

<https://www.lamayeshe.com/article/chapter/5-blessing-speech>

Nyung-nä Teachings at Lawudo

By Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Lawudo Retreat Centre, Nepal (Archive #133)

Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche gave these teachings during a *nyung-nä* retreat at [Lawudo Gompa](#), Nepal, in April 1978. Edited by Ven. Ailsa Cameron.

5. Blessing the Speech

Some people wanted to know how to visualize the blessing of the speech, which is the oral teachings of the great yogi Khyungpo Naljor¹.

The best, most perfect way to practice this is to do it before talking. If you practice it before speaking, all your speech during the rest of the day becomes meaningful. That way, you also do the practice before losing the power of speech.

As you wake up from sleep, the very first thing is to think in the following way, which is extremely beneficial for the mind. Remember Nagarjuna's quotation, "Since life is full of harms and more impermanent than a water-bubble blown by the wind, it is a wonderful surprise to have the chance to wake up from sleep, breathing in and out."

There are many other quotations, including ones from secret mantra, about remembering how to obtain the great meanings of life. But what Nagarjuna says is very good to remind you of impermanence at the very first start of the day in order to make your life meaningful. The first part is easy to understand. The second part mentions how greatly surprising it is to wake up, because life is generally full of hindrances.

It is very good to remember the meditation outlines of the indefinite time of death. Life is indefinite, with more conditions for death and few conditions for living, and even the conditions for living can become causes of death. For example, houses are built to protect life, but numberless human beings die when houses collapse in earthquakes or when they burn and the people inside can't escape. Airplanes, cars, and other vehicles, which are meant to prolong life, can also become the cause of death. Food is also meant to prolong life and protect from death, but numberless people die from food.

Jewels and other material possessions are collected to protect life from death, but numberless people die because of their material possessions. A person can kill himself by worrying so much about their possessions, about whether the government will confiscate them or cause other problems. Or a thief might come because of the possessions and kill the people who

Speech Blessing

own them. That's why in America, for instance, there are so many doors, and even one door has so many keys. But things still get stolen from big apartments.

It is also the same with clothes. There are many times when even a button has caused death.

If your body is white, other people can kill you, or if your body is black, other people kill you. In India, when the husband of a Tibetan woman absconded, the police then attacked and raped her. Like a dog waiting for meat, the police waited until her husband ran away then forced her to have sexual intercourse. They then became scared that if the woman wasn't killed, there would be a problem with their jobs and other problems. So, after raping her, they suffocated her by filling her mouth with clothes, then buried her body.

Even the body, which works to protect life, can become the cause of death. It's good to remember these examples.

There are 360 *döns*, or spirits, that cause spirit harms, or possessions. Some people become crazy because they are possessed by spirits. During meditation a person might be unable to meditate because such strong attachment arises. They can't remember anything, and their mind is completely foggy. There are also people who can never relax; if they try to meditate, after a second, they decide they would like to work or do something else. Those are all kinds of spirit harms, or *döns*.

There are also 1,080 *geks*, or interferers. Even if you try to please these interferers, they will give harm. There are also 424 diseases.

Life so easily decays. It is just like a water bubble or a candle-flame in a strong wind. Just like a flame in a strong wind, in any second you can expect it to go out. The flame is moved this way and that by the wind, almost stopping it. Like that, in any second it is so easy for life to be stopped.

It is useful to remember these outlines of the indefinite time of death.

In the daytime, because we are aware, it is easy to recognize the hindrances to life and to protect ourselves from them. If somebody comes with a weapon, you can recognize what is happening and manage to protect yourself. But at night, while we are sleeping, we are unconscious, and our gross senses are absorbed inside, so it is difficult for us to be aware of hindrances to our life. For instance, if someone comes very quietly, we can't hear them or even if they make a noise, we still sometimes can't hear them. If a thief comes, even he cuts our throat with a knife, we can't recognize the hindrance to our life. Because we are unconscious while we are sleeping, it is very easy to receive hindrances to our life.

