

Point Three: Transformation of Bad Circumstances into the path of Wisdom

Patience

The Tibetan word for this point is *lamkhyer*. *Lam* means *path*, and *khyer* means *carrying*. It means that whatever happens in your life should be included as part of the journey. *Patience* here means *forbearance*. Whatever happens, we don't go into reaction mode. The opposite of patience is aggression. Impatience arises when you're too sensitive. Patience is like a suit of armor marked by dignity and forbearance. The world's aggression doesn't disturb you so much.

11. When the world is filled with evil, transform all mishaps into the path of awakening.

Transform whatever occurs into wakefulness (bodhi). We do this through our practice of *meditation*, and also through our understanding of our soft spot (bodhichitta).

We don't blame the environment, or the political situation. Poverty mentality, fixating on loss and gain, and any difficulties whatsoever should be transformed into the path of bodhi. Using meditation, coupled with the previous slogans, begin to develop appreciation for your own wealth. It's the source of your generosity and resourcefulness. At the heart of generosity is the ability to let go.

12. Drive all blames into one.

Kundzop is the Tibetan word for conventional reality. Whatever appears in it, we have no particular expectations in return for our kindness. It means that the problems and complications in our practice are not somebody else's fault. Whatever adversities we face, they're only a problem when we fail to let go, to find warmth and sympathy, making *us* problematic. Whenever we're complaining, the slogan applies. It turns us into spiritual warriors. It's disarming for others when we do so. Trungpa, along the lines of "passing the buck," describes the process of passing a football. It gets bigger, stickier, disgusting, etc., the more it gets passed, by individuals, groups, or countries. The problem is that we've been cherishing ourselves too long, so much so that we do it at others' expense. We could even speak out in ways that aren't as strident. It's essential that we drive all blames...in order to create the conditions for a wise society.

13. Be grateful to everyone.

Without *kundzop*, we can't become wise. We need it in order to practice. If we reject the world, what would we practice? All the things taking place around us are critical. Without noise outside, we can't develop mindfulness in meditation. Without aches and pains, it would be the same. Because of *kundzop* we're enriched. It's like you're giving your flesh and blood to others, and this is extraordinarily powerful. Tibetans use a phrase: "Profit and victory to others; loss and defeat to myself." Profit and victory is

anything that encourages us to walk the path and awaken, created by the world. Loss and defeat are accepted without fear. Appreciate the obstacles posed by others. We couldn't progress without them. Atisha actually brought a short-tempered Bengali servant boy with him to Tibet, having heard (erroneously) that Tibetans were all sweet-natured. He wanted to have someone to practice with. Be grateful to everyone who encourages your practice, as if each one is your teacher. "Loss and defeat" reflects that you didn't get what you wanted somehow, and you're frustrated with that. When you practice this slogan, you're not taking things so seriously. You need some awareness of emptiness, and a background in meditation. Then it will help you greatly in facing hassles.

14. Seeing confusion as four wisdoms is the unsurpassable shunyata protection.

What to protect? There's uncertainty of how to perceive things, then a clear idea of how to organize them, then we make a relationship between the first two, followed by a total experience of the whole. These correspond to:

- (1) Confusion, giving way to:
- (2) Clarity
- (3) Linkage between confusion and clarity
- (4) A unified picture of the whole process

As a whole (4), it transcends beginnings, endings, and abiding. Where is the birth of the mind? Or of a thought? Or emotion? As for endings, when does a thought end? There's no transition; it just gets overlapped by another thought. Transcending dwelling means that thoughts don't "live" anywhere, they're not *something* but they're not *nothing* either.

The *protection* comes from understanding that there's nothing to protect.

15. Four practices are the best of methods

1. Three types of encouragement, expressed in the following verse:

Grant your blessing if it is better for me to be sick

Grant your blessing if it is better for me to survive

Grant your blessing if it is better for me to be dead

"Grant your blessing" implies "just let it happen." It's openness, not being concerned with yourself. Merit involves letting go of your possessiveness.

It's not that we'll naively go along with anything that happens. If you can let go of hope and fear, your actions can be beneficial. If it happens, give it permission to happen. There's no scheming involved, no contriving.

2. Laying down evil deeds. This involves our regretting the things we do that cause harm and getting past it. It starts with acknowledging such deeds and deeply regretting it (1), resolving to refrain from them in the future (2), then you give up the criminal (ego) instead of the crime (3), and finally you give up hope and fear (4).
3. Beckoning misfortune. The gist of the practice is to invite whatever is happening to happen. In particular, this refers to sudden changes for the worse, like illness, bad luck, etc. You practice being grateful for the way these circumstances woke you up, taught you patience, etc., and you actually invite them back!
4. Beckoning awareness as a protector. It's a sense of supplication that, when you really go off balance, that you'll get corralled back to normal, like going into a rage at a friend and slamming the door on your finger. The idea of protectors represents our basic awareness. We invoke it to avoid going overboard when we've finished practicing (stop me!). It's gentleness cutting into our harshness.

16. Whatever you meet unexpectedly, join with meditation.

Join, is like putting bread and butter together. Whatever comes up becomes part of your discipline. You don't make it any better or worse than it is; just meet it precisely and openly. Surprise is the context of this practice. Something you didn't expect to happen, either bad or good. You don't react right away. You'll start to feel comfortable and relaxed in the world. It' relieves anxiety because you don't have to pretend.

Source:

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