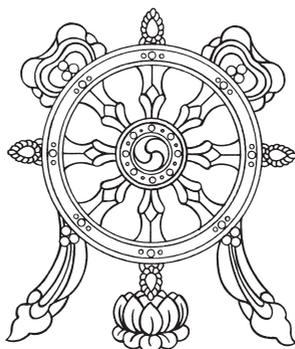


The Ten Nonvirtues & Their Results

*With Teachings
from Lama Zopa Rinpoche*



Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, Inc.
1632 SE 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97214 USA
www.fpmt.org

© 2012, 2018

Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, Inc.
All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system or technologies now known or developed, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Set in Calibri 12/15 and Lydian BT.

Contents

Think About Karma	5
Karma the Creator	9
The Ten Nonvirtues and Their Results	21
A Simple Vajrasattva Practice	33
Notes	39

Think About Karma

I think it is very important when you study Buddhism, and in particular when you study the lamrim, to not just leave it in the text as some sort of information. Try to understand it and remember it in daily life. Whenever there are undesirable things or whenever you encounter suffering, relate it to karma. Relate it to the basic negative karmas, the ten nonvirtues, and try to recognize from which negative karma it came. When you recognize and relate it to karma and the ten nonvirtues, the great advantage is that you want to do something to purify. Because you don't like the suffering result, you want to purify the negative karma. Then you look at what to do in order to purify and you do not do it again.

It very useful to relate it to karma, rather than the usual things. Many of us don't think about Dharma, including myself. We don't think about Dharma much in life and when sickness comes, we think it came from outside. We think the sickness came from outside, from plants or other people, or maybe from insects, or from the window. Usually, the first thing we think of as the main cause of sickness is something bad outside we encountered that made us sick. We do not remember karma, or most especially, we do not think about karma *first*; or we hardly remember it is karma. We think that something is wrong outside; some external condition was the main cause.

We wrongly believe that things exist *outwardly*. We never think, "This is my karma." We never relate it to that. This is a HUGE mistake. How I appear to you is your karma. How you appear to me is my karma. The house here, the property, the trees, how we see them—the view that we have—is a projection of our karma.

It is a view of our mind, a view of our karma collected in the past; everything. When we are walking on the road, or when we travel by car or by airplane, in every minute, we see mountains, trees, oceans, lakes, people, living beings, nonliving beings, etc. It is all a projection. It is all a view of karma. It is all a view of your mind.

Whether you believe it or not, karma works like that. Whether you believe it or not, fire burns and water makes wet; this is the nature of these phenomena. Karma is not only for people who believe in karma. The idea that there is karma only for people who believe in karma, and for those who do not believe there is no karma—that would be very strange. Then there is no hope. Then, for the people who don't believe, there is nothing they can do. There is suffering, but there is nothing they can do about the suffering. It becomes truly existent and permanent.

Many times you don't believe it, but you have suffering. It is not up to believing. There are many people who don't believe they have cancer, but when they go to check, the doctor tells them they have cancer. This is just one example. There are so many sufferings we don't understand. We experience them, but do not have knowledge about them, even the suffering of pain.⁶

It is very, very good when you go by car to practice this mindfulness. Always keep in mind, "This is the view of my karma. It is the projection of my karma. It is the result of my past karma." That mindfulness is so good. It is like a movie. *It is a movie from your karma.* A movie is shown by way of film; somebody recorded and projected it on the screen. Here, your mind is the film, the negative roll with the imprints left on it from past thoughts and actions—negative thoughts and actions, and positive thoughts and actions. These are projected, experienced out, now. There are unimaginable karmic seeds that are experienced out.

Every single second you are seeing the movie of your mind, of your karma: the pleasant and unpleasant, the ugly and the beautiful, the happiness and the suffering that you experience. All the objects that you see are a manifestation of your karma, and

then you have feelings (pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral). This is the result of your karma, the creation of your karma. It includes everything that you see, every single detail of all the forms you see, including people—the shape of their body, the shape of their nose. The view of this form is your karma, your mind. Then all sounds, smells, tastes, tangibles—everything, whatever six sense objects happen in a day; they all come from your mind, from karma.

The Importance of this View

I think this is a *very important, very special, very particular* Buddhist view. The very foundation of Buddhist philosophy, the very essence, is that everything comes from *your* mind. This becomes very interesting. Just look at one leaf, all the designs, it is amazing. All those details come from the mind, from your karma. Karma definitely exists and every thought, every action, has a result; bad and good.

Depending on negative thoughts you have the result of suffering, something unpleasant. Depending on positive thoughts, you have the result of something good. All this is explained by karma. Therefore, it is so important to abandon even small negative karmas and practice even small virtues. This is what I think when considering the explanation of karma and the projection of your mind: this exists. Karma is something you have to be really careful of. What it says in the Buddha's sutra teachings and the Lamrim is that even small thoughts or actions don't just pass through. Later, it is definite that you will have to face the result.

Karma the Creator

There is immediate creation of how your mind creates phenomena, the things that appear to you. Then, there is the long run evolution that comes from your karma. The way of explaining “it comes from your mind” is from your karma

Nonvirtues and Their Results

Killing

For example, the complete negative karma of killing produces four suffering results.¹ One is the appearance of the hell realm, a most terrifying view. Then, in the human realm you experience the three other results.

