



# Dhargyey Buddhist Centre

## His Holiness The Dalai Lama's Talk to Dhargyey Buddhist Centre

10 June 2013

What dharma activities are taking place here?

Gen Jampa Tenzin: Tenets, Mahamudra, Lam Rim and Lama Choepa.

Are there people who understand? That's great. Related with mantra. Without initiation you can't do it, you can't do guru puja. However if you know the disciples, teaching can be given without being requested. Even if you have initiation if you have interest you can teach without request. If you have strong faith the guru puja is very important. Meditate on Mahamudra. The name is quite fantastic, it is nothing more than meditating on calm abiding.

Do most of you understand Tibetan?

In this world we first came as refugees in 1959. It was now it is 2013 it is 54 years since we became refugees. Personally speaking I was 24, a dashing young man and now I am an old man and 78 years old. The most urgent situation in Tibet it is so stressful in Tibet and it is a matter of survival. However, Tibetan government is too relaxed when things are normal. When situation becomes tense Tibetan spirit becomes very solid. I am very impressed the way Tibetans can maintain their temper in difficult situations. Globally speaking in the late 20<sup>th</sup> cent and 21<sup>st</sup> century a pattern has developed where people are seeking happiness for their mind.

Tea offering

A new interest is developing where people seek happiness for the mind. People have realised that material benefit has a limit and now they are beginning to understand that. Therefore people are looking within particularly scientist are looking to the mind as a source of happiness. When Gen Rinpoche was at the library the number of people interested in Buddhism grew but now the number is very small. There were hardly any Indians who attended his classes. People were interested in western and scientific stuff and if you have a mala in your hand you were considered backwards and Tibetans were ashamed of their culture. Now people claim to be Tibetan to find a way to the West. Times have greatly changed and a new awareness particularly among scientist is to look for happiness in the mind and thus we have a lot of meetings with scientist, particularly Buddhist psychology as in ancient India. Depending on that they think that Tibetan Buddhism has inherited that and thus a strong interest is now developed. For the last 30 years we have been talking with the scientist.

Some abbots have the same view that studying science is bad for Buddhism, that was prevalent. But these days, now that we interact with the Western scientists we begin to know each other particularly with regard to mind and mind matters and they are taking a great interest. We now have young Tibetan monks at monasteries who study science so much so that as part of their assessment they have scientific tests. We have to have faith and respect of all religions but as a Buddhist it gives us a great sense of hope.

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We have to have regard and respect for all spiritual traditions. However the way scientists now have turned to Buddhism as a source of inner happiness and peace is a measure of great confidence. Not many scientists turn to other spiritual traditions to find avenues and solutions. Scientists turn to Buddhism in general and Tibetan Buddhism in particular not as a matter of spectacle and fun rather than to gain something and advance their understanding of the human mind with the view of gaining some benefit. In one way the Tibetan situation is so sad considering what is happening in Tibet but the latest developments are positive. When we first came to India as refugees the morale of Tibetan community was very low. Now with the passage of time the Tibetan people take pride in language and culture thanks to the interest shown by Western scientists. Particularly the current Tibetans inside Tibet is simply one of astounding courage.

(Samples the sweet rice dish 'dresi') This is excellent, very delicious.

At one time we were travelling to Sera and it was taking a long time and we were offered a lot of tea and dresi and I ate a lot of it. It was almost all the food for me for the day.

Venerable Lhagon Rinpoche:

The spiritual guide of Buddhist world on this planet the noble laureate the leader of the peace movement in the world, you have kindly without considering your own personal difficulties have blessed us with your presence and visit. The members of the Dhargyey Buddhist Center, the teachers and community, we welcome you here, we offer you the warmest welcome and honour your presence here. For the sake of peace in the world and survival of the teaching in the world, you are the eyes for us to see and you are the heart in our chest.

His Holiness: Did you say eyes in the chest? (Laughing) No, no you said heart in the chest.

Your Holiness for the survival of the teaching and the wellbeing of the Tibetan in Tibet who are undergoing immense difficulties, may you last immutably in a state of indestructible vajrakaya (?). We request bringing our 10 fingers together that you guide us here and hereafter right up to the state of our Buddhahood. May the Holder of the White Lotus, the protector of Tibet and the protector of the Dharma in the world, may you live for eons, may you live for eons, may you live for eons.

