CHAPTER 25

Oral Instructions of the Twenty-four Mindfulness

OM MANI PADME HUM. I prostrate to Great Compassion. The oral instructions of the emanation of Great Compassion, the dharma-protecting king Songtsen Gampo, on the twenty-four mindfulness.

First, being mindful only of the Buddha is important. In general the principal one of the teachings is the Buddha Shakyamuni. Therefore, we should supplicate him. In particular, we should supplicate him because Snowland is the field of taming of Lord Great Compassion. If we are not mindful, there is the fault of the support of practice being absent.

Second, being mindful of the dharma is important. Having studied the holy dharma of the great vehicle, we should enter into the teachings. In particular, all dharmas are gathered into the Six Syllable of the essence mantra, OM MANI PADME HUM. Reciting and practising this is important. If we are not mindful of dharma, there is the fault that the path of practice is absent.

Third, being mindful of the sangha is important. Having remembered the sangha, being respectful of the bodhisattvas abiding on the great bhumis is important. In particular, we should supplicate Great Compassion, the

Noble One Avalokiteshvara. If we are not mindful of the sangha, there is the fault that companions in practice are absent.

Fourth, being mindful of the lama is important. With faith, respect and devotion, at all times carrying the root lama who gives the oral instructions of Great Compassion as our crown ornament, we should supplicate. If we are not mindful of the lama, there is the fault that the root samaya is transgressed.

Fifth, being mindful of the yidam is important. By not being mindful of the yidam by visualizing the body as Great Compassion, body will be reversed into ordinary attachment. Continually have the purpose of not being separate from the yidam. If we are not mindful of the yidam deity, after the body has gone into ordinary skandhas in our being, there will be the fault that we will be no different from ordinary people.

Sixth, being mindful of the dakinis is important. If we make offerings to the wisdom dakinis with faith and devotion, the Word and teachings of Great Compassion will be protected. By the arising of blessing and power no obstacles will arise and auspicious purposes will exist. If we are not mindful of the dakinis, there is the fault that there will be obstacles to dharma practice.

Seventh, being mindful of the view is important. The view of Great Compassion is the nature of dharmas, the great all pervading and all encompassing. Realising equality without exclusion is important. That occurs by realising that the purpose of all dharmas being apprehended. If

we are not mindful of the view, confidence in realisation will be absent. There will be anxiety, and there will be the fault of being overcome by the views of others.

Eighth, being mindful of meditation is important. The meditation of Great Compassion is luminous emptiness free from covering obscurations. Therefore, it has the purpose of not going into drowsiness and wild discursiveness. If we are not mindful of meditation, mind is left ordinary. After discursive thoughts are left to do as they like, the fault exists of collecting bad habitual patterns.

Ninth, being mindful of the action is important. As for the action of Great Compassion, by the union of emptiness and compassion, the benefit of beings is acted on, having dedicated ourselves to difficulties. It has the purpose of the benefit of beings not subsiding and not being discarded. If we are not mindful of the action, it is not the action of Great Compassion. It has the fault of subsiding into indifference.

Tenth, remembering compassion is important. All sentient beings like a child being grasped by kindness and compassion is the mind of Great Compassion. After it has taken sentient beings to heart, it has the purpose of not letting them go. If we are not mindful of compassion, by sentient beings being abandoned by our thoughts, there will be the fault of not going to the action of compassion.

Eleventh, being mindful of kindness is important. By kindness sentient beings are grasped, as if by a loving mother. Since that is the way of

seeing Great Compassion, it has the purpose of sentient beings not being abandoned by our thoughts. If we are not mindful of kindness, the fault exists that sentient beings are abandoned by our thoughts.

Twelfth, being mindful of joy is important. Having rejoiced at the benefit of sentient beings, since doing that is the way of acting of Great Compassion; it has the purpose of accepting hardship for the sake of sentient beings. If we are not mindful of joy, there is the fault that the benefit of beings subsides and is neglected.

Thirteenth, being mindful of equanimity is important. Establishing equal unbiased compassion for sentient beings is the way of action of Great Compassion. It has the purpose of compassion and the benefit of beings without partiality and bias. If we are not mindful of equanimity, the fault will exist that compassion goes into bias and partiality.

