the poor and hungry, this is one type of generosity. But if we do not have money, how do we give? At this time we can give teachings and we constantly practice Bodhicitta, recite the six syllable mantra, thinking that it will do benefit to others, this is another type of generosity.

That is why we don't need a lot of clothing or food, just enough will be sufficient. You should always have the benefit of others in your mind. You should normally give generously to beggars or give our own food to dogs or chicken, while you are giving you must think that they were your parents because all sentient beings were our parents before.

While you are giving you must never think that “today I am giving a little to you, tomorrow you will return a lot to me.” Never generate the thought of having return for what you have given. The above are methods of giving in money and in teaching. Giving to the Triple Gem, giving to your master, giving to the Dharma centre are all classified as giving. If one can give a little money to the Dharma center so that the center can be sustain for many years, and during this time we can practice Buddha Dharma. Isn't this a huge benefit? This is what we all have to learn and practice.

The next is giving life. For example when a bird, chicken or fish, these type of animal, when they are about to be slaughtered, we help them and let them live. This is giving life. This type of liberation will result in us having longer life. When we give in terms of money we will be rewarded with wealth in the future. Those super wealthy people with a lot of power all resulted from having given to the Triple Gem, to the poor and needy for many life times.

As a parent we must spend money and take care of our children's food, clothing and schooling. Many people would think that the children must be our karmic debtors. Actually this is not a correct view. Irrespective of whether they were our family members or others we must consider them as our previous parents and as such must provide for them and not to consider them as our karmic debtors. We should adopt this mind set to make offerings to people other than our children and family members.

Another example, our country had built houses, roads and made land available for us and because of this we have to pay a certain amount of money. We would not like to part with this money and feel stingy. Stingy thoughts are very bad for our mind. In order to eliminate this stinginess in our mind, we have to learn to be generous and give. The buildings, roads, hotels etc that our government had constructed are useful to all and because of this we should be happy to exercise our generosity and give. This type of generosity benefits a lot of people.

When we have to pay certain fees for the house we would feel the pain of having to part with our money. This is a sign of stinginess. When our stinginess in our mind grows stronger and stronger, where will it lead us? It will lead us straight to the hells realm. Therefore we must not have the thought of not paying and the thought of the inevitability of paying in our mind. These thoughts cause us the pain and suffering that goes with this mind set. We should have the mind of giving, paying and it is right to pay. If we can do this then it would be generosity in the highest sense.

Another example; where does the electricity come from? This is because we all pay our dues that the electricity is made available (this is because Garchen Rinpoche had lived under the communist rule for many years. That he has no idea of privatization as we have in the west that he views all infrastructures as state generated and owned. But his wonderful teachings permeate all barriers) Airplanes exist because of our payment so that there are airplane companies, factories so that the communities can have airplanes. Isn't that benefit to the general public? It is because a lot of people pay their dues therefore all

of us will benefit from the proceeds; if we can have that thought in our mind then we will all adopt the happy attitude when we have to pay our taxes. So when we buy our airplane ticket we should think that we will have more airplanes; when more vehicle payment comes in, there will be more cars on the road. The same thing with our roads, because taxes are collected therefore their maintenance will be better. If we can adopt this type of attitude then we will be able to eliminate the stinginess from our minds.

We should also use our body as gift of generosity. What is using our body as gift of generosity? For example when we work for a private or public organization, our body goes to work, if we perform our duty honestly and diligently by using our body then our country will strengthen, our bosses' business will expand. Therefore while we are working we have to adopt the idea that our bosses are our parents and when we perform our duties, we are doing it for our parents. Money paid to us from our bosses is like money from our parents. In previous lives our parents gave us clothing and food, in this life they have become our bosses and continue to give us money. Therefore we should never think that we are not receiving enough money, on the other hand we should be grateful and more than satisfied.

