

CHAPTER 18 – PATIENCE

The young Garchen Rinpoche’s father was his main teacher when he was very young. But one day his father arranged for him to receive teachings from Lama Chime Dorje on certain Dharma texts. So this lama taught him, sometimes alone, and sometimes along with other young monks.



Lama Chime Dorje was kind-hearted and caring. He calmed and comforted the mind of the little tulku. He often thought of this teacher as the father he longed for - even more like a father than his own real father.

Lama Chime Dorje had been a special student of the Seventh Garchen Rinpoche. And after the Seventh Garchen Rinpoche passed away, Lama Chime Dorje became the teacher of the little Eighth Garchen Rinpoche. The student became the teacher and the teacher became the student! And they were both tulkus.

Lama Chime Dorje later passed away, took another birth, and was again named Lama Chime Dorje. Today he is a student of the elderly Garchen Rinpoche! Here are some photos of the “new” Lama Chime Dorje.

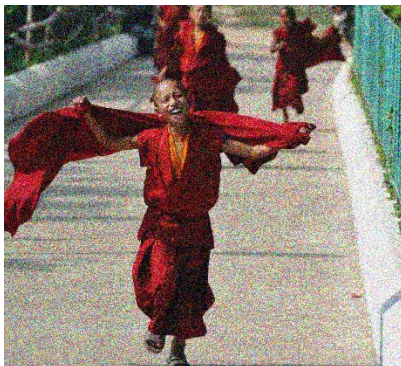


Garchen Rinpoche’s dear teacher, Lama Chime Dorje, was a great yogi and a humble, self-disciplined monk, full of compassion and wisdom.

He gave personal advice to the young Garchen Rinpoche. He repeatedly told him, “You have been recognized as the previous Garchen Rinpoche and you should never have doubts in your heart! With this title you carry great responsibilities, but you also need to put in great effort.”

He continued, “The greatest saint Milarepa was born as an emanation of the great yogi Tilopa. But look at how hard Milarepa had to work to get rid of his own delusions to become fully enlightened! The fact that he was an emanation of Tilopa was not enough. He had to show extreme diligence and perseverance, putting in the greatest effort of body and mind, to become

victorious, and to become the great master he was meant to become.”



But there was so much studying that the little Garchen Rinpoche was required to do. He had to sit on a cushion for hours and hours, in a dark, boring room. There was so much to learn, and for so many hours, every day!

Naturally, the little Garchen Rinpoche would rather play than learn. He would rather be outside, sitting in the warm, cheerful sunshine, or racing up and down the walkways and stone steps.

So the little tulku came up with all sorts of lame excuses in the hope of escaping – even if for a few moments – the boring, desolate circumstances in the monastery.



“Lama Chime Dorje!” the little tulku called out, “I need to go to the bathroom in a hurry, please!” He wasn’t the least bit shy about asking.

Sure enough, his lama glanced up from the text on his wooden table. Then slowly, he raised his hand up to emphasize his answer. He spoke in a deep, assuring tone of voice, stretching out the words to be very clear:

“Garchen Rinpoche! No, no! You already went a moment ago. I am *sure* you don’t need to go again.”

“But I do! I really do!” the young student protested. “I have a stomachache right now; I need to go.”

His lama replied, “Garchen Rinpoche, you already went not long ago. I am *very* sure you don’t need to go again so soon.”

Lama Chime Dorje repeated the exact same answer again and again, no matter how many times he asked, until the little one finally gave up. The lama seemed to love to spoil the little tulku’s plan. He was determined to help the little one understand that another trip outside was not an option. Anyway, it was not a good idea to let him go. The master knew that if he let the little Garchen Rinpoche leave the classroom, he likely would not be back inside for a long, long time.

The text book was open on the table in front of the young tulku, but he wasn’t reading it.

“Garchen Rinpoche,” the master addressed him, “please go back to the original root text right now.”

“Garchen Rinpoche,” the master continued, “you need to make better efforts in your study. I’d say you must show other young monks a fine example of your diligence.”

But unlike the little tulku's father, Lama Chime Dorje never lost his temper or patience. He never yelled, and never hit the little one. In all his conversations with the young tulku, he always began by saying "Garchen Rinpoche," as if he was deliberately trying to remind the little one – the reincarnated one – over and over again of the important role he was destined to play.

After a number of times of unsuccessfully trying to escape the classroom, the young Rinpoche finally gave up on his scheme to get away. He began to concentrate, again, on the texts. He had no choice but to try hard not to disappoint his dear teacher, and to be patient.

