

## 5 – Working in the Movement as a Way of Developing Insight

Order member as Chattrul Rinpoche

*'how do attain success in my sadhana?'*

→ *'do it for others'*

you are doing your sadhana for others

you are working for others as your sadhana

not *either* benefitting yourself *or* benefitting the local sangha

doing both

So far this workshop has been more focussed on the development of your centre

benefitting others

I want to devote this morning to our development as individuals working in the movement

about benefitting self

understand more deeply how working in the movement can be a means for growth in the Dharma

Talk about it in terms of developing insight

there is always the opportunity for the arising of insight / prajna / panna

insight = *knowledge and vision of things as they really are*

we don't see things as they really are

viparyayas – topsy-turvy views

we see things upside-down

we see things back to front

need to reflect on their true characteristics / laksanas

impermanent / anicca

insubstantiality / anatta

unsatisfactoriness / dukkha

strictly speaking *conditioned/compounded* things

talk about them in that order:

look at *asubha* / unbeautiful later

### **Anitya – Impermanence**

For insight to arise you need to do two things

1. to see impermanence you need to reflect on it
2. need to pay *very close attention*

can't be aware of everything all at once

need to focus on one particular thing in particular

see beneath the surface

reflection & attention come together as insight

A Buddhist centre / a Sangha is working ground for insight

the particular thing that you are engaging with

because it's your responsibility you pay closer attention

it intensifies your attention

like a mother watching over her child

she knows that the child is entirely dependent on her attention for its survival

you pay close attention because you *care*

you want things to go well

you care about people and therefore you care about the situation

(maitri again!)

Because of that you are more likely to know and see that the situation is *constantly changing*

e.g. the mother sees that her baby isn't well

e.g. the paint is peeling off, the roof is leaking

no one is coming to the Dhamma class that has been going really well for years

a key person is leaving

it's usually our responsibility to lead the response to the changing situation

connection between the words '*responsibility*' & '*response*' / *responsiveness*

we can't put our head in the sand because it's up to us – this is good!

we feel the attachment to the way things were

we need to let go of it *for others sake*

An emotional matter as well as a matter of incorrect thought

we need emotional maturity

we need to grow up

Buddhism is growing up for adults

→ for others

see my friends who've had children

enabled *them* to grow up

part of the reason I decided to become chair

I don't have children

I knew I needed to be responsible for *others* in order to grow

one of the key lessons from reflection on impermanence:

we need to respond to the *actual situation*

not the situation as it *was*

as you or others would *like it to be*

this needs *courage*

the objective demand brings that forth

Vajrapani

Correspondence with impermanence

More later

### **Anatta - insubstantiality**

Egotism

We think there is something fixed in us and that the world revolves around it

We feel this most keenly when we are criticised

Being the Chairman mean being visible!

We can become '*a lightning rod for criticism*'

Being criticised is a wonderful opportunity for growth!

We see our egotism – fixed view of self - very clearly

how to respond skilfully to criticism? – to *blame*?

Working with this *viparyasa* very directly

## Working with Criticism / Blame

### 1. recognise it as fact of life

nothing has gone wrong

opportunity to get to grips with this fact of life

Dhammapada - Chapter on Anger

*227 This is an old story [...] not just one of today.  
They blame him who speaks little;  
they blame him who is talkative;  
they even blame him who speaks in moderation.  
There is no one in the world who is not blamed.*

*228 There has not been, nor will there be,  
nor is there anyone now,  
who is absolutely blamed or absolutely praised.*

let go of an unrealistic need to be treated fairly

liberating to face the fear

### 2. metta

simile of the two-handed saw

without this opportunity how would you practice patience?

Shantideva – Bodhicaryavatara - without a beggar how could you practice generosity / dana

That difficult Sangha member is a Bodhisattva sent by the Buddhas to teach me patience – *kshanti*

### 3. stand in right view / skilful action

be clear about what is skilful course of action is

what the right thing is to do?

not concerned so much about what will be popular

what will make people like you

Babasaheb

Speech delivered by Dr. Ambedkar to the Bombay Presidency Mahar Conference, 31st May 1936

Year after he declared that though born a Hindu he was not going to die a Hindu

*How far you will agree with my views, I cannot say. But I hope you will give deep thought to them. To speak that which pleases the audience and earn goodwill, may be a convenient principle for the man in the street. But it does not befit the leader. I consider him a leader who, without fear or favour, tells the people what is good and what is bad for them. It is my duty to tell you what is good for you, even if you don't like it. I must do my duty. And now I have done it. It is now for you to decide and discharge your responsibility.*

Often – usually – it will not be possible to make a decision that will please everyone

accept this otherwise you might make weak / compromised decisions

develop True Individuality

one of the opportunities of the role – develop confidence

you have the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha as a Refuge

what could be a surer basis for confidence than that?

