

## ***The Development of Bodhicitta***

(From Geshe Tashi Tsering, *The Way of the Bodhisattva, Chapter One*, CD-ROM Langri Tangpa Centre, 2002.)

### **Q1. What is Bodhicitta? (The mind of enlightenment)**

A1. It is the spontaneous and non-simulated aspiration to attain great enlightenment for the sake of all beings.

### **Q2. What does that mean?**

A2. In the Buddhist tradition, Great enlightenment or Buddhahood is identified as a state of accomplishment reached after having brought our familiarity with certain qualities to their utmost expression. Enlightenment is reached only after a process of habituation with certain ideas. It's not just a mere habituation but a very full, complete habituation. The qualities we must habituate oneself with to accomplish a 'greater enlightenment' are wisdom, compassion (concern or love for others), and capacity (that comes about by possessing ultimate wisdom and ultimate compassion). Great enlightenment or Buddhahood is a state possessing ultimate wisdom, ultimate compassion and ultimate capacity. It is important to understand this. Great Enlightenment has these three characteristics.

So, Bodhicitta is a mind that not only seeks to attain the state of enlightenment; it also seeks to attain that state to benefit others. To bring about the state where we possess ultimate wisdom, compassion and capacity, it is important to train in certain topics. Having developed wisdom and compassion and capacity to their utmost extent, our own well-being is fulfilled and we have the ability to accomplish the well being of others. Such a state is something that we all need and could all use

Bodhicitta is an essential pre-requisite to great enlightenment. An authentic mind of bodhicitta being spontaneous and non-simulated means that the generation of this mind is now effortless. It is effortless because of earlier training in either the *Seven-fold Quintessential Instruction on Cause and Effect* or the *Equalizing and Exchanging Oneself with Others* methods. So, bodhicitta is an authentic natural wish to have the qualities of ultimate wisdom, ultimate compassion and ultimate ability to help others without exception, be they friend, foe or stranger.

Bodhicitta is a mind. In fact bodhicitta in English means 'the mind of enlightenment'. In Buddhism we do distinguish between *mind* and *mental factors*. Bodhicitta falls into the first category of *mind*. Things such as loving kindness and compassion are factors that assist bodhicitta and fall into the category of *mental factors*.

Mind is continuously present whereas mental factors are adventitious or temporary. They come and they go. Our first priority is to encourage or cultivate the positive mental factors and to eliminate or dispel the negative mental factors.

In Buddhist terms we often speak about mental factors accompanying the mind, or mental factors associated with the mind. This association is what gives the mind its direction and its focus, its flavour so to speak. Bodhicitta is a mind that is assisted or directed by two aspirations, two mental factors. The first aspiration is to attain Buddhahood. The second aspiration is to alleviate the suffering of sentient beings. Bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment is directed at its object, suffering sentient beings. That mind has the same focus as the two aspirations that accompany it.

To illustrate the way these two aspirations define the altruistic mind of enlightenment (bodhicitta), we can look at how anger or an altruistic intention can focus the mind. While the delusion of anger arises (anger being a mental factor), the mind focuses upon its object. The mind begins to work for whatever harmful result anger has set for it. If instead we generated a mental factor like compassion, a thought like “what can I do to benefit this person?” positively influences the mind. The mind is directed towards the object that we seek to benefit and the mind works towards accomplishing our intention.

It should be pointed out that any instance of bodhicitta is necessarily an instance of mind. Although certain mental factors assist bodhicitta, those mental factors, the 2 aspirations for instance, are not bodhicitta itself. Rather, they are assistants to it. Bodhicitta is a mind, ok?

At the moment we have a mind that is not the mind of enlightenment. It has not yet been transformed into bodhicitta. We’re seeking to transform the mind, to make this mental entity we possess the mind of bodhicitta. The way to do this can be illustrated with an analogy. Mr. Bean is not a real person, is he? Someone said that Mr. Bean is actually an English man called Rowan Atkinson who pretends he is Mr. Bean. The Englishman adopted the attitudes, mannerisms and habits of an imaginary Mr. Bean and became a copy of Mr. Bean. A lot of people call him Mr. Bean. In the same way we have to try and make our mind, which is not now bodhicitta, a copy of bodhicitta and later, actual authentic bodhicitta.

