

# *On Vajrasattva Retreat Preparations*

## *Part 2*

### *~Thanks and Advice~*

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*Rinpoche saw videos of the Tashi Choling sangha cleaning the temple and grounds in preparation for the upcoming Vajrasattva retreat and made these comments as he watched everyone working (note: this is Part 2 of 2).*

In the future, we really take the teachings on harmony to heart. We are not rattlesnakes. We don't need to be nasty. Sometimes the lamas say "Harmony, harmony," but the students just get more and more political. Really watch that. You don't need to go that way. Anyway, that is not only you guys, that is all of samsara's tradition, and wherever there is dharma, of course. Really try not to follow that. When the lamas teach on harmony, really take that into your heart as your own advice to be more and more humble, more and more compassionate, to have more and more faith. More and more patience, we need that every time! If you tame your own brain more and more, naturally your claws will fall away, your horns will disappear, even your tail will get shorter and shorter. You will have less and less to be embarrassed about and will naturally be more and more smooth and soft with everybody, like cotton. To be more harmonious means to tame your own mind more and more, becoming more smooth yourself, more open yourself, more peaceful yourself. Then naturally you can be harmonious with other people. As long as our own five poisons are like a raging fire, how are we going to be cooler with other people?

You do have the five poisons. Everybody has them. The five poisons one way go with the five wisdoms, the five dhyani buddhas. That is their nature. If we don't practice, they go to the five poisons, the five negative garbage things. That is why we practice. That is why we try. It looks like everybody is doing so wonderful, thank you! What you are doing right now, cleaning the center, exactly in the same way we need to clean our five poisons, step by step. We think if we have snakes biting us in the butt, that is a big deal, yow! But our five poisons make snakes look like no big deal. More than a thousand mosquitoes inside our heads, we have the five poisons all the time: anger, desire, jealousy, pride, ignorance. Ignorance means you don't even know! That is the worst one. That means we need to learn. Then we need to practice. Slowly, slowly. Everybody is the same. Nobody needs to boast. Just everybody needs to purify their negativity.

Support each other. Here I am seeing a few people working. Does that mean it is only their job? No. Everybody can help. In the same way, if someone is teaching something, is that none of your business? No. You can go and listen to the teaching. Maybe you learn something. Maybe you know it already. Maybe you think you are smarter than them. That's okay. Maybe you do know more—if so, you don't need to boast. Maybe you are just arrogant and should be embarrassed. Anyway, check, especially if you think you are smart.

You don't need to think that the work has nothing to do with you, or that the teaching has nothing to do with you, or that the study has nothing to do with you, or that the practice has nothing to do with you. Don't think everything is everybody else's problem. If you are listening to someone teach and you already know it, you can still go deeper and deeper. The dharma is not just something simple or shallow. You can always think about it again. You think if you already know something, that is a problem? That is completely the wrong way! Our problem is we don't know! This is our problem: ignorance! I don't think anybody has the problem of being too smart. I don't think having too much wisdom is a problem! We are not that kind of people! Buddha Shakyamuni got too smart, so he was kicked out of samsara! He kicked himself out. Poor guy!

Anyway, I am joking, but I don't think anybody can say, "I don't need to hear that teaching, I already heard it." Hearing it is good; understanding it is better. And then practice. That is the best—then it can really benefit your mind.

The centers are supposed to be for learning and practicing the dharma. We need both, learning and practice. Wherever you go, whatever dharma you learn, you also need to practice. Here I am looking at Tashi Choling, but it doesn't matter which dharma center you are at. Whether you think it is "our" center or others' centers or other lamas' centers, no matter where you are studying or what kind of dharma you learn, you also need to put it into practice. Without practice, our understanding won't be strong enough or deep enough. Without practice, we can't really understand too much. Therefore, we need to go step by step.

Thank you for taking care of your center, everybody, because it looks like your teacher is almost dead! I am not really a teacher because I am not really qualified, but until now, here and there, I have sort of pretended to be. Now everything really belongs to you guys. Don't forget about it. Don't waste anything. It all belongs to you, piece by piece. In the future, Tashi Choling, O.D.D., Portland, and all the other centers—don't forget about any of them. Don't ignore any of them. Remember what amazing teachers have come, not just once but many times, not just to one center but to each place. Remember what teachings and transmissions you have received. In the future, you need to practice; and hopefully you can teach and share what you have learned, and everybody can support each other as one family.

Therefore, thank you, everybody! Thank you for your work, your cleaning, cleaning your brain or your mind, studying, learning, practicing. So wonderful, how you are loving and supporting each other, respecting yourself and others—all of these, thank you! Please continue on in this way, holding this tradition, so it continues for a thousand years into the future after you! For that, study! For that, practice! For that, keep harmony in the sangha! Okay?

Here I am good, everybody is doing well. I am just lying in my bed all day, spoiled rotten! It looks like right now everything is okay, I am doing fine. I am always complaining to these ladies, but actually these days I don't really have anything to complain about. So many delicious things they give me to eat—one way that is so much work, it's really terrible! You think you are working there, but I am really the hardest worker, more than anybody—not only

breakfast, but then lunch, and then again dinner! That much they torture me! And then delicious tea—too much! Horrible! Anyway, I am joking with you, but actually everything is very good here. My body is fine—my mouth is always a little bit cranky, though!

Anyway, thank you, everybody, for your work and everything. You are all really cute together, in every corner cleaning and laughing. Really that is my happiness, to see everybody taking care of the center and everybody happy. That one, I am not joking about—really thank you from my heart. Not just for me, but really this is the fulfillment of the blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and so many other lamas who sent me here and then supported us over the years, teaching and giving transmissions again and again as we were struggling, struggling at all the centers. Now it looks like really you guys are doing it. So wonderful!

Okay, good! Good work! No more talk!

*-Gyatral*