



Nalandabodhi Connecticut  
Paramita of the Month Newsletter



"For meditative stability, nothing to do,  
Other than rest in presence."  
-Milarepa, The Song of the Six Perfections

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This month we will explore the perfection of meditative stability. This perfection marks a transition in the essence of the various perfections. The perfections of generosity, morality, and patience engage us in the accumulation of merit. Those of meditative stability and wisdom engage us in the accumulation of wisdom. As was discussed last month the perfection of diligence applies to diligence in both the accumulations of merit and wisdom.

Our minds can be like squirrels in spring: darting about in ignorance pursuing this thought and that, hoarding those things we crave, pushing away those things we find unpleasant. Without any attempt to quiet our minds it can be difficult to develop the wisdom that penetrates this unending cycle. In Buddhist tradition meditation is the tool that we use to quiet our minds so that wisdom may develop naturally. Shinay (sk. shamatha) practice develops a calm state of mind. In this more peaceful state we find ourselves able to focus our mind more acutely. Shinay practice makes our minds more workable, more pliable.

According to the teachings of Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche meditative stability can be viewed as having two aspects: worldly and beyond the world. Worldly shinay practice builds an appropriate peacefulness within our own mind. This worldly type of meditation is still ego-centered. This presents a pitfall that we must be careful of. One will cling to this peaceful state, and exert oneself diligently to fostering and stabilizing it. While our clinging to this state is helpful in strengthening our motivation one must be careful not to become too attached to it. In its ego-centeredness this is still a samsaric state. We crave it and cling to it and this leads to the arising of attachment and aversion. We seek those things that foster the calmness and fear those that disrupt it. The peaceful state of mind alone will not lead us to complete liberation.

Shinay practice beyond the worldly level seeks to make effective use of this peaceful state in order to pacify our minds, completely remove our neurosis, and cut the sources of our suffering at their root. Having accomplished this we are then able to help others in the world work with their defilements and suffering. It is this motivation, born of bodhicitta, that takes our shinay practice beyond the worldly level. The fruition of that non-egocentric practice is complete liberation and enlightenment.

Milarepa tells us that to perfect meditative stability we need do nothing other than "rest in presence." Having calmed our minds, and avoided developing attachment to that calm state, we need only rest in the presence of that. Within this resting free of attachment we will begin to realize and then nurture our innate wisdom. There is nothing more to do than that.

*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](#)