



The Wheel of Sharp Weapons

Mahayana Thought Transformation

Hosted by Shantideva Center

April & May, 2024 with Ven. Yönten

"Theg-pa chen-po'i blo-sbyong mtshon-cha 'khor-lo" by Dharmarakshita,
translated by Alexander Berzin and Sharpa Tulku, with Jonathan Landaw and Khamlung Tulku,
based on an oral explanation by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, 1973.
The version in this course is the poetic rendering. Used with permission.

Freely offered here:

https://studybuddhism.com/en/tibetan-buddhism/original-texts/sutra-texts/wheel-of-sharp-weapons/wheel-of-sharp-weapons-poetic-rendering_

Main Themes in Wheel of Sharp Weapons Review

Peacocks

- analogous to beings who can use hardship and temptation on the path - Bodhisattvas

Poison

- analogous to the danger of living in a samsaric environment and having samsaric views

Crows

- analogous to cowardly beings motivated by self-cherishing and self-grasping

The Wheel of Sharp Weapons

- analogous to karma - our current experience being directly related to our past actions

Yama and Yamantaka

- the Lord of Death (karma and disturbing emotions) & Slayer of the Lord of Death (wisdom)

ལོ་ཤོར་ *Lo-Jong: Thought Transformation / Mind Training* *Emphasizes*

གཏོང་ལེན་ *Tong-Len: Giving and Taking Practice* *which develops*

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སེམས་ *Jang-Chub-Kyi-Sem / Bodhichitta*

Cultivating Conventional Bodhichitta technique

Key Components in *Lo-Jong* teachings:

1. Equalize Self and Others
2. Identify the Disadvantages of Self-Cherishing
3. Identify the Advantages of Cherishing Others
4. Decide to Actually Exchange Self for Others
- ➔ 5. *Tong-Len* in Practice

The *Tong-Len* (Giving and Taking) practice and attitude

(7) Uncontrollable wandering through rounds of existence is caused by our grasping at egos as real. This ignorant attitude heralds the demon of selfish concern for our welfare alone: we seek some security for our own egos; we want only pleasure and shun any pain. But now, we must banish all selfish compulsion and gladly take hardship for all others' sake.

(8) All of our sufferings derive from our habits of selfish delusions we heed and act out. As all of us share in this tragic misfortune, which stems from our narrow and self-centered ways, we must take all our sufferings and the miseries of others and smother our wishes of selfish concern.

What NOT to think:

- I should suppress or deny my emotions
- I should accept bad behavior from others

(94) With all of the sufferings that others experience, smother completely our selfish concern. The sufferings of others arise from five poisons; thus whichever delusion afflicts other beings take it to smother delusions of self.

What TO think:

- I can use the suffering, delusions and bad behavior of others as a means to overcome my own delusions. This will actually help me to prevent my future bad behavior and suffering.



Therefore practice *tong-len*...

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5. *Tong-Len* in Practice

- Connect with “giving” on the out breath - visualize golden light
 - With loving kindness, offer your past, present and future happiness
- Connect with “taking” on the in breath - visualize black smoke
 - With compassion, take the past, present and future suffering

...the wheel of sharp weapons returning...



(25) When all who are close turn against us as enemies,
this is the wheel of sharp weapons returning full circle upon
us from wrongs we have done.

Till now we've held grudges inside us with anger with
thoughts of sly methods to cause others pain;
hereafter let's try to have less affectation, nor pretend to be
kind while we harbor base aims.

...the wheel of sharp weapons returning...



(29) When sleep overwhelms us while practicing virtue, this is the wheel of sharp weapons returning full circle upon us from wrongs we have done. Till now we have gathered the causes for obstacles hindering our practice of virtuous acts.

(We have lacked all respect for the scriptural teachings; we have sat on our books and left texts on the ground. We have also looked down upon those with deep insight.)

