

~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 11

Dharmakaya, or Buddhanature, or the First Samadhi

So, we have a precious human life, we have the ability to practice, we have the opportunity to practice, and we have lamas that we know we can trust. When we say that we need to trust the lama, we need to trust the guru, why is that important? Well, look at how much people usually trust the lama...maybe three percent? Maybe two percent? Or maybe a quarter percent, even on a good day? If that is the case, then you are never going to get any result because the result you get is directly related to how much you trust the lama. How much your faith and devotion and pure view have developed, that much you will be able to open yourself to the blessings of your own nature, which are the blessings of all the buddhas, which are the blessings of the lama, which is suchness itself. When we gather and perform tsog, we are performing a generation stage practice. Whenever you do generation stage practice, the first thing that happens, just before the visualization, are the three samadhis. The first of those is the samadhi of suchness. The nature we are speaking of is the nature of all phenomena, which is your own buddhanature—it is this same suchness, the samadhi of suchness that corresponds to the dharmakaya.

We like to say, “Oh, I am a practitioner and I am hearing and contemplating and meditating on the dharma.” Go to that first samadhi and check and see how well you are practicing and how much you understand. Mostly we get to the first samadhi and everybody opens their mouths and bugs their eyes and stares at the wall because we don’t really even

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know what that nature is. But through the lama's kindness, we can start to slowly have some understanding.

For myself, I have no qualities. I studied and had the opportunity for how many years to cultivate qualities; but I threw away all of my opportunities, so now I am just a funky old man, sick, finished, well-nigh dead, and with no accomplishment whatsoever. But because of my lama's kindness, I was able to escape from Tibet to India, and among the many, many thousands of refugees I was escaping with, I was one of just a very few who were able to make it. How many had to fight the Chinese for years and years, but I didn't have to fight them at all in order to get away. This is not because of my qualities; this is really the kindness of the lama's blessings.

I know that my safe passage was not through my own qualities because I look into my mind and I see that I am full of attachment and aversion. I have lots of hatred and my obscurations are thick and strong. The darkness of my obscurations completely overwhelms my mind, and I am under the thumb of my mental poisons as well. Of course, I am just about made of the three poisons, not flesh and blood, which is all dried up anyway so it is hardly even there. Plus, my bad habits are creating more poisons all the time. We all have that heaviness and that ugliness. Sure, I have them! I am not going to lie to you and pretend that I am pretty. You just have to look at my front teeth to know that I am not pretty anyway, so it would be useless to lie about it. But some people do think they are pretty and they have no shame whatsoever about their real ugliness of negativity. *We are* shameless, all of us, whether we think we are pretty or not. We are shameless in flaunting our negativity. We are shameless in indulging in bad habits. We are shameless in how we let the three poisons, or the five poisons, or the 84,000 poisons, overcome us again and again and again.

We need to stop being so shameless. We need to be humble. And in that humility, we will find the methods and the strength to stop the five poisons from overwhelming us again. That strength only comes from recognizing our own nature. Our own nature is the suchness,

the suchness of the first samadhi. It is the best way to purify obscurations. It is the best way to accumulate merit. It is the best tsog right there at the beginning of the practice before we even get into the tsog verses.

Because of Khenpo Namdrol's kindness, I think you all do know something about this suchness. I think there is not a single one of you who hasn't heard some teaching from him or from others who have understood those same texts that he has understood. From his kindness, or from the kindness of others who have taken the time to study and understand the dzogchen teachings, I think everyone here has heard something about the nature: the essence, the intrinsic nature, and the all-pervasive compassion that are the threefold wisdom that is the basis of all things. This is the fundamental nature of all phenomena. It is the fundamental nature of you, too, you buggers. And this is the fundamental nature of all beings. Have you forgotten them yet? They are still there, and they still have their buddhanature just like you have yours, so don't be proud and don't be stingy, ok?

~ teaching continues in Part 12...