

~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 3

Our Ordinary Body, Speech, and Mind

Now, for ourselves, we do not experience these two kinds of omniscience. This is because our minds are completely covered over by our karmic obscurations. We look at our body and see it is filled with sickness and discomfort. Therefore, we know that this is not an experience of enlightened body. We look at our speech and we see that our speech is harsh and unpleasant and usually unskillful with everyone with whom we interact. Therefore, we know that our speech is not displaying the qualities of enlightened speech. In such ways we can examine for ourselves and see if we have ordinary body and ordinary speech. For ordinary mind, that's easy! You just look at your mind and ask yourself, "Do I know all things?" and "Do I know the nature of all things?" If the answer to either of those is "No," you do not have Buddha's enlightened mind.

What do we have instead? Instead, we have a mind that is very vast but very complicated and very crazy. Where the Buddha's mind is vast in seeing all things, and everything is perfect and complete in its place, for us our mind is vast in the varieties of delusion we harbor and through which we can screw ourselves up. Our mind is vast in that somehow we never run out of ways to engage with the five poisons. Our mind is amazing in its ability to confuse ourselves and then confuse ourselves again even more. Because of this, we suffer in inconceivable ways. Our mind itself is always filled with restlessness and suffering. Our mind is always filled with the three poisons, arising in infinite permutations.

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~Translated and edited by Shashi Reitz~*

In addition to our general sufferings, we are often under the sway of real mental illness and hallucination. These are just the facts of our ordinary existence.

This is because our minds are so heavily shrouded. By what? By our deeply entrenched habit of reinforcing our karmic obscurations. By our long familiarity with confusion and ignorance.

Our minds are always saturated by the three poisons. Since body and speech flow from the mind, and since the mind which is their source is filled with the three poisons' negativity, then all of our verbal and physical movements naturally are going to be completely suffused with the three poisons as well. Every one of these movements of confused body, speech, and mind is a cause, and the results of all such causes will likewise be negative, impure, and deluded. We call those results the experiences of our daily life. We call those samsara.

You can look within your own mind and ask yourself if your mind is pure or if your mind is filled with the three poisons. Is your mind altruistic? Are you always filled with compassion, loving kindness, and concern for others? Or are you always filled with self-concern and negativity?

This is a very simple way we can check for ourselves if our body, speech, and mind are manifesting our innate buddha qualities of wisdom body, speech, and mind or not.

~ teaching continues in Part 4...