Also, when spirits give harm, most of the time it is at night. It is easier for them to give harm to people in the nighttime, when the mind is unconscious. That's why when you get sick it often starts at night. When you wake up, your mind is not well and your body is not well.

Speech Blessing

You have a cold, a fever, or some other uncomfortable feeling. Many times you will feel a little better in the morning, then in the afternoon and evening, your illness gets worse. Fever and other types of disease are signs of spirit harms.

When someone is sleeping, their mind is completely unconscious. There is just the breath coming in, going out, coming in, going out. That defines the person as living.

One point is that breathing in and out is not up to you. With a watch, for instance, we can make it run and we can stop it from running. Even if it breaks, we can fix it. Breathing in and out is not up to us; it is up to the breath. How long our breathing continues to function is not up to us but up to our breath. How long we can live depends on how long our breath functions, coming in and going out. It is completely dependent on the breath. We say, “I am alive,” just because our breath is coming in and going out, just because the continuity of our breath hasn’t stopped. Just because of that, we can say that we are alive. This breath is so fragile.

So, you are completely dependent on breathing in and breathing out. This breathing in and out can be stopped at any time. You can’t say for sure when it will stop. Since it is an element, it is very easy for it to be stopped.

That’s why Nagarjuna is saying how wonderful it is having the freedom to wake up from sleep, the breathing going in and out. Nagarjuna’s quotation is the very first thing to remember. After that, think, “Last night, if my breath had gone out and not come back, by now I would have lost my precious human body, qualified by eight freedoms and ten richnesses. If I were now in the fearful intermediate state or in a lower realm, such as a hell, it would be impossible to have the freedom to practice Dharma. I would be experiencing only unbelievable suffering. How fortunate I am to have the freedom today to wake up alive and to practice Dharma.”

It is then also very good to remember that each of the freedoms and richnesses is much more precious than the whole universe filled with jewels. Also remember the three great meanings of a perfect human rebirth, and how easy it is for it to perish. Then think, “In this year, is dying or not dying more definite? Dying is more definite. In this month, is dying or not dying more definite? It is more definite that I will die. In this week, is dying or not dying more definite? It is more definite that I will die. Even today, is dying or not dying more definite? Dying is more definite. Even with each breath, is dying or not dying more definite? Dying is more definite.”

Then make the following determination: “This year, this month, this week, especially today, each time I breathe, I must practice pure Dharma practice, by not letting myself under the control of the evil thought of the eight worldly dharmas. I won’t let time pass without practicing the two bodhicittas. I will practice absolute and relative bodhicitta by destroying the ignorance that believes the I and phenomena to be truly existent and by destroying the

Speech Blessing

self-cherishing thought. I will put all my effort into destroying the two types of grasping.” Make the determination that you are going to use your life in this way.

After that, as explained by Buddha in the sutra teachings, there are mantras to be recited. For instance, if you recite OM SAMBHARA SAMBHARA BIMANA SARA MAHA JAVA HUM/ OM SMARA SMARA BIMANA SKARA MAHA JAVA HUM seven times, it increases any merit you collect during the rest of the day 100,000 times.

There is also the mantra to bless the rosary: OM RUCHIRA MANI PRAVARTAYA HUM. If you recite this mantra seven times and blow on your rosary, it increases any mantras of buddha you recite by counting with the rosary many trillions of times.

The sutra called Palace of Vast Jewels explains that if you are concerned about all the insects that are harmed or killed when you step on them without knowing, there is a way to make it beneficial for the insects. If you recite the mantra OM KHRECHA RAGHANA HUM HRI SVAHA three times then spit on the soles of your feet, any insects you kill that day by stepping on them are reborn in the god realm, the Realm of Thirty-Three. Doing these things becomes worthwhile for other sentient beings.

