



Nalandabodhi Connecticut  
Paramita of the Month Newsletter



"Even when obstacles crowd in  
The path to nirvana can be won  
By those who establish mindfulness  
And bring to perfection equipoise."

- *Samyutta Nikaya I, 48*

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This month we examine Patrul Rinpoche's teachings on the paramita of patience. He describes transcendent patience as consisting of three aspects: patience when wronged, bearing hardship for the sake of Dharma, and the patience to face the profound truth.

With respect to patience when wronged, Patrul Rinpoche states that this form of patience is applied whenever we are robbed, insulted, slandered, or anytime that someone does something that hurts or annoys us. We are instructed to reply to such instances with kindness and compassion. To allow our patience to give way to anger, and then acting out in a fit of rage, can destroy the positive karma accumulated over many kalpas.(1) Shantideva reminds us of this in *The Way of the Bodhisattva* when he states:

Good works gathered in a thousand ages,  
Such as deeds of generosity,  
Or offerings to those gone to bliss:  
A single flash of anger shatters them.

No evil is there similar to hatred,  
No austerity to be compared with patience.

In dealing with our anger Padampa Sangye advises:

To hate enemies is a delusion caused by karma.  
Transform your vicious thoughts of hatred!

In fact, whenever someone wrongs us, as long as we do not lose our patience and respond instead with kindness and compassion, we exhaust negative karma and clear away obscurations. With such thoughts in mind we can develop great joy in the practice of patience and overcome our karmic tendencies towards anger and rage.

When examining bearing hardship for the sake of the Dharma, Patrul Rinpoche advises us to be careful of seeking to marry Dharma to the worldly life. He exhorts us: How could there be a way to marry Dharma with worldly life? He reminds us that even the Buddha himself practiced great austerities before achieving enlightenment. Seeking success in both worldly life and Dharma is contradictory. Patrul Rinpoche compares it to trying to ride two horses that are running in opposite directions. Geshe Shawopa sums this up by stating:

To practice Dharma with sincerity your ambition in this life should be poverty.

At the end of a life of poverty, you should be able to deal with your death.  
If you have this attitude, you can be sure that no god, demon, or human being  
will ever be able to make difficulties for you.

Patrul Rinpoche advises that it is of fundamental importance for us to cast to the wind the cravings of ordinary life. We should be practice the Dharma without concern for any hardships that may befall us along our path.

In referring to patience in facing the profound truth without fear Patrul Rinpoche advises that should we be fortunate enough to receive teachings on the natural state of profound emptiness that we should try to grasp their meaning without giving rise to negative views. To criticize these teachings is viewed as "the harmful act of rejecting the Dharma." It can cast us into the depths of suffering for innumerable kalpas. Patrul Rinpoche reminds us that it is important for us to have a heartfelt and respectful interest in these profound teachings and those who teach them. At the very least we should never criticize them.

*May all beings benefit!*

(1) In Buddhist cosmology a kalpa is the period of time during which a universe is created and destroyed.

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The information presented in this newsletter is based upon teachings presented by Patrul Rinpoche presented in the text "[Words of My Perfect Teacher](#)." This text is available through [Namse Bangdzo Bookstore](#).