

~From the Archives of Teachings by Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche~

TEACHINGS ON THE PRELIMINARY PRACTICES (NGÖNDRO)

*Rinpoche sent the following teaching for those gathered to do the preliminary practices (ngöndro)
at Dorje Ling in Portland, Oregon, on May 12, 2013.*

Part 17

Conclusion: It Is So Wonderful to Focus Your Mind on These Practices!

You can see again and again how it is the mind that is the most important thing. For ourselves, it is our own mind that will make the difference between having the qualities of enlightened body, speech, and mind or the faults of ordinary body, speech, and mind. It is actually the mind that is the source of all qualities and all faults. It is also the mind that, for us as sentient beings, determines whether we are able to connect with the blessings of enlightened body, speech, and mind or not. If we have faith, if we have compassion, then we will be able to connect to those qualities. However, if we don't have faith or if we don't have compassion—in other words, if our mind is not really focused on those enlightened qualities—then even if we have many other flashy qualities, they're not going to bring the blessings of enlightened body, speech, and mind.

For example, a great scholar could know so much, know every single page of every single book, or a great accomplished yogi could even fly in the sky, but these are not really that impressive. If they don't have faith and they don't have compassion, they're not really going to be able to benefit themselves, for one thing, or to benefit others, for another. They won't really benefit themselves because even if they know so much, or even if they have some kind of extraordinary power that allows them to fly or turn things upside down, or whatever, that's not really going to benefit them because it's not helping them reduce the three poisons in their minds. It's not helping them avoid non-virtue and accumulate merit. At the time of their death, no matter how amazing their magical powers or how extraordinary their

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scholarship, if they've accumulated negativity, they'll go to hell. If they've accumulated some virtue, they'll be born in the higher realms just like everyone else; but they are certainly not creating the causes that will help them transcend samsara. Therefore, they are not really benefiting themselves, and they will not be able to really benefit others.

So please think about these things, slowly, slowly. Just small ideas, just small things. In your own life, or looking at people around you, or looking at the Dalai Lama, think again and again in these ways.

If you need an example to follow, everyone can look at the Dalai Lama these days. On your computer, in books, in magazines—everywhere, you can look at the Dalai Lama. He's a very good example of someone whose body, speech, and mind show enlightened qualities, and we can know that those are not different from the qualities of our own buddhanature. If you want those qualities, this is how you get them. It is not some big secret. Any quality you want to develop will only be the result of accumulating virtue and purifying negativity. So please consider these points, slowly, slowly.

I am so happy you came to do this ngöndro practice! I hope you come every week. I hope you do ngöndro every day. It is so wonderful to focus your mind on these practices. It is so good to think about the Four Thoughts That Turn the Mind. It is so good to remember impermanence. It really helps you to cultivate patience. It really helps you to cultivate compassion. Impermanence—that will really help protect your mind from negativity if you really think about it, so don't forget that one.

And Tashi Delek! And I am going back to bed.



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