

Patrul Rinpoche followed his teacher, Jigmey Gyalwai Nyugu, and learnt and practiced the Dharma and through this he attained enlightenment. Then, as a result, he wrote these instructions, these Patrul Rinpoche's "Instructions to myself".

Each of these verses that Patrul Rinpoche has written, Rinpoche himself feels that there are no words to express their profound meaning. And why? Because these pith instructions are really incredible. We have all had the good fortune to have met His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche and experienced the power of his lineage and his teachings and also his great kindness. From this, we have this opportunity to learn these words of advice from Patrul Rinpoche, "Instructions to myself". These negative habits of ours, these afflictive emotions we've had since beginningless time are not easy to transform. Nonetheless, whatever happens, moment by moment, continue, persist in one's practice. This is very important.

Yesterday, we taught the second set of verses. Now we're going to start with the third set of verses. Each day, remember these verses. If we don't remember these verses, what use, what benefit will they be to us? With respect to all of these verses we receive from these great teachers, we must do our best to remember them. For instance, the verses from Langri Tamba, and now these verses from Patrul Rinpoche, "Instructions to myself".

The verses from yesterday were, "there are three things to hold in grateful remembrance: The masters who confer the precepts, the Dharma that shows the path, and the precepts and the vows". Never forget these verses, always remember them. Don't assume yesterday's teachings are now finished, and now we can forget everything and start today remembering nothing. This is the case. These verses should be like our breath. Just like we can't stop breathing the same applies with these verses. Never forget them! Remember them and practice them! Remember them when you by yourself, when you are with other people and even when you speaking about Buddhism.

Now for the third verses, which are:  
"There are three things to set in place.  
The mind in the body,  
The body in the seat, and  
Relaxation in the mind."

These are the three lines of the third verse of Patrul Rinpoche's "Instructions to myself". These instructions we really need to apply in our daily practice and in our daily life. Without these three lines in the third verse, we wouldn't be able to improve our practice.

The first sentence, "There are three things to set in place, the mind in the body". In terms of Buddhism, how do we practice this with tranquility, not in a scattered, dispersed way? What do we mean here in this first line, the mind in the body? It doesn't really matter whether we are feeling really comfortable and happy, or if we are really suffering and in pain or unhappy or even when we're facing death, we shouldn't let our mind follow or be swayed by our body. There really should be a difference between the way practitioners and non-practitioners handle their body, a difference in the way they sit, the way they sleep, for twenty four hours of the day .... people should be able to see the difference between how practitioners and non-practitioners handle and carry their body.

Why? Where is the difference? If our mind is controlled by the whims of our body, then we are no different to a yak that has a ring through its nose with a piece of string tied to that ring and somebody is pulling it along. It has no freedom. If we are like this, we just follow along according to our afflictive emotions, according to the whims of our body. In this case, if this is what we do, then we won't experience any great improvement in our practice.

Remind yourself all the time that this mind of ours and the mind of Buddha are inseparable, and that our body is just like an illusion. This body of ours is only a tool. It's not something to be excessively attached to. There are some people who are really very attached to their bodies. The thing is, one day we're going to have to leave this body behind. One day we're going to die, and when we do, we leave this body behind. There's no way that we'll always be able to maintain the same state of health, in time our body will deteriorate and eventually one day it will disappear. It's very important that we keep in mind how precious this human life is. This body of ours is slowly going to fade away, just like a flower. When this happens, it doesn't matter how much you are attached to this body, it is not going to help you at all. This body of ours is a tool for our practice. You don't have to be excessively attached to it. For instance, in mainland China, there are many people who have a very strong attachment to their physical body. However, they still can't control birth, old age, sickness or death. If we want to be able to control this body, or birth, old age, sickness and death, then we need to start transforming. Transforming all our afflictive emotions that we've had since beginningless time. Then, there's a possibility we will be able to start controlling birth, old age, sickness and death.

