

Rinpoche's Request To Avoid The 10 Non-Virtues As Much As Possible

29 June 2007

My most dear brothers and sisters,

I thought to mention this.

In order for oneself and others to have a healthy life – I don't mean healthy in the sense of diet and exercise, I am talking about a healthy life in the sense of one's mind and attitude, the actions of one's body, speech, and mind being positive, healthy, virtuous and pure – the main cause for this is to abstain as much as possible from negative actions, which result in suffering. This means actions done with negative mind, with ignorance, anger, attachment, and the self-cherishing thought. One way to do this is to abstain from the ten non-virtuous actions, which are killing, stealing, telling lies, and so forth. In Christianity there are also the ten commandments.

If you harm others, there are consequences – immediate consequences and also long-term consequences – that you experience for many hundreds and thousands of lifetimes. These are the result of karma. The immediate consequence of harming others is that others are angry with you, upset with you. They find out your mistakes, you get in trouble, you are killed by others, etc. In order not to be killed by others, to have a long life and be healthy, then it is important that you do not create the cause to experience this karma.

It is important to abstain from harming other living beings, including animals, any being that has a mind and feels suffering and happiness. This is different from plants, which do not have mind. Happiness and suffering are dependent on causes and conditions, having the right causes and conditions. For example, there are specific causes and conditions needed for a plant to grow (stem, trees, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit) and then also to die. Living beings have suffering and all the causes of sufferings – the delusions, meaning ignorance, anger, and attachment, and the actions arising from these delusions. These actions plant more seeds causing more delusions to arise, and like this, the karma doesn't end.

By harming others out of ignorance, anger, and attachment, you cause suffering. Actions created from the disturbing obscuring negative thoughts – including the root, ignorance – are what cause us to die and be reborn and experience all the sufferings again and again.

So this is the fundamental solution: Don't harm others, and then you will not receive harm from others. Even if a child shoots you, or an unknown person shoots you, or an animal attacks you, or mosquitoes bite you, or an ant bites you, or even the tiniest insect harms you ... This includes all the problems in the world, from suicide up to war. All your suffering and happiness is due to either a lack of education of mind or a correct education of mind.

Here, what I am suggesting is at least to avoid the ten non-virtues, as at least as much as possible.

With much love and prayers,

Lama Zopa

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