Even food and things cause sickness. They have a side effect. Also, medicines have a side effect. It is the correct medicine, but for some people it has side effects and causes other sicknesses. Then, there are digestion problems; you eat food but cannot digest it. You can experience many sicknesses in life, one after another; or many health problems or allergies. These are all possessed results.

You receive harm from others; there is danger to your life. Maybe there are insects or mosquitoes that bite, or people who cause danger to your life through shooting or giving poison. Experiencing harm to your life is experiencing the result similar to the cause that came from the negative karma of killing.

Then, again you do that same action due to that past karmic imprint left by the karma of killing on the mind. Again, you do the action of killing. This, too, is a result similar to the cause that is produced by that person’s own karma of killing.

Stealing

For the negative karma of stealing, the motivation is the self-cherishing thought. Then, there is attachment clinging to this life. What is produced later on is the lower realms: the appearance of having an animal body, *preta* body, or a hell body and experiencing suffering. All that view comes from your mind.

Three sufferings are experienced in the human realm that are produced from the negative karma of stealing. Where you live there is no water, no rain, drought, and no crops growing—or even if crops grow they are destroyed by hailstorms. Or the weather causes so much rain and flooding that the crops are destroyed; or they are eaten by animals or insects, such as rabbits, forest animals, and so forth. All these sufferings or problems are from the past negative karma of stealing done with a nonvirtuous motivation, bad thoughts. This is the possessed result.

Also, you have economic problems, are unable to find a job, or have no means of living or a shortage of means of living. Even if you have things, such as a house or food, you have to share them with other people. You don't own them completely. You have no control over them. Then, you often lose things. You see people to whom this often happens. It is due to having committed so much negative karma of stealing in the past. This view is from stealing, from that intention.

Even if you have wealth and a means of living, other people steal it away, or your food gets filled with ants or mice. The animals eat it or interfere. There are so many obstacles. You have wealth, but it is taken away or you lose it. Things are always getting stolen or lost. This is all experiencing the result similar to the cause in that others take away your things. They take them away with force; they confiscate them or they are robbed or stolen. You have that view, which comes from the negative karma of stealing, from that intention. It comes from your own mind.

Then, you create the result similar to the cause. The past negative karma of stealing left a karmic seed on the mind and

from that, there again arises the negative karma of stealing which makes you, again, experience the four suffering results.

Sexual Misconduct

Then, there is the negative karma of sexual misconduct. This is also done with self-cherishing thought and attachment clinging to this life. I'm not sure if it can also be done with anger or not. It produces sufferings such as the possessed result. You have this view produced from your negative karma, intention, of a very dirty, unhealthy place filled with ka-ka, pooh-pooh, and smelly. Many people have the karma to live in these places. Sometimes, we have to pass through them. This is a possessed result due to having created the negative karma of sexual misconduct in past lives. All of this view appearing like that, seeing things like that, comes from your mind, karma, intention.

Then, in the family, people do not like you. Many times it is like that—the whole family is against you or doesn't like you. Their wish is opposite to yours, contradictory, so they don't get along with you and you don't get along with them. Then, your girlfriend or boyfriend—or if you are married, your husband or wife—you are together with them but their wish is against yours. You don't get along, so you live life with much suffering. Every day there is fighting and it is so unpleasant. You are living together and there is no peace in life. You are always creating the negative karma of insulting each other. Instead of practicing virtue, practicing Dharma, you practice so much unhappiness and problems with that person. Also in the office, many people don't like you. Their way of thinking is opposite to you and there is much unhappiness. You experience the result similar to the cause.

All of the abuses that happen are productions that came from your own mind. It all comes from the mind, from the past negative karma of sexual misconduct, the intention.

You create the result similar to the cause. From the karmic seed left on the mind, it comes again in another life. When you are

again born as a human being due to good karma, again you engage in that negative karma. Again you open the door to the complete negative karma that produces the four suffering results.

Telling Lies

From the negative karma of telling lies, sometime later when you are born as a human being, you experience the possessed result. You have an unpleasant view and appearance. An example of the possessed result of lying is: if you do business selling boats or transporting people, then you aren't able to find people to transport and so you can't make money. Another is when you are running a restaurant, no one comes; all the chairs are empty. There is no success. It is the same thing when running a center or a monastery; you set it up, but no monks come or no people come to listen to the Dharma.

Maybe you are trying to tell the truth, but other people believe the opposite. This is experiencing the result similar to the cause: you tell the truth but others think the opposite, or don't understand and take it the wrong way. They believe you have spoken in this way, which is mistaken. Then, you always get cheated by others. They do not tell the truth, but tell lies to you. All these things come from your own mind, from karma.

That past negative karma left a seed, an imprint, on the mind that produces karma, or action, creating the result similar to the cause, which is telling another lie. If it goes on like that, it produces endless suffering results.

Slander

With the negative karma of slandering, the possessed result is that when you are born a human being, the place where you live has many hills or mountains. Life is very difficult because you have to go up and down, up and down. The place is not well-planned,

not beautiful, and it is very difficult to get around. Also, the place where you live has many external dangers, many causes for fear.

