



Nalandabodhi Connecticut  
Paramita of the Month Newsletter



"For patience, nothing to do,  
Other than not fear what is ultimately true."  
-Milarepa, The Song of the Six Perfections

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According to the teachings of Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche we should view the practice of patience as having three aspects: accepting suffering, developing certainty in the dharma, and not allowing ourselves to become discouraged. First, we must accept the fact that the nature of samsaric existence is suffering. This was one of the four noble truths that were taught by the Buddha. As long as we are caught in samsara's web we will experience suffering. What we can control is how we choose to react to this suffering: we can allow it to control our actions or we can use it as motivation to pursue the dharma.

Khenpo's second instruction in the practice of the perfection of patience is to develop certainty in the dharma. As we progress along the path we will inevitably encounter many difficulties and obstacles to our practice. We should have patience in dealing with these obstacles and not allow them to impede our development on the path. We should develop certainty that our practice of the dharma will indeed bring results. This was another of the noble truths taught by the Buddha; the truth of the path that leads to the cessation of suffering. Our practice of the Dharma can and will bring us to the state of complete enlightenment. We should practice thinking that whatever difficulties may arise or whatever hardships we may endure are for the benefit of all living beings, not for ourselves alone. This should motivate us to practice the dharma and seek enlightenment for their benefit. When we have developed such an attitude then, Khenpo tells us, we have developed the patience associated with having certainty in the dharma.

The last aspect of patience discussed by Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche is that we should not become discouraged in our practice. We may encounter many conflicts along our path that might lead us to believe that our views are mistaken and that dharma practice will not bear fruit or alleviate suffering. We should not become discouraged or abandon our practice. The four noble truths taught by the Buddha tell us that true practice of the dharma does indeed lead to the alleviation of suffering. We should feel great compassion for those whose spiritual blindness leads them to doubt the dharma. We should recognize that their confusion and inability to understand the dharma leads them to experience great suffering. We should not allow their doubts to become our own and should take refuge in the dharma. When we develop such trust in the dharma and compassion for those who are unable to reap its benefit then we are practicing true patience.

Our practice of patience means practicing loving kindness and compassion and engaging in moral actions rather than exploding with anger or frustration when we are confronted by difficulties. When we truly embrace "what is ultimately true" then patience with our practice, and with obstacles or difficulties we may encounter, will develop naturally and without effort.

*May all beings benefit.*

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The information presented in this newsletter is based upon a teaching given by Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche in June 1984 at KTD Monastery in Woodstock, New York as presented in the text "[Transforming Mental Afflictions and Other Selected Teachings](#)" available from [Namse Bangdzo Bookstore](#).

A complete translation of Milarepa's Song on the Six Perfections translated by Ken McLeod is available [here](#)