

# Being Happy Here and Now

A Talk By Venerable Sumati Marut

Advices from the Eighth Chapter of Master Shantideva's  
GUIDE TO THE BODHISATTVA'S WAY OF LIFE on the transcendence of the self.



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## I. THE DISADVANTAGES OF SELFISHNESS AND THE ADVANTAGES OF LOSING YOURSELF IN ANOTHER

ये केचिद् दुःखिता लोके सर्वे ते स्वसुखेच्छया ।

ye kecid duḥkhitā loke sarve te svasukhecchayā ।

ये केचित् सुखिता लोके सर्वे तेऽन्यसुखेच्छया ।१२९

ye kecit sukhitā loke sarve te'nyasukhecchayā । 129

The total amount of happiness  
That exists in the world has come from  
Wanting to make others happy.  
The total amount of suffering  
That exists in the world has come from  
Wanting to make yourself happy.

## II. THE EQUALITY OF SELF AND OTHER

परात्मसमतामादौ भावयेदेवमादरात् ।

parātmasamatāmādau bhāvayedevamādarāt ।

समदुःखसुखाः सर्वे पालनीया मयात्मवत् ॥९०

samaduḥkhasukhāḥ sarve pālaniyā mayātmavat । 90

From the very beginning exert yourself  
In the practice of treating others  
And yourself the same.  
When the happiness and sufferings  
Are the same, then you will care for all  
Just as you do yourself.

हस्तादिभेदेन बहुप्रकारः कायो यथैकः परिपालनीयः ।

hastādibhedena bahuprakārah kāyo yathaikaḥ paripālanīyaḥ।

तथा जगद्भिन्नमभिन्नदुःख सुखात्मकं सर्वमिदं तथैव ॥९१

tathā jagadbhinnamabhinnaduḥkha sukhātmakam sarvamidam tathaiva।।91

There are many separate parts, the hands  
And all the rest, but we dearly care  
For them all, as a single body.  
Just so shall I work for the happiness of every different being,  
Treating all as equal, all as one,  
Thinking of their joy and pain as if it were my own.

मयान्यदुःखं हन्तव्यं दुःखत्वादात्मदुःखवत् ।

mayānyaduḥkham hantavyam duḥkhatvādātmaduḥkhavat।

अनुग्राह्या मयान्येऽपि सत्त्वत्वादात्मसत्त्ववत् ॥९४

anugrāhyā mayānye'pi sattvatvādātmasattvavat।।94

I must stop the pain of others,  
Because it's pain; it's like the pain  
That I feel myself.  
I must act to help all others  
Because they're living beings; it's like  
The body that I own.

यदा मम् परेषां च तुल्यमेव सुखं प्रियं ।

yadā mam pareṣām ca tulyameva sukham priyam।

तदात्मनः को विशेषो येनात्रैव सुखोद्यमः ॥९५

tadātmanaḥ ko viśeṣo yēnātraiva sukhodyamaḥ।।95

Given the fact that both myself  
And others are exactly the same  
In wanting happiness,  
What difference could there ever be  
Between us, what reason that I work  
Only for happiness for myself?

यदा मम परेषां च भयं दुःखं च न प्रियं ।

yadā mama pareṣāṁ ca bhayaṁ duḥkhaṁ ca na priyaṁ ।

तदात्मनः को विशेषो यत्तं रक्षामि नेतरं ॥९६

tadātmanaḥ ko viśeṣo yattam rakṣāmi netaram ॥96

Given the fact that both myself  
And others are exactly the same  
In not wanting pain,  
What difference could there ever be  
Between us, what reason that I protect  
Myself and not all others?

### III. THE ELASTICITY OF “SELF”

तद्दुःखेन न मे बाधेत्यतो यदि न रक्ष्यते ।

tadduḥkhena na me bādhetyato yadi na rakṣyate ।

नागामिकायदुःखान्मे बाधा तत्केन रक्ष्यते ॥९७

nāgāmikāyaduḥkhānme bādhā tatkena rakṣyate ॥97

Suppose you say that the reason why  
You don't protect them is that their pain  
Doesn't cause hurt to you.  
Why then do you protect yourself  
From future pain, since it doesn't do hurt to you either?

अहमेव तदापीति मिथ्येयं प्रतिकल्पना ।

ahameva tadāpīti mithyeyaṁ pratikalpanā ।

अन्य एव मृतो यस्मादन्य एव प्रजायते ॥९८

anya eva mṛto yasmādanya eva prajāyate ॥98

Your idea that you do so because  
You think to yourself that you will have  
To experience it is all wrong, because  
The person who has already died is one person,  
And the one who's taken birth is another altogether.

यदि यस्यैव यदुःखं रक्ष्यं तस्यैव तन्मतम् ।

yadi yasyaiva yadduḥkhaṁ rakṣyaṁ tasyaiva tanmatam।

पाददुःखं न हस्तस्य कस्मात् तत्तेन रक्ष्यते ॥९९

pādaduḥkhaṁ na hastasya kasmāt tattena rakṣyate।।99

And suppose that any particular pain  
Were only something a particular one  
Had to care about; if this  
Were the case, then a pain in the foot  
Would be nothing for the hand  
Why then does it care?

