

Nobody is the Real Innocent
On Our Constant Killing and the Need for Vajrasattva Practice
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Nobody is pure. Nobody is clean. Nobody is the innocent one.

You think you are pure? Look under your foot, how many bugs you are killing with each step. You drive your car, same thing, on the road—not only bugs but snakes, lizards, groundhogs, all the naughty things that go in your path. They didn't do anything to you, but—BANG!—you smash them. Sometimes big ones like deer, too. We kill everything! Even though we are not trying to kill. We are not hunting them. Sometimes not paying attention, sometimes no choice, sometimes we don't know what we are thinking, just spaced out and dumb. People think, "I didn't kill a human being, therefore, I am not a killer." Good luck! You think killing only means human beings?

We are all killers, we are all breaking samaya all the time. We promise the buddhas many things, and then we ignore them. Sometimes we need to think about that.

Am I guilty? 100% yes. I guarantee. For you, you can check yourself. But I think nobody can say they are not under the thumb of that 'guilty.'

Then what to do? You need to build. You need to drive your car. You need to step with your foot, and then another step, and then another. Even if we drink one cup of water, we don't know how many billions of beings are inside that. But, no choice. We have to drink. We have to eat. No place in samsara can you escape killing all the tiny bugs. It is very good to think about this, and try not to kill as much as possible. That is the right way to think. But sure, you are still going to kill many beings, no matter how much you try. Then what? Therefore, we need Vajrasattva!

If you have property, sure you are killing hundreds of billions of beings. Building a building, your house or whatever, making roads, all the pipes and electricity things, then fixing again—you are digging, cutting trees, so many things, continuously. Up by Tashi Chöling, our whole Colestin Valley is wonderful land, everybody trying to take care of it really nicely, buildings and roads and everything. Thank you! But actually? We are all Colestin Killers. And not just the Colestin—any place, any valley, the whole of samsara is like that.

If you want to make safe from fire, you have to cut lots of trees. That means cutting lots of beings! Is it better not to cut? That is difficult to say. I think we need to be safe from fire, therefore, we need to cut and dig. We don't want to kill, that is not our purpose in doing it. But one way, if the whole thing burns up that is also no benefit—lots of beings will suffer and die. When you are cutting the trees, don't think it is just to protect yourself; think you are protecting all the animals and beings there, too, so the fire won't harm them. It isn't just your place, but their place, their home.

I think better to cut the trees, protect from the fire, but then also we need to do Vajrasattva. That way, be conscious what you are doing. Don't pretend you are not guilty. We are guilty, yes, we need to recognize that. One way, more than guilty we need to be conscious. What we *did*. What we are *doing*. Where is your own foot stepping? Where was the last footstep, and where is the next one?

For us, almost every step is something negative, big one or small one. Therefore, everybody needs to practice Vajrasattva! This is why I tell you, again and again. Maybe you are tired of hearing it, in which case, that's okay, you don't need to listen. Don't listen to me, but just practice instead! That's better!

Anyway, this old man is going to say it again, whether you are listening or not: We need to practice! We have no time! Vajrasattva is our one friend! More than friend—our one hope!

I don't care if you do the long or short practice, or long or short mantra. Whatever you like. OM BENZAR SATTO HUNG is easiest. What is important is not to be wishy-washy. Even if you just say one OM BENZAR SATTO HUNG, don't have a wishy-washy mind. Really focus. Our time in this life for positive things is short. Our past lives since the beginning of samsara have been very long and negative. We have done all the negative things, billions of times. Not only killing. People think, "I didn't steal a million dollars. I didn't sneak into somebody's house or use a gun to rob them. Therefore, I didn't steal anything!" Really? I think check yourself. Are you being honest?

Nobody is the real innocent. Therefore, nobody can say, "Vajrasattva doesn't matter to me."

Check, consciously. You do have a brain! Don't pretend to be stupid. You are not *that* innocent—but not *that* stupid, either!

Then practice, conscious way, your Vajrasattva.

Tashi Delek!

-Gyatral