What should be the attitude of the boss? Bosses should think that all staff members are their children and that he should take care of them as we normally take care of our own children. If this relationship between staff members and bosses exist then everyone will be able to work in harmony and happiness. In this way everyone benefit.

26. If, lacking ethical conduct, one fails to achieve one's own purpose, the wish to accomplish others' purpose is laughable. Therefore, guarding ethics devoid of aspirations for worldly existence is the bodhisattvas' practice.

The second paramita of the six paramitas is skilful conduct or keeping precepts. There are many precepts. There are precepts for monks and nuns, and precepts for the non clergy. And there are precepts for children. All these are rules which will allow us to generate joy within our minds and to refrain from hurting others but to help them. This way both parties will benefit. Each country has its own rules and laws, if a person breaks the law he will be put in jail. At this time one does not need to talk about helping others, he will not be able to help himself. The law breaker would either be put in jail or be executed. From this one can see the importance of obeying the laws of the land.

Everyone here likes Buddha Dharma. What are the rules and regulations of practicing Buddha Dharma? It is to eliminate the ten negative actions, do not kill, steal, drink etc. If one can keep these precepts then you have kept the rules and regulations of practicing Buddha Dharma. There are rules between family members. This rule is refraining from hurting each other. When all family members do not hurt each other, everyone will live in harmony and are happy. This is the rule within the family.

There are rules between parents and children. Parents should teach and lead their children so that they will understand what should and should not be done. The children should

listen to their elders and learn then put into practice the teachings. When the children are older the parent should send the children to schools and receive better education.

There are rule between boyfriend and girlfriend. First of all both must observe and understand each other. You must reflect on the amount of love you have for this person. If you find that you have a lot of love for this person then you can make a promise to: remain with each other until death. If you can make that kind of vow then you will become husband and wife. If you have only known each other for a few months and without investigating about one another, develop a relationship then part with one another after a while then move on to another partner. In this manner one move from one partner to another; the result of this action will cause you to lose the ability to be reborn in the human realm. If you cannot be reborn as a human then the pain and suffering would continue to grow, this is a serious consequence of your action. Where do these pain and suffering come from? This is because you constantly change partners and destroy your original vow.

That is why one must observe closely the relationship between man and woman. This is not to observe the external attributes but to understand your partner's mind. Whether the other partner believes in cause and effects and whether your partner is honest. If you only observe your partner's external attributes, then this is not reliable. If you can find out about your partner's mind, then you will have a bright future together. The above involved the morality of abstention from misbehaviour.

Then we must talk about the precepts of performing virtuous deeds. When we carry out worldly matters, they have their own rules and regulations; similarly, when we carry out the acts of benefiting all sentient beings we have dharma rules and regulations too. For example, in the morning we should prostrate and recite our morning prayers. When others are resting at night we must have in our mind the practices of dharma. Diligently practice our meditations and recitations such as recite 100 times the six syllable mantra. This is all rules and regulations. So we must understand that rules and regulations are not uses to gauge the actions of others and argue with them; they are to protect our minds from wavering and this is the essence of morality of integrating virtuous deeds.

In the Bodhisattva vows there are three types of moralities; the first is the morality of abstention from misbehaviour, the second is the morality of integrating virtuous deeds, the third the morality of working for the benefits of other sentient beings. Why do we need to perform deeds to benefit all sentient beings? First we must understand that we are a Buddhist practitioner and as a practitioner our duty is to benefit all sentient beings. Our body is used to server all sentient beings as our parents; our speech is used to recite mantras and sutras and to teach sentient beings the importance of cause and effect as well as karma. If we speak nice words but we harbour hatred thoughts then this would be contradictory to the essence of the bodhisattva vows. We should think that they are all our parents and have the thoughts of benefiting them. When we are angry, we ask ourselves why we should be mad at our parents. As such we control our actions; this control is observing the precepts.

The vow to benefit all sentient beings is to remind ourselves constantly to broaden our views and to include all sentient beings as our target of performing virtuous deeds. Everyday we must remind ourselves 100 times to benefit all sentient beings. This is keeping the vow of benefiting all sentient beings.

