

## **Preliminary Practices are VERY Important**

Everybody raise boundless Bodhicitta to benefit countless suffering sentient beings. What we're beginning to talk about today is the teachings of Patrul Rinpoche on the instructions he applied to himself, named "Advice(Instruction) to Myself". Some people know Patrul Rinpoche, but it's not necessarily that everybody knows about Patrul Rinpoche. When we start learning Buddhism, it's not necessarily the case that everybody is going to hear about how great or what type of the teacher Patrul Rinpoche was. Within the Nyingma tradition, Patrul Rinpoche is a very, very famous, if not one of the most famous teachers. What we're teaching here now is the essence of Patrul Rinpoche's experiences during his practices during his life.

From Patrul Rinpoche's teachings on the Words of My Perfect Teacher, we can start to see what a great teacher he was and how much importance he placed on the preliminary practices, the outer and inner preliminary practices. If you are going to practice the outer and inner primary practices as taught by Patrul Rinpoche, it is really essential to learn about and practice these more and more. Patrul Rinpoche really placed a lot of importance on these outer and inner preliminaries. Patrul Rinpoche himself, from his own root teacher, Jigme Gyalwai Nyugu, listened to the preliminary practices 25 times. Within Tibet, he transmitted the Great Perfection very extensively benefiting countless suffering sentient beings. Considering such a great teacher, Patrul Rinpoche, listened to the outer and inner preliminaries from his teacher Jigme Gyalwai Nyugu more than 25 times, how many times have we listened to them? How well have we contemplated them? How many times have we practiced them?

With the foundation of these practices we start practicing the Great Perfection. These are very, very important as a foundation for our practices. Even HH Lama Achuk Rinpoche was talking about it today, and when we practice the Great Perfection then our practices should never leave the outer preliminary practices. Lama Rinpoche himself was teaching about the foundations of the preliminary practices and that we must place so much importance on these practices. And it's very important that we practice according to the step by step procedures according to the teachings and according to how our teachers give them to us. This is also very important within the process of learning and also in actually practicing the preliminary practices.

Patrul Rinpoche also wrote about when he was meeting people or receiving offerings from other people. He's saying that we don't need to receive these offerings. Why? Because if we have three horses, then we have the worry of having three horses. He said this himself. Why? Because he's already seen through the sufferings of samsara. It's not that he doesn't want to receive any offerings, but it's just that in his mind he doesn't have any conceptual thinking, he doesn't have any worldly thoughts. He's completely overcome, surpassed samsara. So you don't need all forms of offerings.

It's important that we learn more about the preliminary practices and that we practice them. Through our practices, when we meet up with certain problems, we can use these teachings to follow our teacher according to the teachings. And if you do practice these practices, I really believe that you yourself will witness improvement in your own practice and you will definitely have a wish for attaining liberation and enlightenment. These practices "the Instructions to Myself" are also very, very important. Lama Rinpoche today was also teaching everybody regarding "the Instructions to Myself". He said students must really pay

a lot of attention and importance on these practices. Some people in their practices don't have sufficient belief in their teacher. They don't have sufficiently vast compassion and in this case these people will not attain enlightenment.

When we practice, we must practice on the foundations of these preliminary practices, so that we develop this great loving kindness towards sentient beings and that we have belief in our teacher. What is the purpose of "Advice or Instructions to Myself"? Just like Patrul Rinpoche and Langri Tangpa (Note 1), we'll be able to have beneficial methods we can apply when we face sentient beings, when we are practicing Buddhism or when we meet our teachers, the Dharma or the Three Jewels. We will know how to and have practical methods to be able to transform our minds. Through these methods, we must establish a really good foundation, a good basis of practice.

Now we'll start teaching about the verses of these teachings of Patrul Rinpoche's - Instructions to Myself.

Note 1: composer of the Eight Verses to Transform the Mind