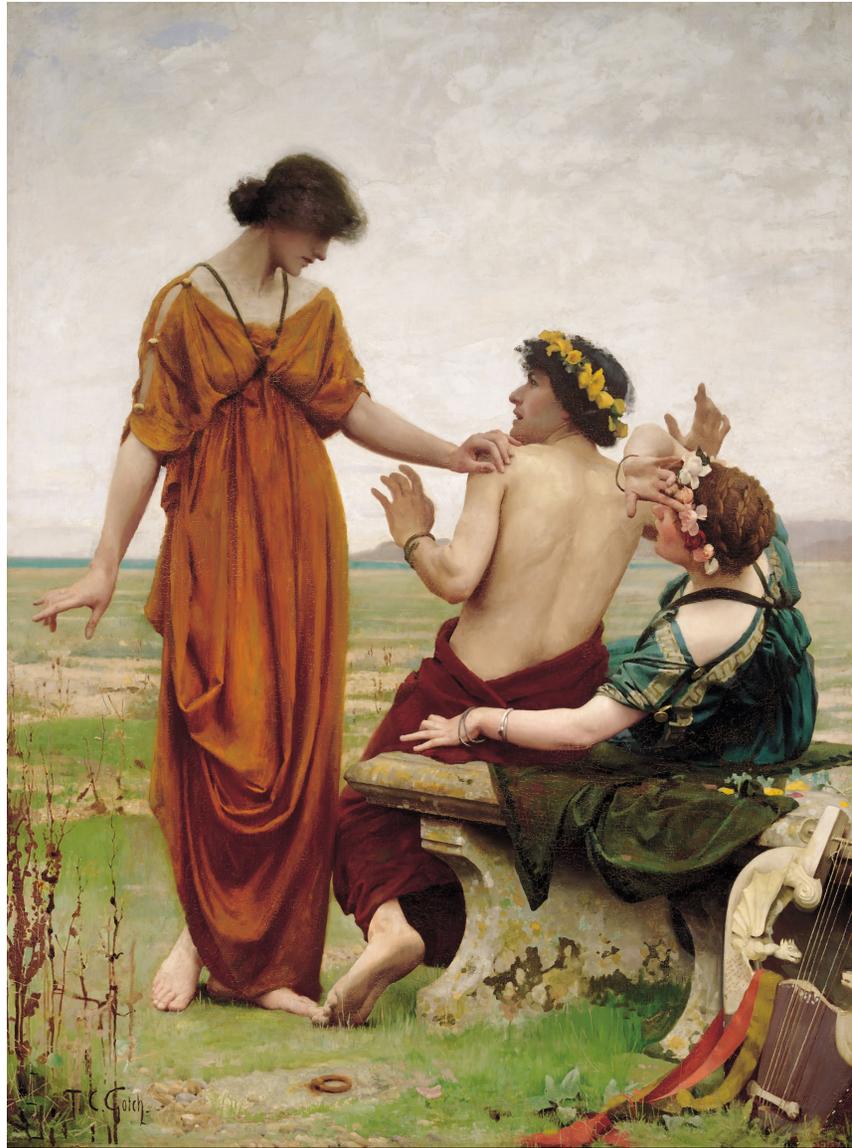
Hereafter for the sake of our practice of Dharma let's gladly endure all the hardships we meet.

...the wheel of sharp weapons returning...



(31) When all our affairs, both religious and worldly, run into trouble and fall into ruin, this is the wheel of sharp weapons returning full circle upon us from wrongs we have done. Till now we have felt cause and effect [9] could be slighted; hereafter let's practice with patience and strength.

[9] Cause and effect describes the universal law of karma whereby virtuous actions result in happiness and nonvirtuous actions in suffering.



What Karma is NOT: Destiny

- the events that will necessarily happen to a particular person or thing in the future:

e.g. she was unable to control her own destiny.



What Karma is NOT: Fate

- the development of events beyond a person's control, regarded as determined by a supernatural power
- the course of someone's life, or the outcome of a particular situation for someone or something, seen as beyond their control



What Karma is NOT: Predestination

- Predestination, is the doctrine that all events have been willed by God
 - usually with reference to the eventual fate of the individual soul



What Karma is NOT:

Punishment, Retribution or Reward

- **punishment**

the infliction or imposition of a penalty as retribution for an offense, by an external “authority” or divine being.

- **retribution**

punishment inflicted on someone as vengeance for a wrong or criminal act, “payback.”

- **reward**

a thing given in recognition of one's service, effort, or achievement by an external “authority” or divine being

Karma is NOT describing
any of these concepts:

- Fate
 - Destiny
 - Predestination
- Punishment
 - Retribution
- Reward
 - *A Judge*
 - *A Jury*

Karma is not personified though it is personal

Karma is NOT describing
any of these concepts:

• ~~Fate~~

• ~~Destiny~~

• ~~Predestination~~

• ~~Punishment~~

• ~~Retribution~~

• ~~Reward~~

• ~~A Judge~~

• ~~A Jury~~

Karma is not personified *though it is personal*

What Karma IS:

- **Action**

- *"Action" meaning mental intention*
 - *Also related to verbal and physical activities*

- **The Consequences of Actions**

- consequence | 'kænsɪkwəns | noun
a result or effect of an action or condition

What Karma IS: an “extremely hidden phenomena”