HHDL:

Going by the report you have all performed extremely well and I fully rejoice in what you have done. Starting from Gen Rinpoche through the various lamas all have done extremely well to serve Buddhism in general. What you have done is a huge service to Buddhism. As far the people here are concerned traditionally you have no Buddhist upbringing. With the passage of time things have changed and you have developed an interest in Buddhism, particularly Tibetan Buddhism. With the establishment of this Centre as a seat of learning, you have expended human and material resources for the dissemination of the teaching of the Buddha into the world. For that I thank you. It is excellent. In the report he was talking about connecting with the science and there is a university here and some research possibility here with regard to Tibetan medicine. The interest in Tibetan medicine is growing in the world and even in Tibet at lot of Chinese are showing a great deal of interest in Tibetan medicine. During the cultural revolution monasteries and seats of learning and Tibetan centres of medicine have survived the ravages. Two years ago something I heard in Lhasa both Tibetan and eastern Tibetan medical centre have been producing mercury purification process where medicine is produced. Now Chinese physician have experimented with the efficacy of refined mercury for six months. As a result of six months trial they have declared that when taken mercury purified medicine cancels out inner toxins in the body. There is only benefit and to date no side effects. Interest is growing in the West and in Tibet and yet the Tibetan medical centre in Dharamsala has not been able to benefit with the growing interest to date. You

should make contact with the Tibetan medical centre and make it possible a working relationship with the Tibetan medical centre. This does not need to be connected with Buddhism and could be purely medical research. In fact international medical conference was held in the 8th century during the 37<sup>th</sup> king when physicians from around the world were invited. It was organised by Tibetan physicians who invited physicians from India, China and Persia. Tibetan medicine has the source of bon practice and neighbouring countries. Tibetan medicine is quite rich in terms of its sources. Tibetan medicine is helping a lot of people to overcome their physical problems and issues. For example many years ago the wife of an Indian doctor at a medical institute in New Delhi took ill. Although he tried various orthodox medicine but was not able to treat her. He sent her to the Tibetan medical centre. It clearly shows that the Tibetan medical centre has benefit or this doctor would not have risked his wife's health.

From where I left off before: as I was talking to you before, new interest is developing in Buddhist psychology. People are approaching Tibetan Buddhism not as a matter of spectacle but with real interest. Anecdote: two people from a Norwegian aide organisation that works in Africa came to talk to me about what they are doing. The two Norwegians and two Africans came. The two Norwegians were dressed well and the Africans were almost naked. When the Norwegians went there out of humanity to help people based on human kindness and not to learn the culture and the Norwegians were going to start going round naked. Likewise when early on a lot of Westerners showed interest in Buddhism and Tibetan culture they viewed it as entertainment and spectacle and not to learn something that would be of benefit to their lives. These days when people are approaching Tibetan Buddhism it is done with a view of learning something, particularly how you can come to terms with your own mind and how it works, and your own psychology. They approach it with a different interest and the rationale is to learn something. Whilst the West has made a lot of advances in science and technology not much progress or equal degree of progress has been made in the domain of mind and psychology. Now they realise that the technical advances need to be complimented by equally by science of the mind.

When centres run different courses, it should not be simply to teach and to provide a platform for Buddhist, and those who proclaim themselves to be Buddhists. It should not just be for Buddhists. Up there on the shelf there are Kangyur and Tengyur texts and Buddhist psychology and particularly Indian commentary. When they talk about mind they are talking about what is already there in the text. About three years ago I offered a suggestion that we have 300 volumes that you can divide into three categories. In the text there is something about physics, e.g. directional part-less particles. When we learn basic logic we talk about matters being composed of 8 elements. Such presentations about particles and elements and how they are composed is not about the means to achieve liberation but about presenting a matter of fact with regard to things. When you talk about directional part-less particles, then you have to talk about indivisible moments. When we talk about these they are not teaching us how to pray to Buddha. They are simply talking about the facts with regard to the physical reality. The scriptures talk about the higher and lower Abidharma text talking about linguistic terms engage their objects through a process of elimination and so on. They are talking about how the mind engages with its object and particularly how by Dharmakirti. What he talked about regarding the mind is extremely important. Those could be Buddhist presentation of mind process of cognition and Buddhist psychology – one category. Secondly, Buddhist ideas about interdependent arising and relational existence, how things are dependent on each other. The principles of interdependent origination, relational existence, this philosophy was taught to help people gain liberation, as a final aim. But it can be put away as a separate part of Buddhist philosophy. You could divide the volumes of Tangyur and Kargyur into science – meaning science of mind psychology – and Buddhist philosophy and the third would be Buddhist spiritual practice. When you teach lam rim it presents Buddhist spiritual practice. The mind and cognition could be considered Buddhist science. The third

one would be view and thoughts, so philosophy. The first two, science and philosophy could be considered purely Buddhist academic studies.

