

~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 9

The Strength of Our Habits Doesn't Make Them True

As you consider that all the impure phenomena of samsara have no true basis, you might begin to think, "Well, how is it possible samsara is so powerful?" This is the same as asking, "How is it possible that our *habits* of samsara are so powerful?" Then the next question is, "And how is it possible that we could ever break free from them?" The answer, or the good news, is that our habitual negativity is not our nature. Our negativity has no true nature—meaning that its nature is not the great negativity that it appears to be. Your own nature is the buddhanature. So that means all of this samsara stuff—these habits, these many forms of negativity—is just fake. It's just a way of cheating yourself. And right now, you're very, very habituated to cheating yourselves, so that is what feels natural. That is what seems to be what's really going on.

Just because it goes on for a long time doesn't mean that it's true!

When you begin to purify your body, speech, and mind, you find that it doesn't take long for the qualities of enlightened body, speech, and mind—which, unlike your negativity, *are* your nature—to begin to become evident in small ways. You begin to notice small things. Your three poisons decrease slightly. Your mind is naturally turned more and more towards altruism and compassion. When your mind is filled with altruism and your three poisons have somewhat abated, there is a kind of bliss or contentment or joy that you don't experience with samsaric pleasure, even when you are completely taken up with it. It is a kind of contentment quite different from some wholly selfish gratification. The experience has

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a different quality when your mind is filled with concern for others and joy arises as the natural warmth of that altruism, rather than feeling happy from some kind of giddy samsaric "Wow!" feeling. This loving joy is also a sign of connecting to our buddhanature.

Whenever we engage our body, speech, and mind in virtue, we are creating the causes for our own future good qualities. We are creating the causes for the enlightened body, speech, and mind qualities to emerge in ourselves, to be able to display them outwardly rather than continuing to ignore them as our as-yet-unrecognized buddhanature. So, if you are engaged in virtue, such as reciting this ngöndro practice, and you have faith and devotion as you do it, you can be completely certain that you are creating the causes for enlightened body, speech, and mind qualities to make themselves known or to show themselves in your mindstream in the future.

As those qualities show themselves, you will notice that you, too, will have the experience like the Dalai Lama where you walk into a room and everyone is so happy to see you. Just to see your form, they are so delighted. Just to hear your voice, they are so delighted. The Dalai Lama, he says any old thing and everyone thinks it's so great—that's his quality of enlightened speech. Those qualities of enlightened body and of enlightened speech are coming right from the qualities of enlightened mind—they are not separate.

~ teaching continues in Part 10...