27. To bodhisattvas who desire the pleasure of virtue, all those who harm are like a precious treasure. Therefore, cultivating patience devoid of hostility is the bodhisattvas' practice.

When we practice patience and forbearance, we must first start from our parents. When they bring us difficulties, pain and trouble; we must refrain from speaking or replying. We must not have any reactions. Faced with this difficult situation, we instinctively lash out and this comes from our anger. If we could remain calm, our anger will subside. The reward from this type of action is not visible. Normal rewards can be seen such as ability to buy a car or a house, but reward from this virtuous deed cannot be seen. For example, if someone wants to hurt us then we became angry, our Bodhicitta mind is damaged. We must understand that our reward is Bodhicitta and we must diligently guard our Bodhicitta life after life until we become Buddha. Your Bodhicitta still remain intact.

We can see a lot of people and enjoying their wealth; the relationship between boyfriend and girlfriend is also good. All these are the result of having practiced Bodhicitta successfully in the previous lives. This is also because they have given generously in previous lives that they are enjoying comfort and stability. In fact all the worldly comfort and happiness are the result of Bodhicitta. It is like the number of flowers, leaves and branches of a tree all depend on the roots. This root is Bodhicitta. How should a practitioner who wants to enjoy all the good rewards behave himself? As the text says, "those who do harm are like a precious treasure" this is to treat all those who harm us as treasures. When we practice Buddhism and there are those who harm us, then we must depend on the immense power of loving kindness and compassion to pacify our anger. At the moment when we are being hurt, and our hatred thoughts is generated, if we could pacify these hatred thoughts, then our bodhicitta mind will become stronger and stronger. When we can realize this then we will know that our benefactor is actually those who harm us. Due to their anger, we are able to use that to help us practice our bodhicitta. So each time when someone harms us we are able to endure and again develop our practice in bodhicitta. Buddha said this is perfectly understandable.

If we want to eliminate all pain and suffering then we must practice patience and forbearance. At that moment those who harm us are actually our benefactors and should be treated as treasures. Why do we say that those who harm us are treasures? We have to consider those who harm us are treasures, because treasures can bring us immense and wide ranging benefit. We must eliminate our anger thoughts to those who harm us and to all sentient beings. Remain firm and stable in our mind then practice patience and forbearance. This is what is meant in the text "cultivating patience devoid of hostility is the bodhisattvas' practice"

The above deals with calmly patiently endure being hurt by others. The following is to deal with “joyful endurance while we are undergoing pain and suffering”. We must understand this while we are practicing Buddha Dharma. Sometimes when we want to practice Buddha Dharma then in a moment our hands, legs etc will hurt and become very painful. Sometimes we would feel very cold or hot. In these situations we must continue to endure these little pain and discomfort. We have to think of Milarepa how he endured such immense pain and suffering in order to practice, compared to him, we only need to endure a little pain and suffering. For example, when we want to sleep, we would feel drowsy and feel that we must sleep. At this time we must think that sleep is a waste of time; wasting our precious human life. If we could recite 100 times the six syllable mantra, this will benefit us and all sentient beings. So if we could sleep a little less each day and use the time for practice, wouldn't this be better? You can sleep 5 hours or 6 hours, it is better not to exceed 7 hours. One must vow not to sleep more than 7 hours each day. This is “joyful endurance while we are undergoing pain and suffering”.

What else do we need to endure? This is to deal with the avoidance of the habit of smoking, drinking and taking any kind of drugs. While drinking, and smoking we derive some temporary happiness, but in future it will bring us pain and suffering. Not only that, each day we smoke we waste a little money, in the long run we wasted a lot of money. In addition, smoking will bring us a lot of problem after death. That is why we should resolve not to smoke, drink or take any drugs. We need to endure refraining from these bad habits. When others scold us we must endure it and not to scold them in return. When others hurt us we must not think of taking revenge. We must endure all little things. The most important thing is when the troubles are descending on us we must never let our Bodhicitta mind waver and lose it, this is true endurance.