This long path of training begins with the development of equanimity. We then train to recognize that all sentient beings have been our mother, and recollecting the kindness they extended to us over immeasurable lifetimes, wish to repay their kindness. All sentient beings are now worthy of our affection and endearment which leads to a sense of loving-kindness. Seeking to benefit them leads to compassion and finally an extraordinary attitude is generated; the highest intention to assume responsibility for the alleviation of everyone’s suffering and to establish them all in happiness. In order to act upon this extraordinary attitude, we have to possess certain qualities, certain capabilities. We need ultimate wisdom, ultimate compassion, and ultimate ability to bring to fruition that highest intention. In other words, we need to attain Buddhahood. The first aspiration of bodhicitta is the aspiration to *attain* enlightenment, to attain a state where we possess ultimate wisdom, compassion and capacity. We know there is no way to fully act upon our high intention unless we possess those qualities. The main thing that induces the aspiration to attain Buddhahood is the highest intention, and assisting in that process is loving-kindness and compassion.

This path also induces the second aspiration beginning with equanimity and the recognition that sentient beings have been one’s mother and so on. The desire to eliminate the suffering that sentient beings experience comes about through developing loving kindness, compassion and the highest intention. Thus we can see that the highest intention and the steps that precede it induce the two aspirations, which direct or make up the mind of enlightenment, bodhicitta.

The Mahayana knows Bodhicitta as the entrance gate. When bodhicitta is authentically generated in our mental continuum we enter the Mahayana Path. The definition of bodhicitta as quoted by the master Maitreya in his text *The Ornament of Clear Realisation* is that ‘the awakening mind is the desire to attain enlightenment for the benefit of others’. It includes both the aspirations just mentioned. ‘For the benefit of others’ is the aspiration to alleviate the suffering of others, and the ‘desire to attain complete enlightenment’ is the aspiration to attain Buddhahood.

## ***Different Methods to Develop Bodhicitta***

(From HH the Dalai Lama, trans. Thubten Jinpa, *Path to Bliss*, Snow Lion, 1991)

There are two primary methods. The 1st is called the Seven-fold Quintessential Instruction on Cause and Effect from Chandrakirti and the 2nd Equalizing and Exchanging Oneself with Others from Shantideva. These two lineages of instruction were later combined as an effective practice as 11 Points of Training by Lama Tsong Khapa.

<i>Seven-fold Quintessential Instructions on Cause and Effect</i>	<i>Equalizing and Exchanging Oneself with Others</i>
Preliminary Equanimity meditation of the friend, enemy and stranger.	1. Equalising oneself with others (9 points)
1. Recognizing sentient beings as having been ones mother.	2. Reflecting on the disadvantages of the self-cherishing attitude
2. Recollection of all beings' kindness.	3. Reflecting on the thought cherishing the welfare of others.
3. Repaying Kindness	4. Exchanging self concern and holding others welfare as precious
4. Loving Kindness	5. Taking and Giving (Tong-Len practice)
5. Great Compassion	
6. The Extraordinary attitude	
7. Bodhicitta	

<i>11 Points of Training</i>
Preliminary Equanimity meditation
1. Recognizing sentient beings as having been ones mother.
2. Recollection of their kindness and then holding the uncommon recollection of all beings' kindness.
3. Having the thought to repay their kindness.
4. Developing Loving Kindness.
5. Equalising one-self and others.
6. Reflecting on the disadvantages of the self-cherishing attitude.
7. Reflecting on the thought cherishing the welfare of others.
8. Exchanging self concern to hold others welfare as precious.
9. Taking and Giving (Tong-Len practice)
10. The extraordinary attitude.
11. Achieving Bodhicitta.

## ***Equanimity - Developing an Equal Concern for Everyone***

Equanimity is an attitude that involves having equal respect and concern for every being regardless of where they stand in relation to us. In our prayers we wish all beings to develop the state of equanimity. Practically speaking, however, we must start by developing it ourselves. This involves gradually overcoming the three attitudes that run counter to it: possessive-attachment, uncaring indifference, and malice.

