

~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 6

#### How Far We Have Strayed From Our Buddhanature!

When we talk about the qualities of the Buddha, it isn't just Buddha Shakyamuni. It isn't only he who has these qualities of enlightened body, such as the 32 major and 80 minor marks of enlightenment. It isn't only he who has the 60 characteristics of melodious enlightened speech. It isn't only his mind that is the coming together of the two kinds of omniscience. All of the enlightened manifestations are united in their qualities: Guru Rinpoche, Vajrasattva, Vajrakilaya, Tara, Yeshe Tsogyal—it really doesn't matter. When a being becomes enlightened, or to say a being is an expression or manifestation of enlightenment, it means all of those qualities are there. All that can possibly be accomplished has been accomplished. That means all qualities are fully manifest. All qualities have blossomed completely in their body, speech, and mind.

We ourselves in the future can manifest those very same qualities, can display them just as perfectly.

Hearing this, maybe then you will say, "Okay, that sounds good! Let's do that! Where do I go or what do I do?" All you have to do is purify your body, and purify your speech, and purify your mind. These qualities are already there. You don't have to go and buy them from someone. You don't have to go and steal them in some sneaky way from someone. You don't have to cheat somebody out of them in order to get theirs. You all love to cheat each other, but you don't have to do that with enlightened qualities. You already have those qualities. That is what is referred to as buddhanature. The buddhanature is those qualities that every

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being already has. It is beautiful like a jewel. It is perfect. It is perfect body, perfect speech, and perfect mind.

It is amazing to think buddha qualities are really our nature—how far we must have strayed from it to have this yucky, painful body and unpleasant speech and deeply confused mind! How have we come so far from our buddhanature that this is our experience?

That is the power of the three poisons. It is through the three poisons alone that we have obscured ourselves. When we say it is through the three poisons alone, that means that nature itself has never been obscured. There is nothing that has the power to obscure that nature. But by our misinterpretation of that nature, we have tied ourselves in such a great knot of ignorance! This is what we have managed to trick ourselves or cheat ourselves into believing. At the moment our habits are so strong, we find it easier to believe in this impure body, speech, and mind than to see we have the buddhanature and the pure qualities of Buddha's own body, speech, and mind. That is how dumb we are. If you really want to know, if you ask "How stupid am I?" That is how stupid. But not only you. Don't be proud, thinking, "I am the dumbest. My dumbness is the biggest!" because actually all sentient beings are the same, their dumbness is just as big as yours.

*~ teaching continues in Part 7...*