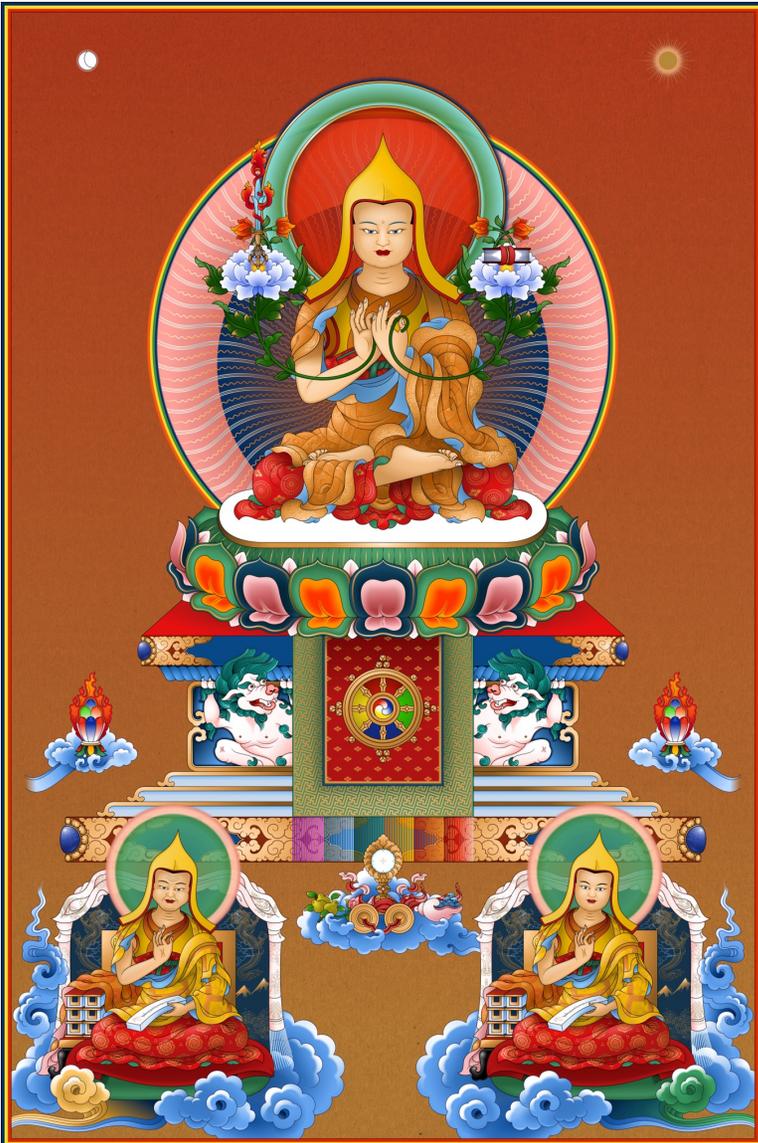
- As opposed to *manifest phenomena*
 - like the water in my glass, that appears to my eye primary consciousness observing it in front of me.
- As opposed to *hidden phenomena*
 - like the emptiness of an inherently existent self that appears to the mental consciousness of an Arya Bodhisattva in single-pointed equipoise *on* emptiness.

Therefore we rely on our observations of the natural world and our reliance on the Buddha as being a “valid being,” and therefore his teachings on karma are non-deceptive.



What Karma IS: an “extremely hidden phenomena”

Therefore we rely on our observations of the natural world and our reliance on the Buddha as being a “valid being,” and therefore his teachings on karma are non-deceptive.



How Karma Operates

1. The certainty of karma
 - Negative actions are the cause of suffering
 - Positive actions are the cause of happiness
2. The magnification of karma
 - From one seed, many branches
3. Not experiencing the effects of actions that you did not do
 - You create the cause then you create the result
4. That the actions you have done do not perish
 - An action will have a result