1. One of the best ways to overcome possessive-attachment to loved ones is to meditate on impermanence. Everything changes, nothing lasts. One day death will separate us from the people we love. Separation could occur even before that if one of us is posted overseas or if we quarrel and come to hate each other. The more attached we are the more pain and stress we will suffer at this separation. Therefore it is wise to give up attachment. But that doesn't mean giving up love! We can love people without being attached to them by living with the awareness of our inevitable separation. We can appreciate and care for them now and at the same time be ready to say goodbye to them when the time comes.
2. To overcome uncaring indifference towards strangers, those who are neither friends nor enemies, we can reflect that "Without others, I would have no food, clothes, shelter or public services. Without others, I could not develop ethics, generosity, patience and the other positive qualities necessary for spiritual growth. Without others, my life would be empty and meaningless." It is also good to think that a stranger may not always be a stranger. When a person we don't know comes to our aid or rescues us from danger, he or she becomes a lifelong friend.
3. To overcome anger and malice towards enemies (an enemy is somebody who hurts us or our friends and is generally someone we don't like), we can reflect on the possible causes and conditions of the harm they give us. "Have I done anything to provoke them? Could it be some flaw in my personality they don't like? Perhaps I harmed him in a previous life and he's simply repaying that harm? Maybe his mind is under the control of delusions and he can't help but act this way. That happens to me too, so I should understand what it's like. He must be suffering a lot and he'll suffer more in the future from the negative karma he's creating." By thinking like this we can generate compassion and patient acceptance towards enemies.

Another way to develop equanimity is to remind ourselves that our present relationships will not last forever. From one life to the next, a friend can become an enemy, an enemy can become a friend, and a stranger can go either way. Even in this present life our relationships can turn 180 degrees! This happens because our minds are possessed by self-centered attachment, anger and indifference rather than equanimity. Realizing this encourages us to generate the strong wish for ourselves and all beings to abide in equanimity.

## ***Friend, Enemy and Stranger Meditation #1***

(Adapted from HH the Dalai Lama, trans. Thubten Jinpa, *Path to Bliss*, Snow Lion, 1991, and Geshe Lhundup Sopa & Jeffrey Hopkins, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*, Rider, 1976)

1. Imagine there are in front of you 3 people: at the left a good friend, in the middle a stranger, to the right an enemy, someone you do not like.
2. Concentrate on the friend in front and examine your feelings towards him or her.
3. Now concentrate on the stranger and examine your feelings towards him or her.
4. Now look at the enemy and examine your feelings towards him or her.
5. Return to the stranger and think about how they could easily become your friend or enemy in the future.
6. Next, look at the friend and think they may become your enemy in the future when cheating or hurting you, or else become a stranger if you grew apart.
7. Now, look at the enemy and realize that this person may become your friend in the future when helping you.
8. Again look at your friend and try to strongly feel love and appreciation.
9. Now look at the stranger and try to hold this feeling towards this person.
10. Again look at your friend and try to strongly feel love and appreciation.
11. Now try to hold this feeling while looking at the enemy; is it really impossible to feel some love and compassion for this person?
12. Think that all three, friend, stranger and enemy are interchangeable and though all three are equal in completely lacking genuine happiness they are all equal in trying to be happy.

After contemplating those points generate these 3 resolutions and meditate on them single-pointedly as long as possible.

- 1. I will free my mind from uneven attitudes.**
- 2. I will feel not give in to feelings of attachment, aversion or indifference towards any living being**
- 3. I will develop and maintain a warm and friendly attitude towards all living beings equally.**

Try to maintain these 3 resolutions day and night, keeping in your heart a warm feeling towards everyone you meet or think about. If you do this there will be no basis for the problems of attachment or anger to arise, and the mind will remain at peace all the time.

## ***Friend, Enemy and Stranger Meditation #2***

(Adapted from Geshe Lhundup Sopa & Jeffrey Hopkins, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*, Rider, 1976)

Imagine that your spiritual mentors and all the enlightened beings of the 3 times and 10 directions surround you. Then say “if I do not develop an equal attitude toward every living being, it’s impossible to generate the mind of enlightenment.”