Sometimes we would lose our temper; sometimes we would feel jealous; sometimes we would feel sleepy and drowsy, all these are harmful situations to us. When they occur we must endure them and persist in guarding our Bodhicitta mind and never let it waver or lose it. Why do we need to guard our Bodhicitta mind? Everyone must reflect upon this. We have this precious human life now; we must use this precious human life to achieve enlightenment. Don't wait for the next life or the life after next. We might not have this opportunity again, that is why in this life we must guard our precious Bodhicitta mind.

If we are able to see the true nature of our mind, then we will know that pain and suffering is also emptiness. To most of us we would feel that some worldly affairs would bring us temporary happiness and when the happiness fades we would feel pain and suffering. If we could eliminate the dualistic views of wanting happiness and avoiding pain and suffering, then this will truly bring us the great joy. That is the enlightened joy.

This type of joy can only be experienced from having seen the true nature of your mind. While you experience emptiness, you will know that all are without substance. So while everything is without substance therefore there is no difference between pain and happiness. This type of joy surpasses dualistic views. This is the true enlightened joy which is unlike the worldly happiness; that when the worldly happiness fades pain and

suffering follow. That is why we must know that having experiential understanding of the true nature of our mind or emptiness is most precious.

28. Even hearers and solitary realizers, who accomplish only their own welfare, strive as if putting out a fire on their heads. Seeing this, taking up diligent effort - the source of good qualities – for the sake of all beings is the bodhisattvas’ practice.

Hinayana practitioners practice so that they can escape from pain and suffering of the three worlds of Samsara. For this purpose they diligently practice calm abiding. Unfortunately, we can see that their quest for Buddhahood is a very difficult one. They are treading on a difficult and long road towards enlightenment because they only think of benefiting themselves. What we are engaged in is different; we are treating all sentient beings that fill the entire void as our target. Because of this we have to be very diligent in our practice. The level of diligence of the Hinayana practitioner is like a person’s hair is on fire and he urgently wants to put it out. We must generate our Bodhicitta to encompass all the sentient beings that fill the void so that we can benefit them. Our diligence should far surpass everyone and everything. Even while we are riding a car or bus we must recite the six syllable mantra. While we are engaged in our daily work we should say “Om Mani Bemei Hung”; we should never let our mind waver and diligently practice our Buddha Dharma. This is what is meant in the text “taking up diligent effort – the source of good qualities – for the sake of all beings is the bodhisattvas’ practice”

What is the difference between Hinayana and Mahayana? In Hinayana is like a person reciting 100 times the six syllable mantra; but the Mahayana practitioner is reciting the same six syllable mantra but is visualizing all sentient being performing the same deed together with us. As we visualize thus then it is as though all sentient beings are reciting the six syllable mantra a 100 times. Why do we do this? We do this because every sentient being is without the “I”. The method that we use to visualize that we do not have an “I” is to visualize our body is empty, our mind is empty; actually this type of visualization is very difficult. If we could visualize the minds of all sentient beings are without substance and without the “I”, that would be a much better method. It is like a drop of water, when merged with the ocean, will become the ocean and no longer a drop of water. Similarly, when we think of the innumerable number of sentient beings like the great expanse of the ocean, at that time all the minds of the sentient beings will be like the water of the ocean; there is no distinction of one drop and another drop. All the minds are the same as the water of the ocean; as one. If we visualize like this while we recite the six syllable mantra a 100 times, then every sentient being is also reciting the six syllable mantra a 100 times together. This way we can generate immense blessing power. Therefore we must not just think of ourselves when we practice. In the morning when we recite the refuge prayer, we cannot just think of ourselves only, we must include all sentient beings reciting the refuge prayer with us.

