

**Shantideva's**  
**Bodhicaryâvatâra**

བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་པའི་སློབ་པ་ལ་འཇུག་པ།

Group Study with Venerable Lama Sangyay Tendzin

**Session 57 - Saturday December 3, 2022**

**Chapter SIX: Showing Patience**

**Q&A - Session 1**

**REFUGE | MANDALA | REQUEST for TEACHINGS**

**Lama's Invocation of the Buddhas and assembly of lineage holders.**

**Short practice of Mental Quiescence - Generation of Bodhicitta**

Tashi Deleg! Having concluded last week the presentation of the commentary on the 134 stanzas constituting Chapter SIX of the Bodhicaryâvatâra on the Practice of Patience, we will review certain points that remain obscure to some of you and couldn't be clarified by their study of the teachings given previously.

We will devote three sessions dedicated to the revision of these points which have been transmitted to me by some of you. Before getting started, I invite you to practice mental quiescence by relaxing your mind. The benefit of doing so is an increase in the clarity aspect of the mind.

**Questions 1 & 2 - Stanza 1:**

***Stanza 1:           Whatever generosity,  
Offerings to the Blissfully Gone Buddhas and the like,  
All positive deeds I've amassed over thousands of eons  
One moment of hatred will devastate them all.***

**Question 1:**

**In the explanation of stanza 1, it is said that a moment of violent anger can destroy 1000 kalpas of accumulated merit for bodhisattvas and 100 kalpas of accumulated merit for ordinary beings. Concretely, what is violent anger?**

**Answer:**

This question seems simple enough. However, although very succinct, it involves defining '*anger*' so that we can understand its different degrees leading to the conflicts it instigates between our true nature and the way our body, speech and mind engage in its manifestation.

Anger results from a series of successive thoughts and feelings, creating mental formations and therefore the manifestation of mental events called འདུ་བྱེད་ - 'du-jed' in Tibetan; '*samskaras*' in Sanskrit.

Although there are a great multitude of *samskaras*, it has been classified on many levels in the Abhidharma sutras. They are listed there in thousands, then condensed into groups of 500+, and finally summarized into 110 as mentioned in Asanga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya*.

Although this presentation of 110 in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* was intended to be practical, these enumerations are so long that they are of little use to most practitioners.

As a result, traditional Indian and Tibetan schools opted for an even more restricted classification of 51 types of mental events grouped into six categories.

Anger appears in both categories of negative mental formations: the 6 primary negative emotions and the 20 secondary ones (\*).

(\*) I invite you to review the teaching given in the past on this subject (See: KTP | GT 013-E Fifty-One Mental Events). As this text has not yet been translated into French, I take the opportunity to entrust the task to Ani Norzang. May she not encounter any obstacle in providing us with the French version soon).

I summarize here the five key points identifying different aspects of anger:

1. ཁོང་ཐོ་ - 'khong-thro' - 'basic anger'. It is the wrathful state of mind that wants to harm other beings and objects seen as problematic.
2. ཐོ་བ་ - 'thro wa' - 'belligerence'. It is defined as the increase of ཁོང་ཐོ་ - 'khong-thro' - 'basic anger' or ཞེ་སྤང་ - 'she dang' - aggression to the point that one is ready to express it and possibly act on it, doing some harm to someone or to something; it is not mere anger but the force of the anger coming out and being expressed. ཐོ་བ་ - 'thro-wa' is used to refer to many levels of force of anger.

Different degrees of fierceness are used both in positive and negative senses. For example, in the guru yoga to Jamgon Kongtrul, the practitioners are instructed to 'rouse their fierceness. This does not mean that they should become angry but that they should rouse the positive force of fierceness, i.e., the intensity that is at the root of anger.

In the practice of *Kyed-Rim*, speaking of enlightened deities expressing a wrathful aspect, the sheer force of the wrath is being expressed not as a matter of conventional anger but as a matter of fierceness that could have a positive effect to vanquish negativity.

3. ཁོང་འཛིན། - 'khön dzin' - 'grudge-holding'. A grudge held firmly in mind.
4. འཛིན་པ་ - 'tshig pa' - 'heated anger'. This is a kind of anger with the emphasis on the sense of burning up—the closest phrasing in English is 'hot under the collar'—and is used to describe someone who has gotten angry and retaliated heatedly, usually in words. Although in English there are the phrasings 'spiteful words' and the like, spite is generally another sense of being angry, it is not this specific quality of retaliating with anger in words in a fiery way.
5. རྣམ་པར་འཛེས་ - 'nampar tshewa' - 'harming'. This translates 'Vi-himsa' in Sanskrit. The root word 'himsa' refers to the general sense of being harmful; it is not a forceful term and could apply to someone momentarily having that state of mind. It has been reinforced to describe beings who are 'bent on harm' whose mind are determined to be harmful, by the syllable 'vi' which means here 'definitely so', or 'very much that way'.

After contemplating what has been explained above, the question really is to abandon anger tendencies through systematic training. This can only be processed individually. The topic is not to make a mental or theoretical investigation about anger but to develop a clear understanding of the manifold ways it affects our conduct.

### Question 2:

**Can an annoyance against oneself, for example not having succeeded in something, already destroy the accumulated virtues? Lama gave two examples last Saturday, but are these small angers, or annoyances of everyday life already so destructive?**

### Answer:

Anger is a negative mental event. A way to use one's mind against one's true nature. It strikes accordingly.

The degree of harm done, or merit destroyed, depends on the force of the action performed, whether physical, verbal or mental.

Once the clarity mentioned in answering the previous question has been achieved, we must connect it with a comprehensive understanding of the Law of Karma Cause & Effects.

The incidence of anger or any negative action on merit is depending on the five factors determining the strength of a karma and its outcome: Motivation, Intent, Effort involved, Result and rejoicing in the Achievement.

These factors are involved in the maturation of our actions and are therefore linked to our merit.

It is the accumulation of merit acquired through the practice of Paramita that gives us the ability to master any affliction when it arises.

It is therefore essential to train ourselves to keep control of our mind and not submit it to conflicting emotions. Buddhahood is achieved when all flaws are extinct, even tinny ones. Let us practice mental stillness for a moment, before dedicating the merit of this study for the benefit of all.