*(Say a few verses of the wishing equanimity prayer) and then take refuge and ask for help to benefit yourself and others. Say the Mahayana verses to develop immeasurable equanimity.*

In the same way that True Paths and True Cessations are the actual refuge, a house can provide shelter and protection from the outside world. But if the foundations of the house are not level, its uneven foundations could cause the house to collapse in a storm or flood. Attempting to build the mind of enlightenment, on the uneven ground of bias and judgmental discrimination, will ensure the collapse of your practice, so begin familiarising oneself with equanimity, by first, clearly imagining a **stranger** in front of you, some-one who has neither helped nor harmed you, and towards whom you feel indifferent.”

*And then looking at them, feel their presence and think about them saying:*

“Living beings we do not know, strangers, provide us with food and music, clothes, shelter, transport, education and entertainments. Without them, we could not develop ethics, generosity, patience or kindness, the positive qualities necessary for spiritual growth. Without others, this life would be empty and meaningless.

All of them want happiness and no one wants suffering; thus, we must help more than the few we personally feel close to and we must not harm others we think are different or dangerous. We must create an even-mindedness that is equally concerned with the welfare of each. Regarding all sentient beings to equally have a natural wish seeking happiness and a wish to overcome suffering, I must create an evenly balanced mind that is free of desire and hatred, aversion and indifference”.

*Hold the wish to develop this equality single-pointedly. Then clearly imagine in front of you a **friend** who is pleasant to remember and towards whom you have very good feelings. Now think about them by saying to yourself:*

“Being unfair and uneven-minded is due to the power of fluctuating desire. We have been born in beginningless cyclic existence through desiring the pleasant, but some day soon, death will separate us from everything we love. Because death strikes all who are born, we should love everyone equally by living with the awareness of our inevitable separation. We should care and appreciate them now, and at the same time prepare to say goodbye before death separates us, one from the other. By recalling death and impermanence, we can see there is no ground for discriminating between anyone when working for their benefit.”

*Hold this sense of equality single-pointedly. Now clearly imagine in front of you someone you don’t like, a person who is unattractive to remember, and towards whom you have unpleasant feelings. Then think about them by saying to yourself:*

“Having the mind agitated like this is due to the power of anger which single-pointedly apprehends the person as disagreeable, but **true enemies** in the real sense of the word do not exist. There are *no true* enemies, and in fact it is the delusions themselves, within the enemies, that are the source of conflict. The mind is under the control of delusions and the person can’t

help but act that way. That happens to all of us. I should understand what it's like. They must be suffering a lot, just like I do, and they will suffer more in the future from the negative karma they are creating. It's also possible that I might have done something to provoke them. Could it be some flaw in my personality that they don't like? Perhaps I harmed them in a previous life and they are simply repaying that harm? Having no justification at all to hold grudges against those who cause me harm and to neglect their welfare, its best through understanding to forgive and care for them now."

*Hold this responsible sense of equality single-pointedly. If you cannot become even-minded with an enemy, stop your feelings of anger by clearly imagining in front of you, slightly towards the left a very pleasant person. Then imagine someone else on the right who is disturbing and unpleasant. Then think by saying to yourself:*

"These 2 are the same because from their point of view they want happiness and do not want suffering. From my point of view this one on the left who is now apprehended as likeable and friendly has been my chief enemy countless times throughout beginningless cyclic existences. This one on the right who is now apprehended as an unpleasant enemy, has been as kind to me as my best friend, limitless times throughout beginningless cyclic existences. Thus who should be desired? Who should be hated? Towards them and all others I will instead create an even-mindedness which is free of desire and hatred, intimacy and aversion.

*Hold this sense of equanimity single-pointedly. When you become even-minded toward an attractive and unattractive person together, cultivate equanimity towards all sentient beings by thinking:*

"Just as I have the right to fulfill the basic aspiration to be happy and overcome suffering, so too do others; just as I have the potential to fulfill this aspiration, so too do they. We are the same and every sentient being is my friend. Therefore, I will create an even-minded, equality of mind which is free of indifference, desire or hatred, which apprehends every living being as a friend."

