

Point Four: Showing the Utilization of Practice in one's Whole Life

Point four and Exertion

Exertion means not being lazy. It means being mindful and taking joy in discipline. Trungpa says it's like waking up on the first morning of a holiday trip. You know you're going to have a good time, so you're going to put some effort into it. There's a feeling of joy and celebration. Resistance comes from our own subconscious gossip. The two slogans relate to how to lead your life.

17. Practice the five strengths, the condensed heart instructions

1. Strong determination. From morning until night, there's a resolution to maintain twofold wakefulness. It's a joyful commitment. You're not wasting time; you're strengthening yourself. You wake up to your practice as if it were a lover each day.
2. Familiarization. You develop a homing instinct to practice and situations will remind you to resume. Like a lover, you don't have to work to remember it. Your basic strength becomes more powerful and your craziness becomes weaker.
3. Seed of virtue. You don't take a break from practice. Your whole being becomes dedicated to propagating a wakeful heart.
4. Reproach. You've embraced the notion that happiness can't be won in terms of hope and fear, and you reproach the ego-based orientation that believes this. "You've caused me untold trouble. Go away!"
5. Aspiration. It's ending each meditation session with the resolve to benefit every being without partiality, to remember twofold wakefulness, and to apply a wakeful heart no matter what the situation.

18. The great instruction for ejection of consciousness at death is the five strengths: how you conduct yourself is important.

This deals with the future, obviously. It's about making friends with our death so we can "die as we are."

Fear of death is not always obvious. Here, we are dealing with a kind of neuroticism about our bodies. We often pamper them like spoiled pets, and interpret every insult as an assault on our mortality.

Death doesn't have to be a big thing. It's an important part of practice. The way to die is the five strengths, discussed above:

1. Determination: "I'll maintain egolessness, even when I die." It's maintaining twofold wakefulness.

2. Familiarization: Keeping mindfulness and awareness, and avoiding panic.
3. Seed of virtue: Don't rest or take a break. It has to do with letting go of attachment.
4. Reproach: Ego doesn't even exist. There's nothing to fear in telling it to go away.
5. Aspiration: Realize that you have tremendous strength and desire to continue and to open yourself up.

Ultimate instruction: Try to rest your mind in the nature of *alaya*.

Trungpa, C. (1993). Training the mind and cultivating loving-kindness. Boston, Shambhala.