

General Introduction to Sangharakshita's Seminars

Hidden Treasure

From the mid-seventies through to the mid-eighties, Urgyen Sangharakshita led many seminars on a wide range of texts for invited groups of [Order members](#) and [Mitrās](#). These seminars were highly formative for the FWBO/Triratna as Sangharakshita opened up for the still very young community what it might mean to live a life in the Dharma.

The seminars were all recorded and later transcribed. Some of these transcriptions have been carefully checked and edited and are [now available in book form](#). However, a great deal of material has so far remained unchecked and unedited and we want to make it available to people who wish to deepen their understanding of Sangharakshita's presentation of the Dharma.

How should one approach reading a seminar transcription from so long ago? Maybe the first thing to do is to vividly imagine the context. What year is it? Who is present? We then step into a world in which Sangharakshita is directly communicating the Dharma. Sometimes he is explaining a text, at other times he is responding to questions and we can see how the emergence of Dharma teachings in this context was a collaborative process, the teaching being drawn out by the questions people asked. Sometimes those questions were less to do with the text and arose more from the contemporary situation of the emerging new Buddhist movement.

Reading through the transcripts can be a bit like working as a miner, sifting through silt and rubble to find the real jewels. Sometimes the discussion is just a bit dull. Sometimes we see Sangharakshita trying to engage with the confusion of ideas many of us brought to Buddhism, confusion which can be reflected in the texts themselves. With brilliant flashes of clarity and understanding, we see him giving teachings in response that have since become an integral part of the Triratna Dharma landscape.

Not all Sangharakshita's ways of seeing things are palatable to modern tastes and outlook. At times some of the views captured in these transcripts express attitudes and ideas [Triratna has acknowledged as unhelpful](#) and which form no part of our teaching today. In encountering all of the ideas contained in over seventeen million words of Dharma investigation and exchange, we are each challenged to test what is said in the fire of our own practice and experience; and to talk over 'knotty points' with friends and teachers to better clarify our own understanding and, where we wish to, to decide to disagree.

We hope that over the next years more seminars will be checked and edited for a wider readership. In the meantime we hope that what you find here will inspire, stimulate, encourage - and challenge you in your practice of the Dharma and in understanding more deeply the approach of Urgyen Sangharakshita.

Sangharakshita's Literary Executors and the Adhithana Dharma Team

DISCLAIMER

This transcript has not been checked by Sangharakshita, and may contain mistakes and mishearings. Checked and reprinted copies of all seminars will be available as part of the [Complete Works Project](#).

THE JEWEL ORNAMENT OF LIBERATION

Chapter Seven: Benevolence and Compassion.

Contents

1- 4	Definition of terms: Maitri and Karuna
4- 9	"as a remedy against attachment to self-complacency"
9-12	"working for the benefit of others"
12	Mahayana references to the Hinayana
13-	Self-interest eg: Children
14	Martyrs and monasticism.
16-17	Awareness
17-22	Selfish enjoyment and interest in others
22-28	Boundless nature of Metta
28-48	"the classification is threefold"
29-	i) metta to sentient beings, plants and animals, Awareness of Nature
39-40	Ecological parties
- 44	Good will, Repugnance; Dean Swift and Yahoos
44-45	ii) metta and the whole of reality
45-48	iii) metta and all entities of reality have no origin
49-51	Sacrifice, adjustment with others
52-55	Positivity and gratification
56-	The Causal Characteristic
57-	The Method of Practice
58-66	The root of Benevolence lies in the memory of benefits received
60-	Gratitude and expectations
64-	Feeling obligated
66-	The gift of life:the greatest benefactor,Mother.
75-88	Having babies in the West.
93-97	Tibetan women's independence
97-102	A mother's love for her baby
102	The gift of culture
104	Archetypal mother
105	A mother's tirelessness
107-112	The development of metta from gratitude
110	Old Age
113-117	Sentient beings and the expansiveness of metta
117	" A bodhisattva is towards beings as to a child"
119-128	The initial meeting point and ground of communication
128-136	Priti, and exhibition of emotion
137-142	Conflict of interests and giving the Dharma
143-	Bringing out a child's potential
146-148	the importance of publicity
149-	The relative value of Benevolence and Compassion
151-	The Blessings of practicing Benevolence
153-158	Energy and tiredness
158-	Immunity to danger

161-	lack of conflict
165-169	The art of doing one thing at a time
171-173	Aesthetic sensibility and ethical insensibility
174-176	Metta and subjective preference
177	Metta and Karuna
179-	Compassion arising on seeing the misery of beings in evil lives
181	Indian families
184	The four Noble Truths and conditionality
-190	and clinging to permanence, ossifying experience and interests
-192	National changes and co-ops
192-	Compassion for those who do not see Sunyata
-200	Demonical Possession, repression, and religious groupieism.
200	Contemplating suffering Newsreports
203	Seeing beings as one's mother
204	Precariousness of life
-206	The negative Spiral
208-	Getting out of contact, the benefits of contact with the Sangha
209-214	Making comparisons, equality
216	Maha maitri, prajna and the absence of historical consciousness in the development of Buddhist thought
219	Omniscience