"Please, all you spiritual mentors, Buddha's and Bodhisattvas, Protectors and Deities and all enlightened beings of the three times and ten directions that surround me, help me to develop the mind of equanimity, the foundation practice from which to generate the mind of enlightenment."

## ***An Equanimity Prayer Practice for Human Beings***

(From Mary Jo Meadow, *Gentling the Heart*, Crossroad, 1994)

1. May all human beings without exception abide in equanimity, without the attachment that holds some close and the hatred that keeps others distant.
2. May every individual without exception abide in equanimity, without the attachment that holds some close or the hatred keeping others distant.
3. May all male and female people without exception abide in equanimity without attachment holding some close or hatred keeping others distant.
4. May all the people both strong and weak abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close or hatred to keep others distant.
5. May all the tall and short people abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close or hatred to keep others distant.
6. May all the people both small and large abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close and hatred which keeps others distant.
7. May all the people I have met and those I do not know abide in equanimity without the attachment to hold some close or hatred to keep others distant.
8. May all the people dwelling both far and near abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close and hatred keeping others distant.
9. May all the people of every age abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close and hatred to keep others distant.
10. May all the people waiting to be born abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close and hatred to keep others distant.
11. May all the people already born and those not yet born abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close, or hatred to keep others distant.
12. May all the babies and all young children abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close, or hatred to keep others distant.
13. May all the teenage children and young adults abide in equanimity without attachment holding some close and hatred keeping others distant.
14. May all middle-aged and all mature-aged adults abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close and hatred to keep others distant.
15. May all the elderly and very old adults abide in equanimity without attachment holding some close and hatred keeping others distant.
16. May all the dying and those between birth and death abide in equanimity without attachment to hold some close and hatred to keep others distant.



### **3 Reasons to Develop Equanimity (based on the conventional truth from the viewpoint of others)**

(These 3 reasonings, and the other following, are adapted from:

HH the Dalai Lama, trans. Thubten Jinpa, *Path to Bliss*, Snow Lion, 1991

Geshe Lhundup Sopa & Jeffrey Hopkins, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*, Rider, 1976

Geshe Acharya Thubten Lodan, *Meditations on the Path to Enlightenment*, Tushita, 1996)

1. We do not want to experience the slightest problem even in a dream and we're not satisfied even when we enjoy the greatest happiness. Likewise, even tiny sentient beings such as ants want only to experience happiness and do not want even the smallest suffering. Since we are all equal in wanting happiness and not wanting suffering it is not right to be attached to our friends and to want to help them, and to hate our enemies and want to harm them. We should wish to benefit all sentient beings equally.
  - a. **Develop this thought that “all sentient beings are equal insofar as the natural wish to avoid suffering is concerned and that therefore there is no point in being partial or discriminatory.”**
2. When we give food to a group of beggars, it would not be right to give food to some and not to others since all are equal in their hunger and need for food. Similarly ourselves and all other ordinary sentient beings completely lack uncontaminated happiness and do not even experience perfect contaminated happiness. Since we are all equal in lacking happiness, although constantly wishing to obtain it, it would not be right to have the thought wishing to give happiness to some and not to others. We should wish to benefit all sentient beings equally.
  - b. **Reflect that “all sentient beings equally desire happiness; therefore there is no ground for discriminating between them when working for their benefit.”**
3. In a hospital where there are many sick and suffering patients, it would not be right to treat some people while neglecting others. Likewise, our selves and all sentient beings are completely the same in that each one of us is ill due to the three mental poisons of attachment, hatred and ignorance. In consequence, we wander in cyclic existence experiencing the three types of suffering: the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change and the suffering of pervasive compounding suffering. The suffering of suffering includes both physical and mental suffering; the suffering of change refers to an experience that originally appears to be happiness but eventually changes into suffering; and pervasive compounded suffering is our contaminated aggregates, the bases of our present suffering and the creators of our future suffering. Since all sentient beings are equal in not wanting suffering yet continually experience it, we should have the strong wish to benefit all of them equally without the bias of thinking to help some and neglect others.
  - c. **Reflect that “all sentient beings are equal in lacking genuine happiness although they have the innate desire to possess it. Likewise all sentient beings are the same in having suffering and the wish to avoid it. There is therefore no moral justification for me to be biased when helping others to relieve their suffering.”**

- d. Then think strongly that “I will never discriminate between beings and will always work equally to help them overcome suffering and gain happiness.”**

### ***3 Reasons to Develop equanimity (based on the conventional truth from the viewpoint of oneself or others)***

These reasons help us to assume responsibility to help others.

