

~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 5

How Enlightened Body, Speech, and Mind Manifest

When we speak of the enlightened qualities beginning to make themselves known in your body, speech, and mind, does that mean that suddenly you will have a radical personality change and go jumping for joy in every direction, day and night? I can't say for certain if that will happen or not. I can't say for certain that having a radical personality change and jumping for joy day and night is actually a sign of genuine accomplishment or not. It does say in the scriptures, however, that one genuine sign of progress is you will be able to engage in the dharma—engage your three doors in virtue—with greater and greater ease. You will have fewer and fewer obstacles to accumulating virtue. Your mind will be more attracted to virtue and take greater delight in it. The practice of dharma will become more and more easy, more delightful, more joyful. More and more fun! Those are real signs that your negativity is on the wane and that your good qualities are starting to come forth.

Just to give an example, with our bodies, as the blessings of enlightened body enter us, our bodies will become more and more free of sickness and discomfort. That is considered a sign—just one sign, actually the list of signs is very long—that the blessings of enlightened body are entering us.

For our speech, our speech will become less and less harsh and displeasing to others. This doesn't just mean that people will like your speech necessarily. It means your speech will not cause harm, such as creating a great disturbance or aversion in people's minds when they simply hear it. This is because it will be coming from the motivation of altruism. When

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your mind is filled with altruism and that quality begins to express itself in your speech, the characteristics of your speech will naturally become more and more pleasing and delightful to others, yes. But the main point is that it will become more and more *beneficial* to others. Rather than your words disturbing them, which is not beneficial and is actually harmful, instead your speech will bring them happiness and a sense of peace. Through this beneficial quality, others will be naturally attracted to your speech.

If you find that your speech is always the speech of gossip and slander, that is not a sign that you are cultivating the qualities of enlightened speech. This is an important point because, when you watch people, it looks like some people really think that enough gossip and slander will take them all the way to enlightenment!

A great example of someone who really shows the qualities of enlightened speech is His Holiness the Dalai Lama, because everyone loves the Dalai Lama and everyone loves to hear what he has to say. As soon as he starts to talk, speaking so fast, his voice rising and falling so quickly with his particular style and intonation, everyone loves him. He comes out and says three words, and everyone loves him! Everyone loves his speech. Everyone will sit and listen to him for a long, long time. These are the qualities of enlightened speech, that great enchanting quality. Everyone is simply drawn toward his voice. They want to hear what he has to say. They don't tire of listening to him. When we hear him, we are making a connection with those qualities of his enlightened speech. He is really displaying that wisdom quality in the magnetic attractiveness of his voice.

With the qualities of enlightened body, we can read the official list of the 32 major and 80 minor marks of enlightenment to learn what they are. Then there are further descriptions of exactly what kind of merit is necessary in order to bring forth each particular mark and so on, but, in one way, the list is merely giving detail to the fact that the Buddha's body is completely, perfectly exquisite. Whoever encounters it is naturally drawn to it. They always say in the teachings that, "One who gazes upon the Buddha's enlightened form, looks and

looks as someone who can never look enough.” It is like his form is so beautiful that you are never satisfied with looking at it and you always have to look again simply because it is so perfect.

When you look upon an ordinary person's body and your mind is filled with delight and amazement, that is also showing a quality of enlightened body, for instance a body that is young and strong and healthy without any trace of discomfort or illness. These are the signs of someone whose mind is somewhat purified of negativity. Anyone who has a body that is young and strong and so forth, they are only having that experience because they have created that merit in the past. It is a sign that they did something virtuous. They had moments when their minds were free of negativity while performing virtue with their body. Now that virtue is ripening within and upon their body as being this splendor or this magnificence that is a pleasure to see. When you see the qualities of enlightened form expressing themselves in such ways, great or small, you are reluctant to look away.

Then there are the qualities of the Buddha's mind. Of course, in one way the qualities of the Buddha's mind are incomprehensible. They are inconceivable because his wisdom is beyond anything that we could imagine or that we could encompass. Does that mean that there is no point in thinking about it? No. That means that we have to know exactly what 'inconceivable' means here. Do we just say that the Buddha's mind is beyond thought and therefore it's like a rock? A rock doesn't have any thoughts, either. However, the Buddha's mind has qualities that are different than those of a rock. That is the key point. Those qualities are what we have to learn and study.

~ teaching continues in Part 6 (to be delivered on Losar Day)...