

Developing Equilibrium

Back in 1975, one hundred fortunate students sat through an unforgettable five-day meditation course led by Lama Thubten Yeshe at Dromana, 70 km south of Melbourne, Australia, on the rim of Port Phillip Bay. Now the clean-clear words of our late Lama's teachings that week are captured in *Ego, Attachment and Liberation*, the latest book from the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive. This is an excerpt.

When you get your first taste of equilibrium, even if it's a small one, it's an extremely powerful experience. With that small experience, your realizations have begun; you have started to realize the peaceful mind. Realizations come slowly. They start slowly, develop gradually, and finally become eternal, or everlasting. You probably think that the results of analytical meditation are a long way off: "If I do a five-day meditation course, maybe next year I'll get some peace of mind." Don't think like that; it's a misconception. If you put wisdom into action you'll experience the effects right now; the results will be immediate.

Perhaps you think, "Oh, how can that happen? This is Buddhism; what about karma? If I start creating karma now, surely I'll have to wait for the results. Cause precedes result. How can I meditate for five days and experience the result the next day; meditate for an hour and get the result immediately? That's impossible." If that's how you think, you're wrong. The karma Buddhism talks about is moment to moment reaction, a minute by minute phenomenon. It doesn't necessarily take hours or more to bring a result.

You know how a watch runs. Second by second, an energy force is exerted and the watch reacts immediately. It's the same with the results of meditation practice. You can experience them right away. The effect is right there.

Of course, if you gain an actual experience of equilibrium, nobody else can tell. Realizations can't be seen from the outside. They're not sense objects. But if they were to appear in material form, they would be enormous.

You can see for yourself, even during this short, five-day course, that meditation has an immediate effect. It is very powerful. And you can figure out what will happen if you continue to meditate: "If I keep acting correctly with right understanding and right effort, there's no question that I'll be

able to attain everlasting, peaceful realizations and experience eternal joy. When I first heard that kind of talk I was full of doubt. I couldn't believe there was such a state. But now, through my own small actions and with my minimal understanding of the psychological nature of the mind, even though I haven't yet attained any lasting realizations, I can see that if I put my mind in the right direction, I will eventually gain those deep experiences."

This is perfectly true and completely logical. Why shouldn't you be able to develop enlightened realizations? There's not the slightest doubt that you can develop yourself to perfection.

If I were just to hassle you, "Yes, you should have love, you should have love. Yes, you should have compassion, you should have compassion," if I were to keep at you all day, "You should have this, you should have that, you should, you should, you should..." you'd think I was crazy. But there's a method. It's here, right now. All you have to do is use it. It's such a simple thing.

Feeling equilibrium with all living beings without discrimination is not something that you just make up. You're not trying to equalize something that's inherently unequal. What you're trying to do is to *realize* as equal that which is *already* equal. You're trying to overcome the distortion of inequality projected by your two departments that causes you to experience the two extremes of craving desire and intense dislike.

Just look around. Who among us doesn't want happiness and enjoyment? We all do. And who among us wants to suffer? None of us does. In both wanting happiness and wanting to be free of suffering and attachment, we're all equal. Thus we can see how unbalanced our minds are in being so extreme and how much conflict we experience as a result. If we see this clearly, we'll scarcely believe how ridiculous we've been.



RECOGNIZING THE ACTUAL ENEMY

You know how angry you get if you're looking forward to a good time and your friend stands you up. You feel cheated: "That's it. I never want to see him again." But he's only cheated you once. The two departments of ego and attachment have been cheating you longer than you can imagine – days, nights, weeks, months, years; all your life; countless lives – and you still want to be friends with them. That's like locking your house with a thief inside.

You must recognize that your real enemy, the thief who steals your happiness, is the inner thief, the one inside your mind – the one you have cherished since beginningless time. Therefore, make the strong determination to throw him out and never let him back in. But be careful how you approach this analysis. Don't feel emotional or guilty; simply recognize your situation with wisdom.

If somebody was to beat you up every day and you never did anything about it your friends would think you were crazy. "Are you stupid? Why don't you hit back," they'd ask. But that's what we're like. Our two departments, especially attachment, beat us up day and night, month after month, year after year, and we completely ignore them. If we check deeply, we'll feel really silly. It's so true, however, that running after your ego's illusory projections and following attachment is really, really silly; much sillier than running after yet another man or woman. That's nothing.

The biggest cheater is inside, not out. Isn't there an expression, "Nobody cheats you but yourself"? It's not a Dharma teaching but nevertheless, it's very true. However, if you interpret it psychologically, it's actually quite tasty. You see? If you have wisdom, even common expressions can have a strong impact on you. Normally you interpret such sayings very superficially and don't give them much thought, but when you begin to investigate your internal world, even

things that ordinary people say can have deep meaning. Whatever you hear can become a teaching. Instead of bringing you down, even negative experiences can produce wisdom. Why? Because you understand where everything comes from and why it arises.

You probably think things are pretty good in your country and when I come along and say that this is wrong and that is wrong, you feel, "What's this silly lama talking about? We don't have any problems. He must be talking about his own problems. Don't bring the problems of India and Nepal over here." You're definitely going to think something like that. But if you're honest, when I explain what problems really are and how they arise, you won't be able to contradict me. Of course, anybody can argue anything. In Tibet, we have an expression: "The son who kills his father always has a reason." He can give you a reason for why he killed his father but that doesn't make it right.

The samsaric gods of the formless realm have no gross suffering. Their situation is completely different from ours. They have no gross body, only mind, and their enjoyments are purely mental. They don't have problems like getting a job, going to work, shopping at the supermarket, cooking food and so forth. Therefore it's impossible to teach them Dharma; they have no comprehension of suffering and agitation. While they're in that state, they can't be helped. Similarly, some people in the West think that their lives are perfect and feel extremely proud that they have everything. But it's not true; they don't have perfect enjoyments. They have no real control over their conditions and no true freedom.

Therefore you should decide once and for all to stop bowing down before attachment. "Although I think I'm very intelligent, I recognize now that I have always blindly followed attachment to objects as seen by my ego. I'm not intelligent; I'm silly. I'll never again be ruled by attachment or bow to that destructive mind." It's as if somebody was threatening to kill you with a knife and you were prostrating to that person in gratitude. Just as that would be silly, so is being nice to your attachment.

Do you understand? When you experience the feeling of equilibrium you experience an incredibly universal spaciousness. Your tight, narrow mind becomes completely open because it has come in from the extremes of thought to the middle way. Your mind feels very comfortable and, for the first time, you become truly mentally healthy. This is not just some theory; it's living experience. ☸

To obtain a copy of this book, go to www.LamaYeshe.com