In regards to experiencing results similar to the cause, there is no unity in the family and other people are not harmonious with you. They don't unite with you. Also, the people around you don't really like you. There is disharmony. They have bad thoughts towards you and are mean to you. Because in the past you slandered others, in this life instead of hearing wonderful things, you hear words from others that disturb your mind. Other people speak badly about you, or badly about another person and this creates disunity between you and that other person, that companion, that friend. That friend or companion or husband or wife separates from you, leaves you. Because in the past, through slander, you caused disunity and split people who were harmonious, the same thing happens to you. Also, your speech becomes a cause of fighting. Your words make other people angry and become a cause of quarrelling.

In terms of creating results similar to the cause, one again commits the negative karma of slandering others. It goes on and on. As long as we don't change our mind and actions by purifying the past negative karma and abstaining from committing that negative karma again; the suffering result goes on and on, without end.

Harsh Speech

Now, for harsh speech. Sometimes the way the person says it sounds kind of nice, but it hurts the other person. That complete negative karma has four suffering results. There is the ripened result of rebirth in the lower realms. Then, there is the possessed result that in the place you are born or where you live there are a lot of thorn bushes. It is a rocky place, very rough and very unpleasant. It isn't nice and very green, glorious or magnificent. It is the opposite—a very unpleasant place, an unhappy place.

In the sutra texts, there are quite a number of details. Many unpleasant things are mentioned. There are many fears for your life and many causes of fear. It is a place where a lot of negative karma is done, such as killing.

Experiencing the result similar to the cause related to harsh speech is that you hear unpleasant words from other people. In exactly the same way that you spoke unpleasant words to others in the past, now you hear the same unpleasant words. Your own speech becomes a cause of quarrelling.

Creating the result similar to the cause, you speak harshly again, and again, it has four suffering results. It goes on and on like that until one purifies the past negative karma and changes one's attitude and action.

Gossip

The next one is the complete negative karma of gossiping. The ripened aspect result is rebirth in one of the lower realms. The possessed result of the place where you live is that trees don't bear fruit at the right time, when you need it; or the fruit appears ripe to you, but is not. Also, trees and plants do not have stable roots, so they don't last a long time. The place where you live is very ugly, and there are many unpleasant things, like an ugly pond or forest. The place is filled with so many causes to fear for your life.

Experiencing the result similar to the cause is that when you are born as a human being, your speech has no power. Therefore, when you give a talk or when you request somebody for something important to be achieved, your words don't have power so the other person doesn't aspire to help you. Others do not pay attention to your words. Even if you tell the truth, people don't trust you and don't trust your words, or people don't keep them in mind or take them to heart. You ask for help and no one seems to listen. You are doing business and no clients are coming. It is similar in meditation centers. There are some meditation centers with so many people

coming to listen to the Dharma. Then some where people hardly come at all.

Creating results similar to the cause is doing it again, creating the negative karma of gossiping; having conversations or talking without any purpose or meaning, or to develop delusions.

Covetousness

The three negativities of the mind are covetousness, ill-will and heresy. With covetousness, doing this negative karma will have the ripening aspect of rebirth in lower realms. Experiencing the result similar to the cause is that when you are again reborn as a human, with any worldly perfection such as crops, oil, gold, etc. every year these things are decreasing, becoming less and less. Year by year, month by month, day by day they are decreasing instead of increasing. If where you are now there was gold or precious treasure in the past, but not now; this is the result of coveting.

Experiencing the result similar to the cause of covetousness is that your wishes don't succeed, what you are hoping for doesn't happen. There is so much desire and you are unable to satisfy it; you have dissatisfied mind. It is so strong that you are unable to be content.

Creating the result similar to the cause is that, again, you do the same thing. Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo mentions in *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand* that when you go shopping or go to the market, you return with so much completed negative karma of covetousness. First, there is attachment wanting to have an object and when one decides to get it, the action is completed.

Therefore, you need lamrim in daily life. There is no choice; one's mind has to abide in lamrim. When you go shopping, do it with renunciation of this life or renunciation of samsara—detachment to this life and detachment to samsara. That way you don't create the negative karma of covetousness. If you shop with a bodhichitta motivation and buy food, clothing or whatever with the aim to

benefit other sentient beings and not for your own happiness; then it does not become covetousness, a negative karma of mind. It is similar with right view. If you do your shopping with right view, then you don't create the negative karma of covetousness.

Ill-will

The next one is the negative karma of ill-will. For the complete negative karma, the ripened result aspect is rebirth in one of the lower realms. Later when you get reborn as a human being, you experience the possessed result that has to do with the place. There are many things that can harm your life such as contagious diseases, sickness, wars, fighting, being attacked by others, and so forth. There are also many thieves and robbers. The possessed result is that you live in a place where there is a lot of fear. There are many new diseases happening such as AIDS and other life threatening diseases that, once started, spread very quickly and are very harmful; people die so fast. If the place where you are has all these diseases, this is the result of the past negative karma of ill-will.

Also, you get bit by poisonous snakes, mosquitoes or scorpions. There are a lot of harmful insects in the place.—all kinds of insects are harming you; some people get bitten by many ants. When insects such as fleas or ants bite you, at that time you should remember that you are experiencing the possessed result of the past negative karma of ill-will. When you remember this, you don't get angry. There is no reason to blame those animals or insects, because it's your karma that caused them to bite you. Experiencing the result similar to the cause is that you receive harm from others. Also, you don't see that which is beneficial to you; you are always seeing that which is harmful to you.

