

~From the Archives of Teachings by Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche~

HEART ADVICE ON TSOQ AND OTHER MATTERS

*A teaching read to those gathered at Orgyen Dorje Den on January 14, 2012,
to practice Vajrasattva in connection with Dungse Thinley Norbu Rinpoche's Parinirvana*

Part 7

Having Confidence in the Masters and Practice of Today

Thinking about all the great qualities of all the masters of the past, we can wonder if there are any beings like that still today. Can I see any with my own eyes? Can I actually encounter any such beings at this time, not just hundreds or thousands of years ago? Well, sure! Look at His Holiness the Dalai Lama—he is the perfect example. Everyone who looks at him can see his qualities. He is *the* bodhisattva, he is *the* mahasiddha. His qualities are there plain upon his face. His wisdom and compassion are such that nobody can deny them.

You can have confidence that not only are there such beings whose qualities and enlightened activities are obvious, but there are also many, many beings who are secretly enacting enlightened activity. They don't need to take out an advertisement in the newspaper or—unlike politicians these days—go on television every two minutes saying, “I am so much better than this other lama,” or “I am so much better than this other bodhisattva.” That is your style, that is the politician's style. Real lamas don't need to do that. They can just silently, quietly, without anybody knowing, secretly work for sentient beings. Check who is working for sentient beings—those are the real masters; those are the real objects of refuge. Whatever kind of funky guys or girls they might look like on the outside, they are the ones whose feet are worthy of placing upon your crown, and even the gods themselves should bow to them.

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~Translated and edited by Shashi Reitz~*

For us—struggling as we are, completely overwhelmed by our ignorance—we should try always to engage our three doors (body, speech, and mind) as such genuine masters do, past and present alike. If we do, then our obscurations will in fact be dispelled and go away.

You can have confidence in this as you practice. That is very important, actually. There is no need for doubt or hesitation on this point. Know that if you practice, it *will* be effective. If you study and practice the dharma, then your obstacles, your ignorance, your darkness, your confusion—these *will* be dispelled. As they are dispelled, you will more and more easily work for the benefit of others. More and more easily and naturally, as a matter of course, your own benefit will also come about. You don't need to lie to anyone, you don't need to cheat anyone, you don't need to steal from anyone for those qualities to manifest themselves.

If you lie and cheat and steal, you are actually exhausting your merit, not creating merit. But look around at how businessmen these days spend all of their time lying, cheating, and stealing, as though that were going to create the causes of becoming rich, which is what they are after. In fact, they are exhausting their merit by trying to cheat others. Really, if they were trying to accumulate merit, then they would have a chance at success, which to them means getting rich. But as they don't accumulate merit and they only cheat others, then they are exhausting their merit and they are only going to become poorer, and poorer, and poorer. It's kind of sad, don't you think? Don't you think somebody should tell them? No, they wouldn't listen anyway. So, it goes back to us. We can only tell ourselves this, and hopefully we will listen to ourselves.

Whether our understanding is great or small, we all need to accumulate merit and purify our obscurations. First we must see that need quite clearly. Then we can recognize this *tsog*, this gathering, is an inconceivably precious opportunity to do just that.

We have come here to practice Vajrasattva. We say we have come in the memory of a previous connection, or to make a new or stronger connection, to Thinley Norbu Rinpoche; and of course he is a great master, whether he needs our help doing this Vajrasattva practice

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or not! We don't really need to think about that. We should only come here with the recognition that here is a tremendous opportunity: an opportunity for us to perform this wonderful Vajrasattva practice. This is a precious chance to perform this as a group, with all of the blessing of gathering in this fully endowed temple, this place of dharma, and surrounded by the supports of body, speech, and mind—performing this practice, which is a treasure of Dūdjom Rinpoche, who was a lama of unquestionable quality, a real mahasiddha.

~ teaching continues in Part 8...