1. Each of us has been taking rebirth in cyclic existence since beginningless time and in each of these many lives we have been dependent on sentient beings. Each sentient being has been our mother, relative, and friend and has looked after us. In addition, sentient beings have provided us with, and are providing us with, the three essentials for our daily happiness—food, clothes, and a good reputation. For example, the food we eat comes from the hard work of farmers and the flesh of animals, the clothes we wear come from the textile makers and the skins of animals, and the encouragement and support we need come from other people. Without depending on others we would not have even these basic happinesses. In addition, luxuries such as the ability to travel quickly and comfortably are also due to the kindness of others, the scientists, engineers and so on. Even from the point of Dharma, the development of all our inner qualities is dependent on sentient beings who serve as the objects of our love, compassion, patience, and so forth. Consequently, even the highest happinesses, liberation and enlightenment, are dependent on sentient beings. Since all sentient beings are equal in having been kind to us and in having benefited us, we should firmly decide not to abandon any sentient being and to help each one without the slightest partiality.
  - a. Reflect that “all sentient beings are equally kind to me and they have all at one time or another been my closest friends and relatives. There is no rational basis at all for me to be biased towards any of them.”**
2. We might think that while sentient beings have benefited us they have also harmed us. In response to this doubt we should think that sentient beings have definitely benefited us more than they have harmed us. In this life and past lives the amount of benefit we have received from other sentient beings far outweighs the amount of harm. Therefore, it would not be right to abandon some sentient beings; we should have the intention to equally benefit all.
  - b. Think that “the kindness of sentient beings is not confined to when they are friends and relatives alone; the kindness when they are enemies is boundless. The noble ideals of patience and tolerance, traits vital for the generation of great compassion and bodhicitta are only provided by the opportunities to train against a person of ill-will.”**
  - c. Think again that “There are no grounds for neglecting the welfare a single sentient being.”**

3. Although the moment of our death is uncertain, we will definitely die. It is the same for all other sentient beings. Since we are all caught in the web of impermanence, there is no sense in being attached to some sentient beings and hating others. For example, a group of people who are scheduled for execution tomorrow do not hold feelings of attachment or hatred for each other, since all are going to die simultaneously. Likewise, since we and all other sentient beings are definitely going to die, there is no sense in discriminating. We should decide not to abandon even one sentient being and to help each one in whatever way we can.

**d. Think single-pointedly that there is no sense in being selfish and discriminatory towards others when we are all subject to suffering and impermanence.**

### ***3 Reasons to Develop Equanimity (based on the ultimate nature of things and events)***

This ultimate should not be taken to refer to the ultimate truth in terms of emptiness-rather it means that the outlook adopted in these visualizations is deeper and hence relatively ultimate in comparison to the earlier meditations.

1. Through mistaken conceptions we impute ‘friend’ on the sentient beings who help us and ‘enemy’ on those who harm us. If friend and enemy did in fact truly exist from their own side, rather than being mere imputations, Shakyamuni Buddha would have realised it. However, the Buddha made no distinction between a person who was applying oils and perfumes to one side of his body and another who was cutting the flesh of the other side. Therefore, since enemy and friend are just imputed by our own thought and do not exist from their own side we should decide to benefit all sentient beings equally.
  - a. **Ask yourself “Are there any ‘true’ enemies in the real sense of the word?”**
  - b. **Say to yourself “In fact it is the delusions themselves within the enemies that are the source of conflict and therefore there is no justification at all for me to hold grudges against those who cause harm, and neglect the welfare of such beings.**
2. In addition, if the enemy existed as they appeared to be, he or she would always be an enemy and the truly existent friend would always be a friend. However, the reality is that our relationships, as well as our social status, wealth and so on, are far from being stable. In fact they change frequently because there is no certainty at all in cyclic existence. Even this precious human rebirth is not stable-eventually we will die, take rebirth, and once again die. Therefore, we should abandon our concrete ideas concerning friends and enemies and resolve to benefit all beings equally.
  - c. **Ask yourself “Are enemies permanent. Do enemies remain so or are they changeable?” After concluding that they are not permanent, overcome your disinterest in their welfare.**