We have discussed, generosity, keeping precepts and patience as the three types of practices that we should perform constantly. These three practices are the main causes

for us to gain the precious human body. If we want to become enlightened, we must have experiential understanding through meditation. The following phrase will deal with this.

29. Having understood that disturbing emotions are destroyed by insight possessed with tranquil abiding, to cultivate meditative concentration which perfectly transcends the four formless (absorptions) is the bodhisattvas' practice.

Meditative concentration is to remain in calmness. Our minds have a lot of afflictive emotions that is why we cannot remain calm. We all have different desires which give rise to different afflicted actions. When these desire and hatred thoughts subside then our mind will calm down. The text says "Having understood that disturbing emotions are destroyed by insight possessed with tranquil abiding" is like we can actually see the nature of the water when the ocean is calm. If huge waves are churning, we will not be able to see the nature of water. Calm abiding means our desire and hatred thoughts within our minds are pacified and have not manifested themselves. When all types of thoughts subside, then we will be able to observe the true nature of our mind. This is experiential understanding of the true nature of our mind.

The above is resting in calmness when desire and hatred thoughts have not emerged. For example, when your enemy is in front of you, you have to think this enemy had been my parent in previous lives, how can I be angry with my parents? This enemy had helped me in my previous lives; if you can think like this, then your anger thoughts will subside.

We have strong love for our children; if other people hurt our children we will be very angry. But you should know that these children and relatives had been our enemies in our previous lives, and then our desire thoughts will lessen and subside. Therefore towards our enemies we will not generate hatred thoughts and towards our loved ones we will not generate desire and attachment thoughts. If we can view them with equanimity then our mind will be quiet and restful. Why do we say that the calm abiding mind can eliminate all afflicted emotions? When your mind is calm and resting, not disturbed by any external influences, then it is like a cloudless sky, or like a very calm sea.

All our thoughts emanate from our mind; these thoughts are part and parcel of our mind. In actual mind and thoughts cannot be separated. If we can be in a state where our mind is resting in calmness then this is equivalent to eliminating thoughts. Or we can say that we have eliminated all afflicted emotions. When you are without afflicted emotions then attachment and hatred thoughts will not arise and the true nature of your mind will emerge. Which also means your ignorance is being eliminated.

It is because we have not seen the true nature of our mind that we wallow in ignorance. When we are in the state of ignorance, we cling onto the view that there is an "I". But investigate your mind closely and try to find where is this "I"? In fact it does not exist. If you can see the true nature of your mind then you will know that your mind is emptiness. If mind is emptiness then you cannot say that the "I" exist within. Because the mind is without dualism and therefore without me. This is the wisdom of emptiness. So if we are

not here then where are we? After you have understood this question then you will have gained the experiential understanding of emptiness. Experiential understanding of the true nature of our mind is having seen the non existence of “I” and this is the wisdom of emptiness.

The text says “to cultivate meditative concentration which perfectly transcends the four formless (absorptions) is the bodhisattvas’ practice.” The four formless absorptions; four formless means for different conditions, the most important condition of which that we need to realize is that nothing exist as we perceive them to be. Some non Buddhist traditions believe that emptiness is empty of everything. Whatever is in the mind is also empty. If one holds this view then one would be reborn in the Formless Realm. The proper Buddhist believe is that there is neither devoid of everything nor that everything exist, but that it goes beyond existence or non existence. This is the true meaning of Mahamudra. We must understand that while we practice Mahamudra, we must possess the proper view; if you do not have the proper view then you will not be able to gain enlightenment. There the 30 phrase mentioned as follow.

30. If one lacks wisdom, it is impossible to attain perfect enlightenment through (Other) five perfections. Thus, cultivating skillful means with the wisdom that doesn’t discriminate among the three spheres is the bodhisattvas’ practice.