In time if you could make it possible for people here to study these three categories, particularly Buddhist science of mind and philosophy, then the information will get out and people who are interested in science of mind and Buddhist philosophy that has practical relevance to life will come to the Centre where they can access these things. Gradually, gradually you can make this an academic centre. Of course the centre will still exist as a platform for persons or individuals who have an interest in Buddhist spiritual practice. However if the centre is only a platform for Buddhists and people outside do not come to think of it as nothing but a Buddhist place then the wider community will have no interest. If it is known that the Buddhist centre provides training and information about Buddhist science of mind and philosophy then a new interest will be generated in the wider community. When the centre provide itself as a platform it need not be just a Buddhist spiritual centre but as an academic centre –nothing to do with the Dharma but as an a centre where science of mind and philosophy are taught. Don't talk about past and future lives, nirvana and Buddhahood etc., but present the bare facts about the mind and how it works like Western psychology presents information about mind and to that extent you can invite psychologist to talk about their understanding of the mind. It would be purely academic regarding Buddhist mind without being biased towards Buddhism. We can be open and receive western psychologists and they can present Western psychology. Engage with them. Paul Eckman is an expert about mind. He said by simply looking at a human face you can talk about 16 new mental factors. What he has said is completely new. This is what we can receive and learn and benefit from their teaching. The findings that they have come up with are not just speculations but based on research through many years. Therefore based on research they have strong conclusion. If we discuss and engage with such Western scientists and psychologists and the things we learn from them will enrich Buddhist science which we believe is already rich.

If you can explore these avenues and you can make this centre into a seat of education and learning, and not just a Buddhist spiritual seat of learning. If you can present Buddhist science of the mind to the wider community and receive the findings they have come up with based on research then it will really benefit us and them.

I have been talking very loudly about secular ethics, in order to include people who have no religious orientation. If you present things from this centre purely from a Buddhist spiritual religious perspective either you have to present things on the basis on the belief with a God angle or present things from the point of view of dependent origination as a way of achieving Nirvana. We can promote basic positive human values completely free of religious connections. We need to educate ourselves and others about the map of the mind and the map of emotions. When we develop prejudices for and against, desire and enmity, how concepts are at work you present the general Buddhist map. When you talk about different facets of mind, just present them without saying this mind is good, this mind is bad. Without value judgements, just present the bare facts. First present the general mind and how these arise depending on various prevailing conditions. Present how the mind works, e.g. when you have anger, when you lose your temper, the mind is at work, without saying anger is bad, you can say, does anyone feel good when anger is at work. People become angry or lose their temper out of frustration and desperation, once at work, the person loses their peace of mind, they can't eat and can't sleep. No one says, 'I am really happy when I am angry' unless they are off their mind. Apart from saying, today I showed them all my wrath and I am satisfied – apart from saying that. Apart from that they will be no one who says anger makes me really happy. Scientists now are saying anger is really bad for physical health.

There are different concepts which scientists say are bad for health and which Buddhist psychology says is bad for health and peace of mind. They will say that, if there is a way to help me reduce unhelpful emotions like

anger rather than resorting to drugs and drinking and so on. They will reassess and will become more interested. In this way present the mind to the people clearly and they become interested in finding means to address inner problems. Then as a means you can present the different ways of developing and maintaining patience and talk about developing love and compassion. Present the mind map and then let people decide which set of mind is helpful or not. If these are unhelpful for one and others, how can they be changed, and then present the counteracting forces or antidotes that counteract the unhelpful mind become stronger, then naturally the unhelpful minds will subside. In this way promote basic human values and decency as a matter of education, not as a matter of Dharma.

As a purely academic and educational matter Buddhist science of mind can be presented right from primary to high school to university where the presentation can be more and more complex as the areas of education move upwards. In this way if you could do something, in fact through the Mind and Life Institutes we are working with American academics and Indian universities. At this centre you could try to do the same thing. First talk about the Buddhist science of the mind, different types of mind and which types of mind robs an individual of their peace of mind. They would know about this and come to realisation about these issues for themselves. The number of people who have a disturbed mind is quite big. Therefore, people with disturbed mind resort to drugs and other stimulants, here present mind and mental facets purely as a matter of learning and growth and not for spiritual progress and not for Dharma. If something like that comes about where people can learn without any inhibition regarding a religion then they will realise that this place where mental healing can take place. If you could consider along these lines. Without any connection with the Dharma. Of course for Buddhists who are really into Buddhist spiritual practice, this can still function as such.