3. Self and others are dependent upon each other. For example, I refer to myself as ‘I’ and to another person as ‘you’, while that person would say ‘you’ when referring to me and ‘I’ when referring to him or herself. I and you are established in dependence on each other and are not established independently from their own side. In the same way tall and short, here and there, up and down, father and son, etc., only exist in relation to each other. A single person can be both father and son in dependence, respectively, on his relation to his son and his relation to his father. If these were not imputed by thought and established relatively, but instead existed inherently, then a father would always be a father and could never be a son. Likewise, friend and enemy are not truly existent but established in dependence upon many factors. Therefore, there is no reason to be attached to the friend and to hate the enemy. Instead, we should help all sentient beings equally.
- d. Think that concepts of friend, enemy and stranger exist only at the conventional level and are mutually dependent like short and tall.**
  - e. Think that there is no true friend, enemy or stranger and so overcome any biased feelings you have towards them.**
  - f. Think that “concepts of friend, enemy and stranger exist only at the conventional level and are mutually dependent like close and far. Think that “there is *no true* friend, enemy or stranger” and so overcome any biased feelings you have towards them and finally recollect this verse**

“As no one desires even the slightest suffering  
Nor ever has enough happiness,  
There is no difference between myself and others;  
Therefore, inspire me to rejoice when others are happy.”

## **9 Reasoned Equanimity Meditation (condensed)**

(From HH the Dalai Lama, trans. Thubten Jinpa, *Path to Bliss*, Snow Lion, 1991)

Begin by saying to yourself “if I never give in to feelings of attachment, aversion or indifference towards any living being, I will free my mind from biased attitudes AND have a warm and friendly attitude towards all living beings equally.

1. “All sentient beings are equal insofar as the natural wish to avoid suffering is concerned; therefore there is no point in being partial or discriminatory.”
2. “All sentient beings equally desire happiness; therefore there is no ground for discriminating between them when working for their benefit.”
3. “All sentient beings are equal in lacking genuine happiness although they have the innate desire to possess it. Likewise, all sentient beings are the same in having suffering and the wish to avoid it. There is therefore no moral justification for me to be biased when helping others to relieve their suffering and so I will never discriminate between beings and will always work equally to help them overcome suffering and gain happiness.”
4. “All sentient beings are equally kind to me and they have all at one time or another been my closest friends and relatives. There is no rational basis at all for me to be biased towards any of them.”
5. “The kindness of sentient beings is not confined to when they are friends and relatives alone; the kindness when they are enemies is boundless. The noble ideals of patience and tolerance, traits vital for the generation of great compassion and bodhicitta are only provided by the opportunities of training with a person of ill-will. And so there are no grounds for neglecting the welfare of a single sentient being.”
6. “There is no sense in being selfish and discriminatory towards others when we are all subject to suffering and impermanence.”
7. Now ask yourself “are there any *true* enemies in the real sense of the word? And reply by saying “There are *no true* enemies and in fact it is the delusions themselves within the enemies that are the source of conflict. And so I have no justification at all to hold grudges against those beings that cause harm and to neglect their welfare.”
8. Now ask yourself “are enemies permanent. Do enemies remain unchangeable or can they change?” After concluding that “they are not permanent” overcome your disinterest in their welfare.
9. Think that “concepts of friend, enemy and stranger exist only at the conventional level and are mutually dependent like close and far. Think that “there is no *true* friend, enemy or stranger” and so overcome any biased feelings you have towards them and finally recollect this verse

“As no one desires even the slightest suffering  
Nor ever has enough happiness,  
There is no difference between myself and others;  
Therefore, inspire me to rejoice when others are happy.”