Creating the result similar to the cause is that as a human being, again, you commit the negative karma of ill-will. If you don't change your mind and purify negative karma, it goes on and on like that.

Heresy

With heresy, the ripened aspect result of the complete negative karma is rebirth in a lower realm. The possessed result is that where you are born or where you live, where once that was the main place for production of oil, or gold, or something precious, this cannot be found there anymore. Also, places that are very dirty or unhygienic appear to you as clean and you believe they are clean. It is suffering, but it appears to you as pleasure; this kind of thing happens.

In the place where you are, there are no guides. You are guideless. There is nobody to help. It can be external, but it can also be related to Dharma, spiritually. It could be both. You have no guide, no refuge, and no one to help you. In places where there are so many problems, and nobody is helping, people have to constantly suffer; there is no refuge.

Experiencing the result similar to the cause is that when you are born as a human being, you have wrong views. You don't like spiritual friends; you like the evil friend's mind. You don't like Dharma friends who give you Dharma advice, who guide you; you hate them. Rather, you like the opposite—the evil friends who give you wrong advice, wrong concepts, and who oblige you to engage in evil deeds. Then, instead of liking virtue, you like nonvirtuous activities. You take interest in wrong philosophies. You lose your wisdom, degenerate your wisdom, and have an unclear, imprecise mind.

It is so easy to believe there is no reincarnation, no karma. It is so easy not to understand the Prasangika School's view of emptiness and dependent-arising. "While it is empty it is existing, a dependent-arising." You cannot put this together; you can't figure this out at all. Things like that you can't understand at all, no matter how much it is explained, and so you are against it. All this is karma, action, from heresy to Buddha's teachings, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Because of that, there are so many harmful

things in the place where you live, so many diseases, etc. There are many places like this in the world.

Creating the result similar to the cause is that when you are born as a human being, again, you engage in heresy. You do it again.

*Virtues and Their Results*²

Abstaining from Negative Karma

By living in vows, living in the morality of ***abstaining from killing***, there is rebirth in a higher realm, a long life, no digestion problems, no side effects from medicines, etc. You don't experience these things. Everything is helpful and not harmful. You don't receive harm, life danger, from others. You don't receive the many ways of receiving harm, so you have a long life. Also, having a clean house or being in a nice place that you can enjoy comes from the action of abstaining from killing. Then again, in a future life, you create the result similar to the cause and live in the vow of abstaining from killing; so you can enjoy hundreds of thousands of different kinds of happiness in future lives. On that basis, you learn the Dharma and actualize the path, remove delusions and achieve liberation and then enlightenment. It is unbelievable, the happiness that one can enjoy for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes.

Living in the morality of ***abstaining from stealing*** you get higher rebirth. Then, there is plenty of food, crops, water, everything. You are able to have the means of living, with no difficulties or hardships. You are able to find a job, have wealth, and are able to help others and make offerings to the Triple Gem—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—taking the essence from that which is essenceless by making it meaningful and creating the cause of enlightenment. Whatever your needs are; you get plenty. There are no worries. Then, you experience the result similar to the cause: you have wealth. You don't have to worry at all about needs and enjoyments. They just come, you receive them. All wealth is

the result of having done charity in the past or having lived in the morality of abstaining from stealing. The result similar to the cause is that again you live in the morality of abstaining from stealing and experience hundreds of happinesses in life after life.

It is the same with living in the morality of ***abstaining from sexual misconduct***: In future lives the person you live with will have the same wish; it will be very supportive in the family. You have a good relationship with a harmonious mind and heart and no fighting, etc. You have so much peace and happiness; in the relationship, in the family, in the office, with others. Having a good, peaceful, mind that is so happy is the result of past karma, the morality of abstaining from sexual misconduct. Also, in the office, the people you work with will be supportive and will want to help fulfill your wishes. The possessed result of living in the vow of abstaining from sexual misconduct is to always live in a clean, beautiful place. In this life, if we are able to enjoy such beautiful clean places, all those results are from past living in the morality of abstaining from sexual misconduct. It comes from the mind, from intention. Then, you experience the result similar to the cause and, again, live in the vow in future lives; so you enjoy unbelievable happiness from life to life.

By living in the morality of ***abstaining from telling lies***, there is great success. Whatever you say, people believe you and take as truth. People listen to you and obey you. Your speech has power. When you do business, there is always great success; many people come to buy things. Or when you do transportation, or open a monastery or a center, many people come and you are very successful. Then, you experience the result similar to the cause in that others don't cheat you, don't tell lies to you. They always tell the truth and don't tell lies, so you don't suffer from that. Then you create the result similar to the cause, and again, you live in the vow of abstaining from telling lies and so the happiness goes on and on, becoming immeasurable.

The past karma of the morality of ***abstaining from heresy*** results in comfortable places, healthy and happy places, where you are able to have faith in karma, reincarnation, the Prasangka School view, and so forth. Then also, you are not guideless; you have refuge.

Any good thing that we experience is from past actions done with a good heart, a virtuous motivation.