Results of Karma

(1) the ripening result

the body and mind we will take in a future life

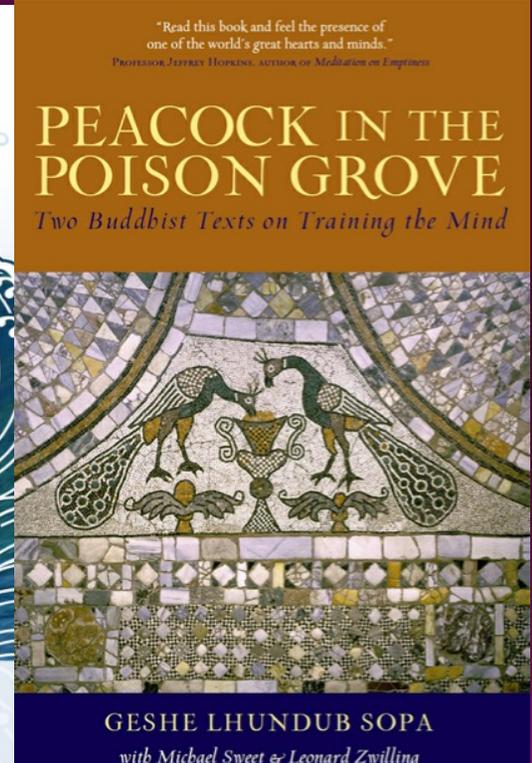
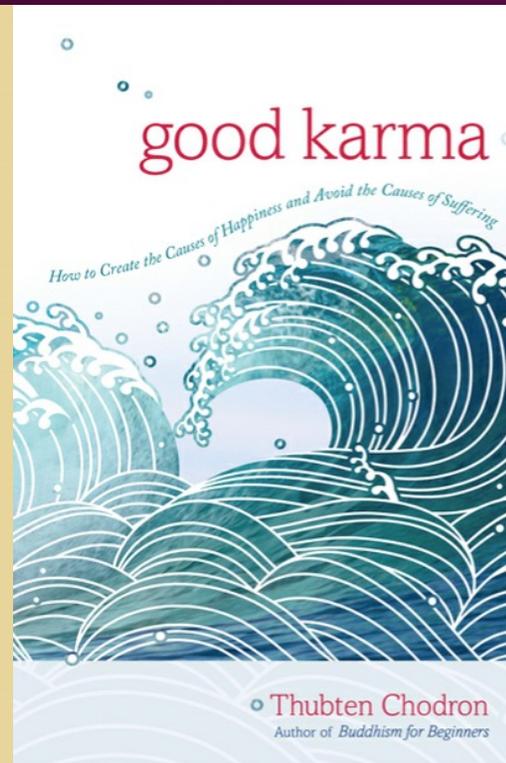
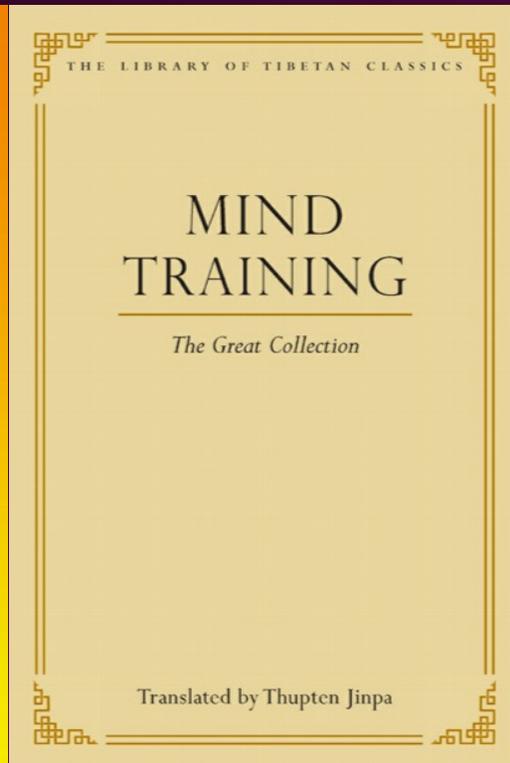
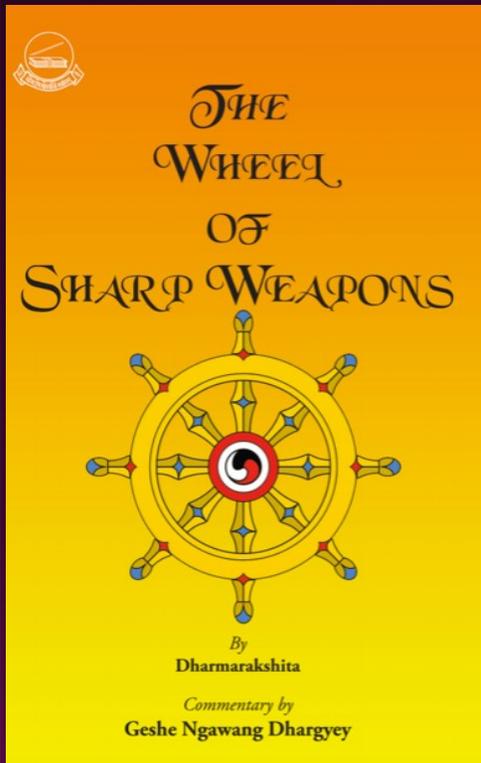
(2) the causally concordant result

- experiential (*that is, we will experience a situation similar to the one our actions caused others to experience*)
- behavioral (*that is, we will tend to do that action again in the future*)

(3) the environmental result

our experience of the environment and climate where we live.

Recommended Reading



*The Wheel of Sharp Weapons
Commentary*
by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey

*Mind Training: The Great
Collection*
Translated by Thubten Jinpa

Good Karma
by Thubten Chodron

Peacock in the Poison Grove
by Lhundrup Sopa