If you do not have the wisdom gained from practicing Mahamudra then you will not be able to gain enlightenment. To achieve the result of becoming a Buddha it is the union of wisdom and method. This method is the immense Loving Kindness and Compassion. The text mentioned we should not be attached to the three wheels. Everyone believes I exist, and all sentient beings exist and believe that everything exists. So there is me, there exist the practice methods that I will use and my ultimate goal of gaining experiential understanding. So in everything, these three items are always present, this is the “three wheel.”

If we think that our mind does not exist, (because we cannot find it; no form, no colour, no taste, nowhere it resides, etc.) but then from this mind all methods appear and so the mind must actually exist. Therefore you cannot say that the mind does not exist nor can you say that the mind exists. If we think beyond the notion of the existence and non existence of the mind, then this is emptiness. The mind’s essence is emptiness but it also contains the awareness to recognize the emptiness. (This awareness quality forms the two qualities of the mind, which is emptiness nature and the awareness nature. Like one watching over another.)

A lot of non Buddhist sects believe that the outer world is permanent, that it possesses solidity. However, the Buddhist view is that this world is empty without substance. The Buddhist view is that the nature of the mind is emptiness but possess a quality that recognize this quality, we call this clarity. If we have experiential understanding of this emptiness then we will not be reborn in the “form” worlds. If we have experiential understanding of the clarity nature of the mind then we will not be reborn in the

“formless” worlds. If we know the mind’s nature is emptiness and the appearance is luminosity then this is the result of the three kayas (Dharmakaya, Samboghakaya and Nirmanakaya) of the Buddha. All Enlightened beings have these three qualities.

The mind of the enlightened beings is the same as the minds of all sentient beings. The only thing is that the minds of the sentient beings are mixed with all afflicted emotions, other than that there is no difference. All sentient beings believe in the existence of the “I”, and do not understand their mind’s true nature, so we must look upon their lunatic actions with great compassion. When we say that the mind of sentient being is the same as the Buddha’s is likened to the water of all the rivers will all eventually end up in the ocean. Although there are different rivers having different sizes and length but in the end when they reach the ocean, all the water become one. People differ such as male and female but the qualities of the mind are the same, there is no difference. All sentient beings and Buddha have the same emptiness within the mind. The only thing is that the sentient beings do not understand this point and carry out disturbed actions as a lunatic. We should have great compassion towards all these disturbed actions; this is the method of the practice.

Therefore we must always have loving kindness and compassion towards all sentient beings and practice on this then your wisdom will gradually appear and eventually you will reach Buddhahood. This is what the text says “Thus, cultivating skillful means with the wisdom that doesn’t discriminate among the three spheres is the bodhisattvas’ practice.” If you do not understand this point then it will lead you to form erroneous opinion, erroneous opinion is like being lost in a maze. Being in this labyrinth will lead to afflicted emotions. Therefore the 31st phrase says:

31. If, having (merely) the appearance of a practitioner, one does not investigate one’s own mistakes, it is possible to act contrary to the Dharma. Therefore, constantly examining one’s own errors and abandoning them is the bodhisattvas’ practice.

You must investigate the afflicted emotions in your mind. You must examine them closely and reflect upon them. Then you will find out whether you have afflicted emotions or not. When there is doubt in your mind and you have not realized the truth and when you cling onto an opinion or object, this will lead to the birth of doubts and afflicted emotions. In this type of situation, all you need to do is to reflect on it and watch your mind. If you have bad thoughts and have done evil deeds then you will immediately recognize it in your mind. When anger and hatred thoughts arise in your mind, all you need to do is to watch your mind and you will know its appearance. Therefore we must always review our actions and watch our mind. The following is the 32nd phrase.

32. If, influenced by disturbing emotions, one points out another bodhisattvas’ faults, oneself is diminished. Therefore, not speaking about the faults of those who have entered the Great Vehicle is the bodhisattvas’ practice.

