

## ADVICE FROM LAMA ZOPA: A THOUSAND BENEFITS

As Lama Zopa Rinpoche moves around the world visiting FPMT centers, he leaves behind pearls of wisdom that he wants to share with the rest of us. Here's what he told the Shantideva Meditation Group in New York City in September 2007.

The benefit of the center is to learn Dharma practice which means purifying defilements and collecting merits/good luck/good karma; attaining the path to liberation and full enlightenment, and liberating numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric sufferings and bringing them to full enlightenment.

That means, by the way, bringing peace in the world because the essence of Buddhadharma is compassion.

When you practice Dharma, the essence is compassion to all sentient beings, and beside that, service to others, service to people, service to animals; and praying, prayer, doing pujas for the sick and dying, for dead people. It is very important to help the families of center members, to help them pray.

It is very important to do Tara practice on the 8<sup>th</sup>, and Medicine Buddha practice on the 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> for success.<sup>1</sup> [This practice] can be dedicated for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's and all the gurus' teachings of the Buddha to flourish in this world, for all sentient beings and the center to be of most benefit to all sentient beings, especially all the Maitreya Projects and all the other projects to succeed as quickly as possible. It helps for individual happiness, success, and spiritual attainments. Tara and Medicine Buddha help so much for the individual's Dharma practice. It is so good for people to come together.

It is important to learn Dharma, have practice and attainment, then one can liberate others and lead them to liberation and enlightenment. So one must learn lam-rim. The best way to benefit sentient beings is through learning lam-rim; this brings so much peace and happiness, the mind has so much peace and happiness, free from attachment, selfish mind, so naturally the mind is in peace, whether in the toilet, bedroom, kitchen, sitting room, office, running in the road, running around the world.

When the mind has much peace and happiness through the thought of benefiting others, then there is so much fulfillment, so that's the happiest mind and life, so beneficial,

so much benefit for all sentient beings including the Taliban and every single ant, elephant, mouse, cockroach, rat, bug, every single being. You can liberate them from oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment. The mind becomes very healthy. The best way to keep a healthy mind is by practicing lam-rim, bodhichitta, right view, that's the best way to take care of the body.



Medicine Buddha, Tara, and Guru Puja – these are very important. Not only for others, but each person collects so much merit, like the number of atoms of mountains, number of atoms of the sky, and unbelievable purification of obstacles and defilements. [These pujas] help for each person's success and, most important, Dharma – learn, practice, realize. As you join the group you inspire others to practice and others also help you. You see that there is so much you can do for sentient beings and this world.

These practices are so good: Animal liberation already causes long life for the animals by protecting them from being killed and from suffering, not only in this life. These are the most practical causes for long life and to be healthy in future lives, and the way we do [the practices] is very deep, like the ocean; these are the benefits to them. We purify their minds of negative karma and defilements from where all the sufferings come, which causes one to die and be reborn, suffering and rebirth. These methods bring them to enlightenment.

*Scribed by Ven. Yangchen and lightly edited by Mandala's editor.*

<sup>1</sup> The Tibetan calendar is lunar and therefore, the days of the month do not line up with our Western calendar. Liberation Prison Project prints a calendar with the Western and Tibetan days marked, as well as all the Buddha days, etc. It can be obtained from the Foundation Store, [www.fpmt.org/shop](http://www.fpmt.org/shop). [Note: This advice is for a particular Dharma center. Lama Zopa Rinpoche also often recommends doing the Medicine Buddha Puja on the 8th of the Tibetan month.]