संतानः समुदायश्च पण्क्तिसेनादिवन्मृषा ।

santānaḥ samudāyaśca paṅktisenādivanmṛṣā ।

यस्य दुःखं स नास्त्यस्मात् कस्य तत् स्वं भविष्यति ॥१०१

yasya duḥkhaṁ sa nāstyasmāt kasya tat svaṁ bhaviṣyati।।101

The things we call a “continuum” and  
A “collection” are unreal; they’re like  
A string of things, or an army.  
That of one with suffering  
Doesn’t exist at all; so who  
Is he that could ever control it?

अस्वामिकानि दुःखानि सर्वाण्येवाविशेषतः ।

asvāmikāni duḥkhāni sarvāṅyevāviśeṣataḥ।

दुःखत्वादेव वार्याणि नियमस्तत्र किंकृतः ॥१०२

duḥkhatvādeva vāryāṇi niyamastatra kiṅkṛtaḥ।।102

Since the one who owns a pain  
Does not exist, there can be no  
Distinctions among them any.  
If something is a kind of pain,  
Then it’s something to remove, what use  
Is saying that it’s fixed here?

#### IV. SEEING THE EMPTINESS OF SELF

अभ्यासादन्यदीयेषु शुक्रशोणितबिन्दुषु ।

abhyāsādanyadīyeṣu śukraśoṇitabinduṣu ।

भवत्यहमिति ज्ञानमसत्यपि हि वस्तुनि ॥१११

bhavatyahamiti jñānamasatyapi hi vastuni ॥111

By accustoming yourself to the idea,  
You have learned to think of  
A few drops of semen and blood  
That belong to other people  
As being yourself, even though  
There's no such thing at all.

तथाकायोऽन्यदीयोऽपि किमात्मेति न गृह्यते ।

tathākāyo'nyadiyo'pi kimātmeti na gr̥hyate ।

परत्वं तु स्वकायस्य स्थितमेव न दुष्करं ॥११२

paratvaṁ tu svakāyasya sthitameva na duṣkaraṁ ॥112

Why then do you say you cannot  
Think of the bodies of other people  
As being yourself as well?  
There isn't any difficulty  
In deciding that the bodies of others  
Are your own body too.

यथात्मबुद्धिरभ्यासात् स्वकायेऽस्मिन् निरात्मके ।

yathātmabuddhirabhyāsāt svakāye'smin nirātmake ।

परेष्वपि तथात्मत्वं किमभ्यासान्न जायते ॥११५

pareṣvapi tathātmatvaṁ kimabhyāsāna jāyate ॥115

Because you've gotten used to it  
You're able to think "it's mine" of this body,  
Which actually has no self.  
Why do you say then you could never  
Learn to think of others as "me"  
If you got used to it.

## V. LOSING YOURSELF TO FIND YOURSELF

बहुना वा किमुक्तेन दृश्यतामिदमन्तरं ।

bahunā vā kimuktena dṛśyatāmidamantaram|

स्वार्थार्थिनश्च बालस्य मुनेश्चान्यार्थकारणिणः ॥१३०

svāarthāarthinaśca bālasya muneścānyārthakāraṇiṇaḥ||130

What need is there for many words?  
The children of the world  
Work for their own sake;  
The able Buddhas do their labor  
For the sake of others.  
Come and seen the difference.

न नाम साध्यं बुद्धत्वं संसारेऽपि कुतः सुखं ।

na nāma sādhyam buddhatvam saṁsāre'pi kutaḥ sukham|

स्वसुखस्यान्यदुःखेन परिवर्तमकुर्वतः ॥१३१

svasukhasyānyaduḥkhena parivartamakurvataḥ||131

If you fail to practice perfectly  
This exchange of your own happiness  
With the suffering of others,  
You will never reach that enlightenment,  
And even here in the cycle of life  
There is no happiness.

आत्मानमपरित्यज्य दुःखं त्यक्तुं न शक्यते ।

ātmānamaparityajya duḥkham tyaktum na śakyate|

यथाग्निमपरित्यज्य दाहम् त्यक्तुं ना शक्यते ॥१३५

yathāgnimaparityajya dāham tyaktum nā śakyate||135

Until the day that you give up  
Your own self, you'll not be able  
To stop the suffering.  
Until the day that you let go  
Of fire, you will not be able  
To stop your hand from burning.

तस्मात्स्वदुःखशान्त्यर्थं परदुःखशमाय च ।

tasmātsvaduḥkhaśāntyartham paraduḥkhaśamāya ca ।

ददाम्यन्येभ्य आत्मानं परान् गृह्णामि चात्मवत् ॥१३६

dadāmyanyebhya ātmānaṁ parān gr̥hṇāmi cātmavat ॥136

And so I shall give away my me  
To others, and I will consider others  
In the same way I do myself,  
In order that I might put an end  
To the pain that comes to me,  
And the suffering of others as well.