Now, blessing the speech as in the oral teaching given by the great yogi Khyungpo Naljor. The first thing is to take refuge and then generate bodhicitta. (We have already done the straight translation of the text.)

I take refuge in the Three Precious Sublime Ones. May I achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. (Recite three times.)

At that time you can take refuge by visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or you can visualize your guru, just in that aspect. You then take refuge and generate bodhicitta.

You then have to transform yourself as it says here in the prayer:

I clearly visualize myself in the form of the deity.

In relation to the Avalokiteshvara yoga practice, you can visualize the guru in the aspect of Avalokiteshvara, either above your head or in front of you. After you have taken refuge and cultivated bodhicitta, strong, white nectar rays flow and purify all obscurations. Avalokiteshvara then melts into light and absorbs into you. You then transform into Avalokiteshvara.

Since you have a copy of the translation, I will just go through the visualization.

On my tongue is the letter AH, which transforms into a moon disc marked in the center with a white OM. The white vowels stand in the clockwise direction, the red consonants stand in

Speech Blessing

the anticlockwise direction. The blue mantra of the essence of interdependent origination stands in a clockwise direction.

There is a white letter AH in the center of your tongue. This AH transforms into a white moon disc, transparent like a magnifying glass. You don't have to visualize that it is heavy glass that your tongue can't hold up. You shouldn't be concerned about that.

The moon is like a magnifying glass, but in the nature of light. In the center of the moon is a standing white OM, facing this way.

On the edge of the moon disc, standing clockwise, are the white vowels, the ali's, OM AH AHH EE EEH OO OOH REE REEH LEE LEEH EH EHH O OO ANG AH SO HA. The other OM is facing the central OM, with the other vowels circling clockwise, or to the right side.

Second, the consonants, red in color, circle to the left side. But it doesn't mean that the mantras are turning; it just means the way they are arranged.

The OM of the consonants should be just next to the OM of the vowels, facing it.

The blue mantra of the essence interdependence is again clockwise, with its OM facing to the OM of the consonants.

All the letters are standing, not lying down, and are radiant, like the neon signs you see on the tops of banks, hotels, and restaurants in a city at night.

You then visualize:

With clear concentration recite the mantras, one after another, beginning with the inner circle.

When you read the mantras, you start with the vowels, then the consonants, and then the mantra of the essence of interdependence. You start from the inside, as you have visualized them. That's why it says "inner circle."

As you are reciting the mantras, you send beams out from the garlands of mantras.

Beams of light radiate from the seed-syllable and the three mantra garlands. The light beams hook and bring back the blessing of the holy speech of those abiding in samsara and those beyond. This blessing returns in the form of the three mantras, the seven precious and perfect royal symbols, and the eight auspicious signs.

You send beams from the mantras to all those who are beyond samsara—all the buddhas, higher bodhisattvas, and arhats—and also to all those who are not beyond samsara. Those who are beyond samsara include the great yogis with achievement of high Vajrayana

Speech Blessing

realizations; those who are not beyond samsara include practitioners of secret mantra, meditators, and those who have very great power of speech, like the Brahmins who never tell lies or who keep silence for many years.

The beams that you send out are received by them and hook from them the power and blessings of their speech in the form of the three mantra garlands (the white vowels, the red consonants, and the blue essence of interdependence), the seven perfect royal symbols, and the eight auspicious signs. The seven royal symbols, as in the mandala, are the precious wheel, precious jewel, precious queen, precious minister, precious elephant, precious horse, and precious general. The eight auspicious signs are the precious umbrella, the precious golden fish, the great treasure vase, the precious lotus, the sublime banner, the wheel, and the conch shell.

All the power and blessings of the holy speech of all those who are beyond samsara and of all those who are not beyond samsara are hooked in the form of mantras and these offerings, which absorb to the mantras like rainfall falling into the ocean. Again you shouldn't visualize them as material objects that hurt the tongue or make a wound. They should be visualized in the form of light.

Some lamas use this practice as a technique for purification.

