

The Rare And Precious Human Existence

Eight Freedoms and Ten Endowments

common to both Kargyu and Nyingma traditions

Eight Freedoms from

- 1) Hell Realms: – States of mind and environments dominated by violence, aggression and extremes of painful suffering.
- 2) Preta Realms: – States of being, dominated by intense craving or addictive greed. Behind these compulsive addictions are often feelings of worthlessness.
- 3) Animal Realms: – States of species specific instinctual behaviour coupled with a slowness or at least an unlikelihood of learning new behaviors that better suit the currently arising situation.
- 4) Long-lived Deva Realms: – States of bliss and jhanic non-conceptual absorption. Here there can be clinging to the bliss and pride in believing that this is the highest realisation.
- 5) Barbarians: – Participating in a society that has no appreciation of dharma, – a society dedicated to activities such as war, consumerism, power and prestige games etc.
- 6) Wrong (Perverse) Philosophies: – such as belief in eternalism or nihilism.
- 7) Being defective, mentally or physically: – To the extent where it is difficult to study, practice and comprehend the Dharma.
- 8) Being born into a place and time where no Buddha has appeared.

Five Personal Endowments

- 1) To have been born a human.
- 2) To have complete sensory faculties
- 3) To be born and to live in a place where Dharma is taught.
- 4) To not engage in unwholesome livelihood, activities or lifestyles.
- 5) To have faith in Buddhadharma

Five Circumstantial Endowments Coming from the Outside

- 1) A Buddha has appeared
- 2) This Buddha has taught the Dharma
- 3) The teachings still survive
- 4) The teachings are still practiced
- 5) There is love and support from others. This includes a Spiritual Friend

Sixteen Further Considerations Taught by Longchenpa

Eight Intrinsic Circumstances That Leave No Freedom

- 1) To be entrapped by harmful influences such as wrong or misleading teaching or teachers.
- 2) To be caught up in the five poisons: greed, hatred, confusion, pride, and jealousy.

- 3) To be caught up in the results of past unwholesome activity (karma).
- 4) To be caught in laziness.
- 5) To be enslaved by others so that one lacks the freedom to study and practice the Dharma.
- 6) To be slow witted and stupid so that one finds it impossible to understand the teaching.
- 7) To practice Dharma with the motivation of escaping fearful states in contrast with practicing in order to awaken for the sake of others.
- 8) To practice Dharma with pretension in order to con others into thinking you are a great or accomplished being in order to gain power, prestige and support.

Eight Incompatible Propensities That Leave No Freedom

- 1) To lack remorse for one's unwholesome activities and hence have no motivation to change.
- 2) To lack faith in Dharma and the Teacher
- 3) To be bound by greed and desire in the realm of worldly commitments.
- 4) To lack empathy and compassion and to behave crudely and in a depraved manner so that one is virtually unteachable.
- 5) To take pleasure in unwholesome actions and fail to control ones body, speech and mind in ways appropriate to the current situation.
- 6) To live by dishonest (unwholesome) means and have no interest in Dharma.
- 7) To undermine one's vows (heart commitment) and (particularly the Bodhisattva Vow).
- 8) To break the samaya, one's heart commitment to one's teacher, the teaching and one's dharma brothers and sisters.

The Rarity of the Human Being

Consider how many other species there are on this planet. Vast numbers of animals large and small, plants, micro organisms, under the ground, on the surface, in the water, in the sky. In sheer numbers humans are infinitesimally rare. Look out to the stars at night and feel the immensity of interstellar space. Realise what an extraordinary thing it is to be a conscious, thinking, questioning, compassionate human manifestation and even rarer to be able to practice and realise the whole mandala of Dharma and all that that means.

How to Practice

- 1) Refuge and aspiration.
- 2) Think and ponder.
- 3) Rest in non-conceptual awareness or basic mindfulness.
- 4) Use the thrust of this contemplation to raise compassion.
- 5) Pray that all beings find liberation and have the support to do so.
- 6) Renew your own commitment.
- 7) Rest in non-conceptual awareness or basic mindfulness.