Nowadays there are many masters, monks and Buddhist practitioners everywhere; we must never criticize these practitioners. If a monk speaks ill of another monk, the latter may have a lot of followers and are affected by the former's words. These followers may lose confidence in the Buddhist view and refrain from practice. All these are caused by the bad words spoken by the first person. Sometimes when we speak ill of others it is because of our jealousy. If you speak ill of others it will only decrease your own merit and the only person who is hurt is yourself. Therefore when you speak ill of others your anger thoughts will damage your bodhicitta mind. That is why we should never criticize other people's faults.

This is especially true the Mahayana bodhisattva's actions because we do not understand their actions. On top of that we don't really know who is a bodhisattva. So we must vow never to speak ill or criticize anyone. On the other hand if someone come to us and tell us "someone had done some evil deeds", we must never believe them to be true. The following is the 33rd phrase.

33. Because the influence of gain and respect causes quarreling and the decline of the activities of listening, pondering and meditation, to abandon attachment to the households of friends, relations and benefactors is the bodhisattvas' practice.

Because someone is my friend, benefactor therefore we will tell him I am the best and other are not so good. This type of dispute arises from fame and personal gain is extremely bad. Others will lose their confidence in their master because of hearing such information about their teachers. This will cause the teacher to lose their own confidence and these actions will cause the listener a large amount of obstacles. On the other hand, we are a practitioner and we have to constantly nurture our Bodhicitta mind, but should we develop thoughts of whether this is good and that is not so good then this will cause our meditation to deteriorate. Therefore it could be said that the obstacle is generated for the speaker and the listener.

Therefore when we hear that "this place is good" and "that place is not good" then we should generate the thought that both are just as good. Then we should rest in this equanimity without thought of one better than the other.

34. Because harsh words disturb others' minds and cause the bodhisattva's conduct to deteriorate, abandoning harsh speech which is unpleasant to others is the bodhisattvas' practice.

We must never use bad language or harsh word when we speak. When a person is angry, even though his words benefit the other, the words will be unwanted. When a person hears words that are unpleasant the anger within this person will also arise. For example when someone is sick and we want to vent our frustration towards this person and say "Listen, hurry up take your medicine" forcing him to take his medicine quickly. Naturally the intention is good and by taking medicine will help him recover but the hearer will feel bad because of the harsh tone. If we could use a little gentleness and say

“Take good care of yourself and this medicine will help you recover quickly” Then the other person will be very glad to respond and take the medicine.

It is very important that we should have correct motivation and correct methods at the same time eliminate harsh words from our speech. Especially when we are angry we must refrain from speaking because while you are angry and although your intention is good, the words that you choose may make the other person generate unhappy thoughts. So while you are angry you must think the other person is my parent and practice patience and forbearance and do not say anything that is unpleasant. This is “abandoning harsh speech which is unpleasant to others is the bodhisattvas’ practice.”

From the point of view of karma, either positive or negative, and as a practitioner when we give in to anger towards another person, then our Bodhicitta towards him will be hurt. When we are angry and use harsh words and unpleasant speech towards another, the expression on our face will turn black, then we must understand that anger is poison; it will lead to the generation of negative karma. It doesn’t matter what the other person had done, we must speak slowly and never use words generated by our anger thoughts. If we use harsh words to criticize the other then we would have generated negative karma. But if we could treat the other person as a close friend and calmly speak to him then this is a form of positive karma.

35. When disturbing emotions are habituated, it is difficult to overcome them with antidotes. By arming oneself with the antidotal weapon of mindfulness, to destroy disturbing emotions such as desire the moment they first arise is the bodhisattvas’ practice.

When afflicted emotions appear and if we do nothing and allow them to grow and gradually increase then in the future we will not be able to control them. Therefore we must use pure motivation and proper method as our sword to combat them. For example, when some one wants to hurt us, the anger in our mind will immediately arise, but when these thoughts first arise we can use pure motivation and proper methods to recognize these angry thoughts and recognize them as bad. Under this situation our pure motivation and proper methods would immediately cause the anger thoughts to disappear.