After all that has been absorbed, you can visualize that white nectar rays come from the mantras visualized on the top of your tongue and fill the whole of your body from your head down to your feet. They purify completely all the negative karmas and obscurations of the body.

The second time, red nectar rays fill your whole body from your feet up to your head and purify all the negative karmas and obscurations of speech.

The third time, blue nectar rays flow from the mantras, filling up your whole body and purifying all the negative karmas and obscurations of the mind. The negative karmas that have been collected with the mind are completely purified. They completely disappear; they become completely empty.

It is like turning on a light in a dark room. The moment the light comes, the darkness disappears. The darkness in the room becomes relatively empty; it becomes nonexistent. It is the same here. Each time the different colored nectar rays flow in the body, the various negative karmas and obscurations don't exist at all, even relatively.

The fourth time, you visualize that all three colors of nectar rays flow at the same time, completely purifying even the subtle negative karmas and subtle obscurations, the obscurations of the objects of knowledge.

Speech Blessing

You can also visualize in the following way. When you purify the negative karmas of the body with the white nectar rays, you purify downwards. When you purify the negative karmas of speech, the nectar rays purify upwards, filling the body from the feet up to the head. When you purify the negative karmas of the mind, the blue nectar rays come strongly from the mantras and suddenly fill your whole body. The fourth time, all the three different colored nectar rays together fill the whole body, purifying even the subtle negative karmas and subtle obscurations.

If you do this visualization, the blessing of the speech also becomes a method of purification.

At the end, the white OM in the center sends white beams to the other mantras. The very last mantra, the mantra of the essence of interdependence, absorbs into the consonants. The consonants then melt into light and absorb into the vowels. The vowels then absorb into the center of the syllable OM.

After all the mantras have absorbed into the syllable OM, the OM absorbs into the moon. (This is the opposite of the previous process.) The moon becomes the syllable AH, which melts into the white, red, and blue nectar. This nectar absorbs into the tongue, which becomes in the nature of a vajra.

You can also visualize the vajra in the form of white light inside the tongue, like a vajra inside a Nepalese brocade purse.

The benefits of meditating in this way are that it perfects the power of speech and multiplies the number of any mantra you recite ten million times. The power of mantras also cannot be disturbed by black food. Garlic is one of the worst. If you eat garlic, you lose the power of your speech for seven days. Even if you recite mantras, you lose the power of the mantras for seven days. In previous times in India, a person who ate garlic wasn't allowed to come into the shrine room for seven days.

Onions are also a black food. And there is no doubt that cigarettes are also. The type of radish that has a very bad smell is also a black food. Each of these and the other black foods causes you to lose the power of speech and of mantra for a certain number of days.

If you have done the practice of blessing the speech in the morning, even if you eat one of these black foods, you don't lose the power of mantra. The reason it is called "black food" is also because of its terrible smell. Generally, "good" and "bad" have to do with individual perception. However, black food destroys the pure power of the body and mind. So, it is avoided because of its effect. It is different if you are a great yogi of mantra, with complete control over the mind and the body. Such a person can eat black food, and even a poison that would usually kill an ordinary person, and not be harmed. It only becomes the cause to increase their bliss and their realizations. It never causes harm to someone who has control over the wind, the vehicle of the mind, by depending on the Vajrayana path.

Speech Blessing

Black food smell bad, and if you are very sensitive, you can feel the effects after you have eaten black foods; you can feel the harmful changes. It makes your mind unclear, and it makes your body kind of tough and can even change its color.

It is explained in the teachings that by the negative karma of drinking wine, a person gets born in the hot hells. Even the person who gives wine to others is born in the hell realm called Crying and Shouting. Because of the person's karma, they are suddenly born inside a red-hot iron house with no doors or windows. The person is trapped inside that. Suddenly, like one dream coming after another, they are trapped in that red-hot iron house, which has no doors or windows, which has no way to escape out of it. Even the person who gives the wine has to be in that suffering state for a certain length of time according to their karma. As with every action, whether or not an action is Dharma depends on the motivation.