When talking about Buddhist views and philosophy then it is the study of Tennets and how the view of higher Tennets really helps overcome the views held by lower schools whose views whilst Buddhist philosophical views are still quite crude and not that helpful, and how their view are gradually changed by the views of the higher schools. What are the views of one of the lower schools and what is their rationale, how when they are challenge they are repudiated, what reasons do they present and what is the rationale for those reasons. Without any value judgement it is just a matter of purely present what they present and the rational exertions.

As a Tibetan I have to say when it comes to learning the deeper Buddhist philosophy and metaphysics then Tibetan language plays a critical role. A lot of Western languages like Italian and Spanish are not enough to do them justice unless they coin new terms. These languages are not sufficient enough to clearly present the complex deeper Buddhist philosophy. Even Hindi cannot do justice. Of course Sanskrit is the only language but it is a dead language. In this way, if we can present the subject matter of Tangyur and Kagyur as a matter of education and personal growth people will become interested, incidentally they will develop a new interest in the language in which these things are enshrined. As a Tibetan I find new sense of amazement at the richness of the language and the ancient translators and what they have done is mind boggling. Otherwise Tibetan language of thought would be nothing more than a language of shopping, but if you consider these matter language become critical particularly for epistemology, Buddhist logic. Even Chinese language does not have a lot of epistemology. In Chinese language there is one piece of work, and apart from that there is nothing except the works by Dharmakirti and one other author. In Tibetan we have it all. On the basis of the prevalence of the existence of these works, Tibetan scholars wrote the treasure trove of reasoning and the Buddhist epistemologist, the guru and the disciple have devised Buddhist debate system which is extremely energetic and stimulating. Only in Tibetan language do these treatises exist and not in any other languages in the Buddhist world.

Tibetan Buddhism early on which was thought of as a spectacle and therefore not given the recognition it deserved, now it beginning to be seen as an object of serious academic learning and as a result recognition for it is growing. Please keep these in mind such that this centre is not just for teaching lam rim to people with disturbed minds. Think globally how you can benefit all people regardless of whether they are believers or non-believers. Think of the big picture. There is a foundation that is really sound at the moment. See what you can do and reach out to the society as a whole, how you can be of service to all society. How we can educate and help the younger generation through doing things that I have just mentioned not as a way to convert them to Buddhism or make them into religious people but to help them find their own self. In this way if you are in the beginning selflessly reach out to the community and give them genuine service and then people will appreciate and reach for their wallet. You would not have to go out there to find money but when worth is seen in what you do then people will value what you do and monetary benefit will come about.

In this way, this place would grow and not just get stuck here with a small premises. You could expand develop new physical structure. E.g. Sera Monastery has a good connection with one of the universities in southern India. As a result people begin to see the Buddhist monastery not as a religious centre but as serious seat of learning and recognition is growing. Normally we meet with the scientist in Dharmasala. I suggested a change of place and venues and it was decided the last Mind Science gathering was held in Drepung monastery. I was not able to go there. There were about 10 Western academics and it was at the time when the inter-monastery debates were being held. During break times these scientists were taken to see the monks were debating, and His Holiness' translator was able to tell them what the issues were that were being debated. Later on when they met me they were simply astounded by the way the monks studied and the education system is unbelievable. As they were taken around to see the debating monks, one of the new one was so impressed with the method of learning that when we met in person later and we were discussing things at the conference, he was copying the way the monks debated and clapping his hands etc. He showed great delight and was extremely pleased. He said, 'Today I have seen how Buddhist monks engage in deep, and critical learning.' One of the people who also witnessed that was a Chinese visitor who is acquainted with the abbot of Ganden Monastery. He told the abbot that the Dalai Lama has proclaimed that the Buddhist way of learning is the Nalanda way of learning and today I have seen how this system is actually carried out. The abbot said, he was really excited to have seen that and how the pure Nalanda system of giving discourse, composition and dialectics and how they were executed in the past. And now I have seen it in person.

What we need to do, if you have something worthwhile and of value people will put a price on that value. Although Tibetan Buddhist learning system was based on a very sound system but we have kept ourselves insulated and we have not shared with the wider world. What we need to do is share it with the wider world. What we have really benefits not just us but all with an interest in personal development, not with the view of us being more popular and glorified, nothing like that. When we do that we should do that purely with altruism and not tainted altruism and ulterior motive so that we gain something from them. When we do talk about Bodhicitta and we pray that all may be happy and that we can be the source of happiness, then we should do it. Please keep that in mind.

Gradually we need to change our system of presentation. We have had Buddhist learning for so long. Now move a few notches up and make it a serious educational centre. We have no money to help the community. What we can do, what we believe we can do best, is to help people gain psychological benefit and help them psychologically and be of benefit.

Translated by Losang Dawa – on his Holiness birthday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2013