The Need for Mindfulness

This gives you an idea. I am just mentioning these few things to give you an idea of how everything—the sense objects; what we see and what we experience—all this came from karma. It came from your mind. It came from your karma, intention. It makes you think that the most important thing in life is to look after yourself, to protect your mind, to practice mindfulness. This becomes the most important thing.

The Ten Nonvirtues and Their Results

Each of the ten nonvirtuous actions has four components or factors. For the action to be complete, that is, to bring the full karmic result, all four components must be present. These four are:

1. The basis or object of the action
2. The intention: the state of mind of the person performing the action. This has three parts: recognition, motive, and delusion
3. The deed: actually performing the action
4. The completion of the action

If any of the four factors is missing, the action will not be complete but will still bring suffering in the future. The ten nonvirtues are divided into three: three nonvirtues of body, four of speech, and three of mind.

Three Nonvirtues of Body

1. Killing

- 1) BASIS: A living being other than yourself.
- 2) INTENTION:
 - ◇ *recognition*: You recognize unmistakably the person or being you intend to kill.
 - ◇ *motive*: You intend to kill.
 - ◇ *delusion*: You are motivated to kill out of anger, attachment, or ignorance. For example, out of anger,

killing an enemy or a being that annoys you; out of attachment, killing an animal for its meat or skin; out of ignorance, killing animals with the belief that they were placed on this earth to be used by humans for food, etc., or killing an animal as a sacrifice to a worldly god, believing this to be virtuous.

- 3) DEED: You carry out the killing by some means, e.g., a weapon, poison, black magic, etc., either directly by yourself or indirectly by ordering someone else to kill.
- 4) COMPLETION: The other person or being dies before you do. (Suicide is a negative action that will bring suffering in the future but is not a complete act because factors 1 and 4 are missing).

2. *Stealing (taking what is not given)*

- 1) BASIS: Something of value belonging to another.
- 2) INTENTION:
 - ◊ *recognition*: You recognize unmistakably the object to be stolen.
 - ◊ *motive*: You intend to steal.
 - ◊ *delusion*: One of the three poisons. For example, out of anger, stealing something from someone you wish to hurt; out of attachment, stealing something you wish to possess; out of ignorance, stealing or cheating, thinking that it's not wrong.
- 3) DEED: Whatever means you use to steal, e.g., taking the object secretly, not paying taxes or fees you owe, misusing donations, etc.; or getting someone to steal for you.
- 4) COMPLETION: You think that the object now belongs to you.

3. *Sexual Misconduct*

- 1) BASIS: For lay people, the basis is improper orifice, improper time, improper place, or improper partner; for ordained people, any kind of sexual activity is sexual misconduct.

(Some lamrim books say that the basis is the person with whom you engage in sexual misconduct).

2) INTENTION:

- ◊ *recognition*: You must be in no doubt that the act is sexual misconduct. (Other lamrim books: You must have unmistakable recognition of the object of your misconduct).
- ◊ *motive*: You intend to engage in an improper sexual act.
- ◊ *delusion*: One of the three poisons. For example, out of anger one might rape the wife of an enemy; out of attachment, engaging in sexual misconduct with someone other than one's spouse or with someone who's already married; out of ignorance, committing adultery thinking that it's cool, or engaging in sexual misconduct thinking that it leads to enlightenment.

3) DEED: The two organs come into contact.

4) COMPLETION: You experience pleasure.³

Four Nonvirtues of Speech

4. Lying

There are many objects of lying, but most are included in the following eight: denying something you have seen, heard, experienced with your other senses, or known; or falsely claiming to have seen, heard, experienced with your other senses, or known something which you have not.

1) BASIS: Another person who can understand you, and who can speak.

2) INTENTION:

- ◊ *recognition*: You must know that what you are saying is untrue.
- ◊ *motive*: You intend to lie and deceive someone.
- ◊ *delusion*: One of the three poisons. For example, out of anger, lying to hurt someone or destroy their reputation;

out of attachment, lying to get something you want; out of ignorance, not thinking there's anything wrong with lying.

- 3) DEED: Conveying the lie by some means, e.g., speaking, writing, making a gesture with your hand or eyes, facial expression, remaining silent, etc.
- 4) COMPLETION: The other person understands and believes your lie.

5. *Divisive Speech (Slander)*

- 1) BASIS: Two or more people, who have a good or bad relationship.
- 2) INTENTION:
 - ◇ *recognition*: You must have unmistakable recognition of the parties involved and their relationship/feelings for each other.
 - ◇ *motive*: You intend to cause division or disunity.
 - ◇ *delusion*: One of the three poisons. For example, out of anger, creating hostility and disharmony among people you dislike; out of attachment, trying to cause a rift between a couple in order to have a relationship with one of them; out of ignorance, causing disharmony, believing that it's healthy, or causing disunity among followers of a religion you disagree with, believing this to be positive.
- 3) DEED: You undertake either to cause disunity among friends, or to prevent reconciliation among enemies, by saying something which is either true or false.
- 4) COMPLETION: The other parties understand and believe what you say, and, as a consequence, become hostile towards each other.

6. *Insulting Words (Harsh speech)*

- 1) BASIS: Another person whose feelings could be hurt. (We can express insulting words to a nonhuman being or to an

inanimate object, but the action is complete only when there's a being who understands and is hurt by our words).