Fourteenth, being mindful of faith is important. Supplicating Great Compassion with faith and love, there is the purpose that blessing will be continuous. If we are not mindful of faith, by mere verbalisms and lip service the fault exists that no blessing will arise.

Fifteenth, being mindful of exertion is important. In the practice of Great Compassion, efficient drawing out by exertion has the purpose of quick accomplishment by practice. If we are not mindful of exertion, accomplishment will be left for years, the fault of accomplishment not being quick will exist.

Sixteenth, being mindful of trust is important. By means of trust in Great Compassion arising, if we practise, there is the purpose that it will be impossible not to become accomplished. If we are not mindful of trust, by going into an attitude of doubt, there exists the fault that even if we practise for eons, there will be no accomplishment.

Seventeenth, being mindful of respect is important. By becoming respectful, making Great Compassion our principal thought has the purpose that a special realisation will arise in the mind. If we are not mindful of respect, by going into neutral activities, the faults will exist that realisation will not arise and knowables will be neutral.

Eighteenth, being mindful of devotion is important. By being without lack of devotion, dedicating body, speech and mind to difficulties, there is exertion in the dharma of Great Compassion. That dharma has the purpose of obscurations of body, speech and mind being self-purified. If we are not mindful of devotion, the fault that body, speech and mind will collect evil deeds by conduct without devotion will exists.

Nineteenth, being mindful of activities is important. All walking, moving about, lying down and sitting having been brought to be, so that the body, speech and mind of Great Compassion and our own body, speech and mind are inseparable, has the purpose that the four activities of the yidam deity do not contradict our own. If we are not mindful of the activities, the fault exists that body, speech and mind are left to subside into the ordinary.

Twentieth, being mindful of the deity is important. Though it is something that exists within us, visualizing our body as the body of Great Compassion, by always meditating on the empty essence and the naturelessness of appearance, body will be inseparable from the deity and bliss will arise in the body. After diseases of the body have been pacified, obscurations will be purified. That has the purpose of body being liberated as the deity. If we are not mindful of the deity, by body remaining ordinary, the fault will exist that the yidam deity and ourselves are separate.

Twenty-first, remembering the essence mantra is important. By reciting OM MANI PADME HUM, the Six Syllable quintessence mantra of Great Compassion, as unobstructed self-clarifying sound emptiness, since speech is continuously the essence, we will not be separate from the mantra and power will arise. After döns and male and female yakshas have been pacified, obscurations of speech will be purified. That has the purpose of speech being understood as the Six Syllable essence mantra. If we are not mindful of the essence mantra, by speech being left ordinary, the fault exists that we cannot be established as the yidam Great Compassion.

Twenty-second, being mindful of samadhi is important. By resting in the self-illuminating naturally arising nature of mind, mind will never be separate from nature. After we pacify the arising in the mind of conceptions and discursive thoughts of the five poisons, obscurations of mind will be purified. This has the purpose of the nature of mind going into being self-arising and self-liberated. If we are not mindful of

samadhi, the mind is left ordinary. Thus the fault exists of discursive thoughts of the five poisons being left to do as they like.

Twenty-third, remembering practice is important. Not letting body, speech and mind remain ordinary, appearances are awareness of enlightened body and all appearances are the field of Great Compassion. All living beings included in form are thought of as the body of Great Compassion. Sounds are awareness of enlightened speech. All words and sounds are the speech of Great Compassion. Think of the murmuring sound of OM MANI PADME HUM. Thoughts are awareness of enlightened mind, whatever memories and thoughts arise of the five poisons and so on. By their arising in self-arising and self-liberation as the empty luminous nature of dharmas, the purpose is body, speech and mind arising as realisation. If we are not mindful of practice, having passed into virtuous practice being just sometimes established, the fault will exist of Great Compassion not being practised.

Twenty-fourth, being mindful of the oral instructions is important. For the sake of beings, the profound oral instructions of Great Compassion are explained with good wishes of benefitting sentient beings who enter into the dharma. Not publicly spreading the written letters and the oral instructions, customarily entrusting them to each of these of good fortune has the purpose that the spreading will last a long time. If the oral instructions and written letters are publicly spread, after the oral instructions are distorted, the dharma will have faults of adulterations entering it.

These were the emanated king's twenty-four instructions on mindfulness.