As long as we maintain mindfulness and awareness, then this body of ours will follow suit. If we don't control these afflictive emotions, then our body will simply continue engaging in all forms of negative actions, moment by moment. Really it is quite scary. We must have this wisdom, the right awareness, the right mindfulness. Then our mind will follow accordingly and then we can work in accordance with the Dharma. This is the sentence. There are three things to set in place, the mind and the body”.

Then the next sentence, “ the body in the seat”. This is saying we must be aware of how we go to sleep, for instance. We shouldn't just go to sleep lying however we want to and in whatever position we want. It is preferable that when we go to sleep, we sleep in the lion posture. When we're standing, when we're sitting, even when we're going to sleep, we should always be in a state of practice. Always be maintaining our awareness.

Without awareness, our practice is not going to improve. Everybody knows that when we go to sleep, sleep in the lion posture, and this will be a great benefit. Maintain this posture while sleeping. If we can maintain the lion posture when you're sleeping, and the Vajra posture when you're sitting, then our mind will be less likely to become all scattered and dispersed. Like His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche, due to His enlightened practice, there is no difference between life or death. This attainment, He attained through following the step by step practices. Once Rinpoche, Asung Rinpoche and Choejia Rinpoche went to take His His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche to a hospital in Ganze. He had been so meticulous in His practice of always sitting in the Vajra posture that when they tried to take X-rays of him, the doctor wasn't able to because he refused to lie down. He wanted to remain in the Vajra posture. His Holiness Lama Achuk Rinpoche asked, “Can't I take these X-rays when I'm sitting in the Vajra posture?” The doctor replied, that it is not possible. The X-rays can't be performed like this”.

Whatever you're doing, wherever you are, don't fall into a careless or relaxed, lazy state of mind. Always maintain awareness. If you're not able to maintain these postures now, then when we go to the bardos (the state in between), then what opportunity, what chance are we going to have to be able to do this? If we can't sleep in the lion posture for just one night, then how are we going to be able to attain enlightenment? How is it going to help us in the bardos?

Start now! Gradually start changing, become used to it, adapt to it, and persist in doing this, and then eventually we will be able to master it. Wherever we are, whether we are eating, whether we are by ourselves, whether we are with a group of people, whether we are sitting in the car, whether buying something or just in normal daily activities, as practitioners, we should be different to non-practitioners. If we are no different to non-practitioners, then what's the use

of wearing these monastic robes, carrying a mala, or being at the monastery? What is the use of all of these practices? Our actions as practitioners should be completely different in terms of forbearance, compassion and wisdom. Because the minds, the habits, and the three poisons, (attachment, aversion, and ignorance) of the non-practitioners are very, very strong. As practitioners, our afflictive emotions should have been reduced significantly. Every one of us should pay attention to this. If we don't pay attention to this, then it's likely we will start engaging in negative activities.

If we do our best to maintain the lion posture and the Vajra posture, then when the time comes for us to face death, this be of great blessing to us. There is a lot of energy and power behind this blessing. This will help us, assist us, that we don't fall into the three lower realms. To master this, we must persist in practicing it. In this way, sleeping also becomes a part of practice.

Eating also becomes practice for somebody who has wisdom. Don't be like those people who are intoxicated and they just collapse and they fall asleep anywhere. After our meditation, don't just collapse anywhere, allowing our body, speech, and mind, our three doors, to engage in negative activities.

This is not according to the Dharma. If we act like this, we are simply not going to reduce or remove our negative karma. Meditation helps us to transform, to tame our minds. But afterwards, our mind becomes all lazy and relaxed, uncontrolled, scattered, dispersed, and then it starts generating all sorts of negative karma. Observe your mind every single moment. If you haven't been practicing in this moment, then from today, start practicing in this way.

If we delay, then later on, we're not going to be able to master this practice. Start now. Start today. As soon as we know this content, as soon as we have received these instructions and we understand them, start practicing right away. If we don't start now, when are we going to start? At what age? Are we going to start at all? We have all sorts of karma that we need to transform. Start from today and continue, persist with the practice.