And it was Lama Chime Dorje who first taught the little one about loving-kindness and compassion. Unlike all the long texts that usually put him to sleep, all the things that Lama Chime Dorje explained to him about loving-kindness and compassion seemed to soothe his heart like soft feathers. It made him feel happy. He enjoyed learning the practice of *tonglen*, which is giving your happiness to others and taking their suffering.

QUESTIONS:

- 1 . What kind of person was Lama Chime Dorje? (kind, caring, humble, compassionate, self-disciplined)
2. What was little Garchen Rinpoche feeling when he wanted to go outside? (bored, impatient)
3. How would you describe the attitude of Lama Chime Dorje when Garchen Rinpoche kept insisting to go outside? (patient, calm)
4. What did Garchen Rinpoche enjoy learning from his lama? (loving-kindness, compassion, and *tonglen*)

DHARMA DISCUSSION – PATIENCE:

"When you lose your patience, you should recognize this and feel regret. Every time you should make the commitment that next time you are going to do better and that I will not lose patience again. Then you might not lose it the next time, but eventually you will lose it again. It is a training of habituation. You will not be able to miraculously stop being impatient without any training....If you persevere in practice, your practice will definitely improve, and in the end you will never lose your patience. It is just like learning anything, it may be difficult in the beginning, but if we keep doing it over and over again, it becomes easy. It is a slow process, and you have to persist even if you fail in the beginning. No matter how often you fall, you must get up and do it again...If you are able to be patient with all thoughts and emotions, you will not fall under their power again. If you lack patience, you will again and again fall under the power of these emotions." Garchen Rinpoche, Quote 89.

“The Buddha said, ‘Perfectly tame your own mind, this is the Buddha’s teaching.’ The Buddha did not say “Perfectly tame someone else’s mind.’ You have to purify your own mind.” Garchen Rinpoche, Quote 90.

Little Garchen Rinpoche lost patience because he didn’t like to stay inside studying. He felt bored and restless, and wanted to go outside. And Lama Chime Dorje was an example of having great patience, never getting upset.

There are many ways we can lose patience. Can you think of some examples?

We lose patience when, for example:

We are waiting for something we want,

We feel annoyed by someone,

We feel irritated by what is happening around us, or

We feel bored, uncomfortable, or frustrated.

Usually it is because we want to change something that we don’t like.

It’s natural to be annoyed when we are really uncomfortable,

But if we have too many likes and dislikes, then we get impatient a lot!

So what happens? We complain. Or whine. Or beg our parents. We make an unpleasant face.

This is quite normal, especially for young people. It happens sometimes.

But if it happens often, repeatedly, or every day, then you might need to work on developing patience!

Or if you often shout, or say or do something unkind, or show a bad temper, this also shows you need to work on patience!

How do you work on patience? Here are some techniques:

First, have a quick reminder that you can silently tell yourself, for example:

Don’t have so many likes and dislikes!

I’m okay, nothing so terrible is happening!

It will end, it will change - everything is impermanent!

The Buddha said to tame your own mind, not someone else’s mind.

I must control *my* mind, not control other people’s minds.

I can choose not to be upset. I can walk away.

If I can’t change it, I can change the way I think or feel about it.

I shouldn’t upset others around me with my impatience.

This is a patience test – let’s see if I pass or fail.

Second, practice mindfulness - right where you are.

Close your eyes and do some mindful breathing. Or be very mindful as you walk.

Third, remember: the more you practice patience, the more of a patient person you become.

Remaining peaceful in different circumstances becomes a habit.

You don’t say things that you later regret.

And it makes you feel happier – you don’t feel stressed, anxious or angry.

PRACTICE THIS WEEK:

Write down some of the reminders or techniques above that you think might help you be patient, or write some of your own.

Next, make a list of things that often make you feel impatient.

Notice when any of those things occur this week.

When they occurred, how did you react? Did you remember to use one of the techniques that you wrote down?

ACTIVITY – MONK AND MONKEY GAME:

One person is a “monk” who sits in meditation position, totally still, with eyes closed.

Another person is the “monkey” who tries to make the “monk” smile, laugh, open the eyes, or move, by saying silly or distracting things, or making silly noises. The rule is that the “monkey” cannot touch the “monk.” If the “monk” opens his or her eyes, smiles, or moves in any way, then the “monk” is out, and must become the “monkey” while the other person takes a turn as a “monk.”

In a group of students, half of the students can be the “monks” and the other half the “monkeys,” and the last person who remains still as the “monk” wins. Then the students exchange roles. The winning “monks” then compete against each other to be totally still while the others try to make them open the eyes, smile or move.