### 4. be aware that **it may not be about you**

Sometimes whatever people are unhappy about with the Centre, Sangha, with Bhante, with Triratna as a whole

its put on you

you represent something for others

you might become a stand in for someone else

e.g. the order, older broth

'This has got nothing to do with be *personally*'

#### 5. if you've done something wrong admit it

→ and apologise

relinquish the expectation that the other person should do the same!

People will trust you more

#### 6. 'next time it will be praise'

Bhante's method

*'next time it'll be criticism'*

The worldly winds

#### 7. opportunity to develop self-knowledge

criticism can be helpful

in fact its invaluable

we need it to grow

even if it unreasonable / given disproportionate weight

opportunity to learn something about yourself

if you are not sure if criticism is accurate ask three friends for a second opinion

if all three agree you need to take it on!

*ask* people for feedback

exemplify

makes it easier if people have something difficult to say

*real* mark of spiritual development: how to you respond you when you are criticised?

Being chair also makes you a lightning rod for *appreciation*

learn to accept it!

You can learn a lot from appreciation and rejoicing too

### **Dukkha - unsatisfactoriness**

seeing conditioned things as conditioned things

unsatisfactory

unreliable

they are not the ultimate

**no matter how good you are you can never get things perfectly right**

you are operating in a conditioned world

you are not in control of all the conditions

**mistaken assumption: there is a perfect solution to this problem**

if only we could find it

you sometimes feel pressure to make the *perfect* decision

that solves the problem perfectly

that keeps everyone happy, spends money wisely, has no risk attached to it, etc

sometimes any decision is the right decision

the decision that moves things forward is the right decision

that solves *some* of the problems

*'The perfect is the enemy of the good'*

*Voltaire*

e.g. looking for a new premises for your centre

list of what you'd like

if you are always holding out for the perfect solution you get stuck

**mistaken assumption: there is a perfect person to be the chair**

and you aren't it

You can only do it as yourself

you are the only person you can be

*Samgrahavastus*

exemplification – exemplify the process of Going for Refuge

I can be who I am, you can be who you are

you'll more easily be friends with some people, and not with others

you'll be good at some things, not at others

it's okay!

dukkha means the conditioned will never be perfect

deep relaxation of the effort of trying to make it so

you won't find perfection in the conditioned

looking for it in the wrong place

this viparyasa put positively - *Nirvana alone is peace*

What I been trying to point out in this talk is that taking responsibility brings us into a more vivid relationship with the way things are

draws out spiritual qualities that would have remained asleep if we had not taken it on

insight has a dynamic aspect

not just a passive seeing

it's a *responsiveness*

volitional aspect → *Vajrapani*

emotional aspect → *Avalokiteshvara*

cognitive aspect → *Manjughosha*

it enables personal growth that might not happen in any other way

**Finish with some words about Beauty**



a short piece from Bhante

<https://www.sangharakshita.org/articles/green-tara-and-the-fourth-laksana>

2018

the year that he died

60 years previous

Jamyang Khyentse Rimpoche

towards the end of his life

October 1957 initiation

four practices

they formed a set

four bodhisattvas were in a relationship of ‘correspondence’  
with the *lakṣaṇas*, the *samādhis*, and the *vimokṣas*.

*Concentrating on the insubstantiality of things – truth of anatta*

*one enters into the sūnyatā samādhi*

*and ‘sees’ **Mañjuḥṣa**.*

*Concentrating on the unsatisfactoriness of things – truth of dukkha*

*one enters into the wishless (apraṇihita) samādhi and*

*and ‘sees’ **Avalokiteśvara***

pure responsiveness

*Concentrating on the impermanence of things*

*one enters into the signless (animitta) samādhi and*

*and ‘sees’ **Vajrapāṇi***

these three bodhisattvas have been with us since the beginning

three key qualities we’ve been touching in to

clarity

love

determination

*Concentrating on the repulsiveness of conditioned things,*

*one enters into the samādhi of pure beauty,*

*and 'sees' **Green Tārā***

Tara has also been there

She is very beautiful

spray of lotuses in each hand

from both hands

represent growth

left hand - Three Jewels mudra

right hand - giving mudra

personal gift

brings people what they need

Tara with Bodhisattvas above her head

*beautiful → seeing people grow*

bringing pure beauty into being is always difficult

something of the unconditioned coming into people's lives

blue lotuses

lotus grows from the mud

the unconditioned appears in the midst of the conditioned

all things that are most worth doing are difficult

when that growth happens all the effort is worth it