

Attitude for Our Work

One must practice with the bodhisattva attitude every day. People can't see your mind, what people see is a manifestation of your attitude in your actions of body and speech. Pay attention to your attitude all the time, guard it as if you are the police, or like a maid cares for a child, like a bodyguard, or like you are the guru and your mind is your disciple.

You need to guard your attitude all the time, 24 hours a day. Doing just what your mind says is very dangerous - even small problems can lead to suicide when emotions get involved. Thinking that this is what I feel, so I can do anything - it's usually what the delusions want, not what the bodhisattva wants. This leads to long-term harm.

What Rinpoche mentioned for Essential Education is exactly what's needed in an office. What Rinpoche wanted to add is humility. Though humility actually comes naturally if you are kind, and forgive others. Then also rejoicing when good things come to others. These are practical good qualities for anyone in the world if you want a happy life.

The point is to be humble, but when there's a need to clarify, to say something, to be able to say it.

A center or an office is a place for Dharma practice. When one goes to the office, dealing with people, one has to recognize it's a place to practice lam-rim, the Three Principles of the Path, tantra, and the 6 paramitas. The 6 paramitas fit very well for daily life - they offer protection for you. Everything is there.

If one doesn't put effort into this, then problems arise. Without this, things won't succeed, won't be smooth, people won't support you. If people are happy, they will support you.

We have meetings in FPMT, but that isn't enough. We have to really put it into practice in work, when we go back. At FPMT meetings all the nice advice is there, but when you go back, if you don't practice, all the problems come.

Think of home and office as practice. It's a wonderful practice, a great challenge. Before you go to the office think "I'm going to practice Dharma: 3 Principles of the Path, 6 paramitas". The office is a place for tantric practice - see everyone as the deity. Everything is in the nature of blessing out! Nothing is boring or upsetting.

Don't get disturbed if you hear problems - our ears are made to hear problems! Hearing problems are like earrings, they are both different decorations for the ear!

Question about the confusion that arises between trying to see and accept everything in Dharmic terms and yet wanting to change negative things.

You have to clarify this. If you don't, then the center/office can't develop. Be humble, don't be dumb! Otherwise can't make the work better. Try to explain within your practice, lam-rim, then the mind doesn't go negative, and things go better, smoother. Think how all sentient beings are so kind, all have been our mothers, shown such great kindness, then respect comes. Think that Buddha, Dharma, Sangha come from this person, all happiness in life comes from this person, they are so precious. Then respect comes. Think that this person is cherished the most by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas, like a beloved child. This person is like their heart. Then you dare not say

any bad words, you offer service, you offer comfort as much as possible, never dare to harm or hurt.

We need wisdom to discriminate what needs to be said and not to be said. What's the right time. It depends on our analysis. It's not easy because we don't have clairvoyance. Bodhisattvas say we need clairvoyance in order to benefit sentient beings. Even without omniscient mind, clairvoyance, it is our responsibility to use our intelligence to do as best as we can.

Try one's best. Might not be perfect. We can't succeed every time, but sometimes we can.

Colophon: notes taken and lightly edited by Claire Isitt at Shakyamuni Center, Taiwan. June 14th 2005.