Drinking wine also makes you unconscious. In future lives, even when you are born as a human being, your mind is unconscious. Many problems in this life—fighting, destroying your own and others' possessions, killing—are also caused by drinking wine.

There is a long story about cigarettes, but I don't remember the exact details. In order to disturb the teachings and the development of mind of sentient beings in this world, degenerating their minds and preventing realizations, maras manifested in those plants, especially in China and other countries around the Himalayas. The details of the evolution of these wrong elements are explained in the teachings.

Besides that, cigarette smoking make you lose the pure power of the body and the mind. It pollutes the body, and also pollutes the mind. It is also explained in the teachings that it creates the karma to be born not just as an animal or hungry ghost, but to be born in the hot hells, where karmically created guardians force hot coals into your mouth, which then burn your stomach. There are various such sufferings from heat.

Even when, after some time, the person is born as a human being, they again experience the suffering result similar to the cause.

There are many gods who protect the white side, which means they look after people who create virtue, who practice Dharma. When someone smokes, the smell of the cigarettes makes the white-side gods who are situated in that place leave. The smell also affects nagas, wealthy beings from the animal realm who live in palaces that we can't see with our limited mind. Someone with clear perception, who has actualized the higher paths, can see these sentient beings and read their minds. The dirty smell of cigarettes harms them and destroys the palaces of the nagas. Besides smokers polluting themselves, they pollute all the sentient beings around them, including gods and nagas. It also pollutes the place.

Then, we don't need to talk about how smoking is the basis of disease, rotting the lungs and causing heart attacks, cancer, and many other diseases that are difficult to cure.

Speech Blessing

Besides causing these present problems, smoking is so harmful to other sentient beings. Perhaps it is okay to harm yourself, but smoking is also very harmful to other sentient beings. Also, if you smoke cigarettes in a monastery or another holy place, where there are holy beings, monks and nuns living in ordination and also stupas, statues, and paintings of buddhas, you make the whole environment dirty and pollute the other sentient beings who are around. The smell of cigarettes pollutes holy places and holy objects, making them dirty. In that way, you also pollute your own mind; your own obscurations become thicker.

At Kopan Monastery, even when a Nepalese smokes cigarettes way down below on the road, not even inside the house, the smell spreads so much that it comes into the room. Whenever I smell cigarette smoke, I feel pain in my heart. When I sit in a compartment in a train or an airplane where people are smoking cigarettes, it makes me very sleepy and unclear. When I inhale the smoke, I also feel pain around my heart. This is just an example of how smoking can hurt other people.

The last benefit is that sometimes it can transform wine and things like that into medicine. After your disease is cured, however, it is no longer medicine. You just carry on taking it, saying, “Oh, for me this is medicine.” When you have recovered from the disease, even if you call it “medicine,” it’s not medicine because you don’t have the disease.

If you have done this practice in the morning, until sunrise the next morning, all your gossip becomes the recitation of mantra by the power of this practice. After you have done this practice, none of your gossip is a waste.

It is explained in the teachings that especially if you are practicing the Avalokiteshvara yoga method, you have to keep very clean. This is partly because it is a Kriya Tantra practice. In Avalokiteshvara yoga practice, such as a *nyung-nä*, the retreat of body, speech, and mind, which we will be doing over two days at the end of this retreat, you have to keep very clean. You have to keep yourself clean of strong anger, attachment, jealousy, and other harmful thoughts. You should always be loving. A person who practices this Avalokiteshvara yoga method should have a loving mind.

Your body should also be kept very clean. You should wash and wear clean clothes. Anyone who practices the Avalokiteshvara yoga method also has to be careful to avoid eating black foods. If you don’t observe this and you don’t keep yourself clean, it causes hindrances to receiving realizations. Your meditation is not clear, which makes it difficult for you to achieve realizations.