2) INTENTION:

- ◇ *recognition*: You must correctly identify the person you intend to insult.
- ◇ *motive*: You intend to speak insulting words.
- ◇ *delusion*: One of the three poisons. For example, out of anger, insulting someone you dislike; out of attachment, speaking in a harsh or rude way to be accepted by a gang, or insulting the husband out of desire for his wife; out of ignorance, using abusive or rude language thinking that it's cool to do so, or not realizing the hurtful effect of your words, or thinking there's nothing wrong with hurting others' feelings.

3) DEED: With a negative intention, you speak words pointing out faults, etc. in the other person, whether true or not, in a hurtful manner; or you get someone else to speak such words on your behalf.

4) COMPLETION: The other person understands and is hurt.

7. *Idle Gossip*

1) BASIS: Something meaningless or insignificant, which you treat as important. (It's not necessary that another being hears our words).

2) INTENTION:

- ◇ *recognition*: You believe that what you wish to say is important or meaningful, although it is not.
- ◇ *motive*: You intend to express such words.
- ◇ *delusion*: One of the three poisons. For example, out of anger, chattering idly in order to disturb someone you dislike who is trying to meditate or do something virtuous; out of attachment, indulging in gossip or frivolous talk about things you are attached to, or to spend time with

- someone you're attached to; out of ignorance, thinking there's nothing wrong with spending time idly gossiping.
- 3) DEED: Speaking without purpose, or getting someone else to do it for you.
 - 4) COMPLETION: Actually expressing the words.

Three Nonvirtues of Mind

8. Covetousness

- 1) BASIS: Another person's property, possessions (includes merchandise in a shop), qualities, children, etc.
- 2) INTENTION:
 - ◇ *recognition*: You identify correctly the object you covet.
 - ◇ *motive*: You wish to make the object your own.
 - ◇ *delusion*: One of the three poisons. For example, out of anger, wanting to buy something before someone you dislike has a chance to buy it, or wanting to deprive your enemy of his cherished possessions; out of attachment, wanting to possess many things, thinking that they will bring happiness; out of ignorance, wanting to buy many things thinking that it's good for oneself or for the economy, or as a habit or obsession.
- 3) DEED: The wish to possess the object becomes stronger.
- 4) COMPLETION: Deciding to find a way to make the object your own. (Note: The motive, deed, and final step are all part of one train of thought).

9. Harmful Intent (*Malice, ill-will*)

- 1) BASIS: Another being who would be hurt if you acted out your harmful thoughts.
- 2) INTENTION:
 - ◇ *recognition*: You correctly identify the being you wish to harm.
 - ◇ *motive*: You wish to give harm to this being.

- ◇ *delusion*: One of the three poisons. For example, out of anger, wishing to harm someone who has harmed you or who you dislike; out of attachment, wanting to kill your father to get your inheritance, or to harm someone to get his possessions; out of ignorance, wishing to harm others because of thinking that violence is good, or that you can do whatever you like.
- 3) DEED: Putting more effort into the wish to give harm, so that it grows stronger.
- 4) COMPLETION: You decide to act out your wish and do something harmful.

10. Wrong Views

- 1) BASIS: Something that exists or is true, e.g., the law of cause and effect, the four noble truths, etc.
- 2) INTENTION:
 - ◇ *recognition*: You believe that your denial of the object is correct (that is, you do not recognize that what you are denying is in fact true).
 - ◇ *motive*: You wish to deny something that exists.
 - ◇ *delusion*: One of the three poisons. For example, out of anger, because of hating someone who holds a correct view, you deny what he/she says and assert the opposite; out of attachment, asserting some wrong view in order to get something you desire, or to impress or gain favour from someone in a powerful position; out of ignorance, not understanding what is true and correct.
- 3) DEED: Thinking about carrying out the repudiation of the object by, for example, telling others what you think.
- 4) COMPLETION: Definitely deciding to deny the object.

The results of the ten nonvirtues are on the following pages.

Results of the Ten Nonvirtues

There are three different results of a complete karma (that is, an action that has been committed with all four components/factors present):

1. RIPENED RESULT: The future rebirth state you will experience as a result of having created a complete karma.
2. RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE:
 - ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: Once your karma to be born in the lower realms has been exhausted and you take rebirth in an upper realm, you will have experiences similar to your original actions.
 - ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: Once your karma to be born in the lower realms has been exhausted and you take rebirth in an upper realm, you will have the instinctive tendency to commit the original action again and again.
3. ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: When born in the human realm, you will experience results of your actions in the form of environmental conditions.

1. Killing

- 1) RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in one of the three lower realms.
- 2) RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE:
 - ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: Later, in a human rebirth, one will have a short life, ill-health, many troubles, no success in your activities.
 - ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: You will have the habitual desire to kill and harm others.
- 3) ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Taking birth in a place where there is much violence, war, many problems, etc., and where food, drink, and medicine have little power.

2. Stealing

- 1) RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in one of the three lower realms.

2) RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE:

- ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: Lack of wealth, possessions and resources; your things will be stolen or lost.
- ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: You will have an instinctive tendency to steal.

3) ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Taking birth in a barren place, where crops do not grow or are destroyed and there are shortages of food, and bitter frosts, hail, etc., and business ventures fail.

3. Sexual Misconduct

1) RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in a lower realm.

2) RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE:

- ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: You will be unable to keep relationships with, and will quickly separate from, your spouse, family, friends, students, employees, etc.
- ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: Having the tendency to be unfaithful.

3) ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Having to live in a muddy or dirty place.

4. Lying

1) RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in a lower realm.

2) RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE:

- ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: Others do not believe you, even when you tell the truth.
- ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: Having the tendency to lie and deceive others.

3) ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Having to live amongst people who cheat, and you can't find anyone you can trust.

5. Divisive Speech

1) RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in a lower realm.

2) RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE:

- ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: Being lonely, having few friends, followers or employees; having difficulty developing good relationships.
- ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: Having the tendency to cause disunity.

3) ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Having to live in a rugged, uneven, inhospitable environment where communication is difficult.

6. *Insulting Words*

1. RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in a lower realm

2. RESULTS CONGRUENT WITH THE CAUSE:

- ◇ *experiences congruent with the cause*: Others will abuse you, and even when you speak pleasantly, they will interpret it negatively.
- ◇ *actions congruent with the cause*: Having the tendency to be critical and hurtful.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Having to live in a place where there are many tree stumps, brambles, nettles, sharp rocks, and thorns.

7. *Idle Gossip*

1) RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in a lower realm.

2) RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE:

- ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: Others will not take your speech seriously or listen to what you have to say.
- ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: Having the tendency to talk continuously and fill any quiet moment with the sound of your voice.

3) ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Having to live in a place where crops do not grow properly, rain falls at the wrong time and activities are not successful.

8. Covetousness

- 1) RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in a lower realm.
- 2) RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE:
 - ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: You will be unable to achieve your aims and get what you want.
 - ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: Being continuously dissatisfied and grasping; your attachment increases.
- 3) ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Having to live in a place where the crops are poor and material resources are easily destroyed or lost.

9. Harmful Intent

- 1) RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in a lower realm.
- 2) RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE
 - ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: You will be a person who easily becomes frightened and panicky.
 - ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: Having the tendency to hurt others; your anger and hatred increase.
- 3) ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Having to live in a violent place where there is war and contagious diseases.

10. Wrong Views

- 1) RIPENED RESULT: Rebirth in a lower realm.
- 2) RESULTS SIMILAR TO THE CAUSE:
 - ◇ *experiences similar to the cause*: Being ignorant of correct views, and finding it difficult to develop realizations and correct understanding.
 - ◇ *actions similar to the cause*: Having the tendency to draw wrong conclusions again and again; your ignorance will increase.
- 3) ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS: Having to live in a place where there are shortages of water and other resources such as food, and there are no precious things such as treasures, works of art, scriptures, or spiritual guides.



A Simple Vajrasattva Practice

For Purifying Negative Karma

Introduction

Complete purification of our negative energy—which ensures that we will never need to experience the results of our negative actions—depends on strong, pure confession. The four steps in this largely internal practice are known as the four remedial powers. The two meditations here by Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche combine visualizations of Vajrasattva with the four powers.

The Power of Reliance

Visualize about four inches above the crown of your head an open white lotus bearing a moon disc, upon which is seated Vajrasattva. He is white, translucent and adorned with beautiful ornaments and clothes of celestial silk. Every aspect of this visualization is the nature of light. He has two hands, crossed at his heart: the right holds a vajra, symbolic of great bliss; the left holds a bell, symbolic of the wisdom of emptiness. The vajra and bell together signify his attainment of the enlightened state, the inseparable unity of the wisdom and form bodies. At this heart is a moon-disc with the seed syllable HUM at its center and the letters of the hundred-syllable mantra of Vajrasattva standing clockwise around its edge.

Holding this visualization clearly in your mind, recite the following prayer for the taking of refuge and generation of bodhichitta:

Refuge and Bodhichitta

I take refuge in the sublime precious three;
I will liberate all sentient beings
And lead them to enlightenment;
Thus perfectly do I generate bodhichitta. (3x)

The Power of Regret

Recollect with deep regret the specific negativities you have created. Then meditate deeply on the meaning of the following:

The negative karma I have accumulated throughout beginningless time is as extensive as the treasury of a great king. Although each negative action leads to countless eons of suffering, it seems that I am constantly striving to create nothing but negative actions. Even though I am trying to avoid nonvirtue and practice positive acts, day and night without respite negativities and moral downfalls come to me like rainfall. I lack the ability to purify these faults so that no trace of them remains; with these negative imprints still in my mind, I could suddenly die and find myself falling to an unfortunate rebirth. What can I do? Please Vajrasattva, with your great compassion, guide me from such misery!

The Power of the Opponent Force

Visualize light radiating in all directions, from the HUM at Vajrasattva's heart requesting the buddhas to bestow their blessings. They accept the request and send white rays of light and nectar, the essence of which is the knowledge of their body, speech, and mind. This light and nectar fall like a rain of milk and are absorbed into the HUM and mantra at Vajrasattva's heart. Filling his holy body completely, they enhance the magnificence of his appearance, and increase the brilliance of the mantra until it shines with the light of one hundred-thousand moons reflecting off snowy mountains.

Then, while reciting the hundred-syllable mantra, visualize that white rays of light and nectar stream down continuously from the HUM and mantra at Vajrasattva's heart. They penetrate the crown of your head, filling your body and mind with infinite bliss.