Therefore pure motivation and proper methods are like a precious sword and anger is like an enemy. When the enemy appears we must use this precious sword to eliminate the enemy. If we do not eliminate the enemy immediately then grave consequences will follow. If anger towards another person had happened a few times and we have not controlled it then this anger will accumulate in our mind. In the end this will lead to serious consequences with the other person. Therefore when anger first appears we must immediately eliminate it.

36. In brief, whatever conduct one engages in, one should ask, “What is the state of my mind?” Accomplishing others’ purpose through constantly maintaining mindfulness and awareness is the bodhisattvas’ practice.

Irrespective of anything, whether we are walking, staying in one place, sitting or sleeping we must always watch what is happening with mind. We must clearly know what we are doing, what we are thinking and when afflicted emotions appear we must immediately eliminate them. We must use pure motivation and proper methods to get rid of these afflicted emotions. We have to have confidence in the Triple Gem and loving kindness and compassion towards all sentient beings. We must daily cleanse from our mind thoughts of hatred and jealousy by using pure motivation and proper methods. We must only perform good deeds and to dedicate all merits to all so that they will all benefit from it. When we are on the path we must help all sentient beings and think that each one of them is good. We must always speak well to everyone and when we meet them on the road we must treat them as our parents. We should employ all these methods and ceaselessly benefit all sentient beings.

37. In order to clear away the suffering of limitless beings, through the wisdom (realizing) the purity of the three spheres, to dedicate the virtue attain by making such effort for the enlightenment is the bodhisattvas' practice.

What is the purpose of us continuously using our body speech and mind to perform limitless amount of good deeds? This is to wish that all sentient beings will be able to escape the pain and suffering so that they can obtain perpetual happiness and eventually to be an enlightened being. Especially by using the three wheel method to purify the mind stream and gain wisdom. Also by understanding that all sentient beings are Buddhas and to dedicate the purity nature to all sentient beings so that they can all achieve the results of Bodhicitta.

Following the speech of the Sublime Ones on the meaning of the sutras, tantras and their commentaries, I have written the Thirty Seven Bodhisattvas' Practices for those who wish to train on the bodhisattvas' path.

Due to my inferior intellect and poor learning, this is not poetry that will please scholars, yet as I have relied upon the sutras and the speech of the Sublime Ones, I think the bodhisattva practices are not mistaken.

However, because it is difficult for one of inferior intellect like myself to fathom the depth of the great deeds of bodhisattvas, I beseech the Sublime Ones to forbear my errors such as contradictions and incoherent (reasoning).

By the virtue arising from this may all sentient beings become, through excellent conventional and ultimate bodhicitta, like the protector Chenrezig who does not abide in the extremes of existence or peace.

This was written for the benefit of himself and others by the monk Thogme, an exponent of scripture and reasoning, in a cave in Ngulchu Rinchen.

Thogme in his closing statement mentioned that the contents of the above text are the same in essence as the Buddha's sutras and teachings. That he had consolidated all his

teachings in the 37 bodhisattvas' practice. In the text he also mentioned that he is without merit or power but the effort start from the wish to benefit all sentient beings that is the reason for writing the texts. If there are errors in the texts he requested all bodhisattvas to forgive him.

Because of these words, Thogme was actually a Buddha. Therefore if we can practice according to the teachings we will be able to generate immense benefits to all sentient beings. It would not be enough if we use one year to learn and practice this 37 bodhisattvas' practices. There are many publications in Taiwan explaining the 37 bodhisattvas' practices. Therefore everyone should constantly read and learn from them. This will generate a lot of merit and benefits because Buddha's teachings are all included in the text.

In future, all of you can learn from other teachers and again receive teachings so that more people can learn and practice. Like this method then everyone will become better and progress further. I wish everyone could carry out the teachings in the 37 bodhisattvas' practices diligently. In future we might have the opportunity to meet in the Dharma centre to practice, I also wish and pray that we will all achieve enlightenment quickly. Finally I wish all of you well and with blessings.