OM VAJRASATTVA SAMAYA MANUPALAYA / VAJRASATTVA
TVENOPATISHTHA / DRIDHO ME BHAVA / SUTOSHYO ME
BHAVA / SUPOSHYO ME BHAVA / ANURAKTO ME BHAVA /
SARVA SIDDHIM ME PRAYACCHA / SARVA KARMA SU
CHAME CHITTAM SHRIYAM KURU HUM / HA HA HA HA HO /
BHAGAVAN SARVA TATHAGATA / VAJRA MAME MUNCHA /
VAJRA BHAVA / MAHA SAMAYA SATTVA AH HUM PHAT

Continue reciting the mantra and visualize the flow of light and nectar, while also performing the following four visualizations in turn.

Purification of Body

Your delusions and negativities in general, and particularly those of the body, take the form of black ink, and sicknesses and afflictions caused by spirits take the form of scorpions, snakes, frogs, and crabs. Flushed out by the light and nectar, they all leave your body through the lower openings, like filthy water flowing from a drain-pipe. You are now completely emptied of these problems; they no longer exist anywhere.

Purification of Speech

Your delusions and the imprints of negativities of speech take the form of liquid tar. The light and nectar fill your body as water fills a dirty glass: the negativities, like the dirt in the glass, rise to the top and flow out through the upper openings of your body. You are completely emptied of these problems; they no longer exist anywhere.

Purification of the Mind

Your delusions and imprints of mental negativities appear as darkness at your heart. When struck by the forceful stream of light and nectar, the darkness instantly disappears. You are completely emptied of these problems; they no longer exist anywhere.

Simultaneous Purification

Finally, visualize these three purifications simultaneously; they sweep away the subtle obscurations that prevent you from seeing correctly all that exists. You are completely emptied of these problems; they no longer exist anywhere.

If you are short of time, or just lazy, and unable to do the preceding visualizations, there is a simplified, alternative visualization:

All the delusions and negativities that you have collected over beginningless lifetimes appear as darkness at your heart. As you recite the mantra, immeasurable, powerful rays of white light and nectar pour down from Vajrasattva's heart and penetrate the crown of your head. Instantly, the darkness at your heart is dispelled, just as the darkness in a room vanishes the moment a light is switched on.

The Power of Promise

Make the following promise to Vajrasattva, specifying the period for which you intend to keep it:

“I shall not create these negative actions from now until...”

Vajrasattva is extremely pleased and says: “Child of the essence, all your negativities, obscurations and degenerated vows have now been completely purified.”

Then Vajrasattva melts into light and dissolves into you. Your body, speech and mind become inseparably one with Vajrasattva's holy body, speech, and mind.

At the conclusion of the meditation, recite the following prayers:

Dedication Prayers

Through this virtuous action
May I quickly become Vajrasattva
And lead every living being, without exception,
To his enlightened state.

May the supreme jewel bodhichitta
That has not arisen, arise and grow;
And may that which has arisen not diminish
But increase more and more.

Colophons:

Think About Karma is from teachings by Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Light of the Path, September 2009 and found in *Living in the Path, Module 3: What Buddhists Believe*. Compiled and edited by Kendall Magnussen, November 2011.

Karmic the Creator is compiled and extracted from teachings by Lama Zopa Rinpoche at the Light of the Path retreat, September 2009 and 2010 in North Carolina, USA. The results of slander, harsh speech, gossip, ill-will, covetousness, and heresy were supplemented with teachings by Lama Zopa Rinpoche from the 33rd Kopan Course in 2000 available from the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive and used here with permission (www.lamayeshe.com). Compiled and edited by Kendall Magnussen, November 2011.

The Ten Nonvirtues and Their Results. This outline was compiled by Ven. Sangye Khadro from various lamrim books, including Pabongka Rinpoche, *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2006; Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, *An Anthology of Well-Spoken Advice*, Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 2002; Geshe Archarya Thubten Loden, *The Path to*

Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism, Victoria: Tushita Publications, 1993, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Thubten Chodron, *The Foundation of Buddhist Practice*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2018. Lightly edited for distribution to FPMT centers by Ven. Constance Miller, FPMT Education Services, July 2000. Edited by Ven. Sangye Khadro, May 2018.

A Simple Vajrasattva Practice was extracted with permission from Kathleen McDonald, *How to Meditate*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1984. Edited for inclusion in this practice booklet by Kendall Magnussen, FPMT Education Services, May 2003.

Artist Credits

All line drawings © Robert Beer. Used with permission.

Notes

1. The four results of karma relate to: (1) the ripened result of the rebirth you take. Then, when you are born human (2) the environmental or possessed result, (3) the result similar to the cause in terms of your experience, e.g. you are killed, and (4) the result similar to the cause in terms of your actions—you have the propensity to engage in that action again.
2. The results of abstaining from the remaining nonvirtues can be deduced from the results of their opposites. These can also be found in a number of lamrim texts as well as the *Abhidharmakosha*.
3. Pabongka Rinpoche in *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand* says the completion is experiencing the bliss of orgasm, however this seems to be an inaccurate translation of the Tibetan term *bde wa*, which means happiness or pleasure. His Holiness the Dalai Lama in *The Foundation of Buddhist Practice* says that “climax is not necessary” for the action to be complete.



Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition