



THE ASIAN CLASSICS
INSTITUTE

7

THE BODHISATTVA VOWS
Level 2 of Middle-Way Philosophy (*Madhyamika*)

DHARMA ESSENTIALS





Class One Outline

- I. Introduction to the Dharma Essentials Series and to this Course
- II. Introduction to the Texts Used
 - A. *Highway for Bodhisattvas* by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419)
 - B. *String of Shining Jewels* by Geshe Tsewang Samdrup (early nineteenth century)
 - C. *Commentary on the Three Principal Paths* by Pabongka Rinpoche (1878-1941)
- III. Living Life as a Bodhisattva and the Definition of Bodhicitta
- IV. The Three Sufferings and Their Cause
 - A. The suffering of suffering
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- V. The Three Types of Morality
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 - A. "Taken from another"
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- VII. The Bodhisattva Vow Ceremony
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- B. The preparation stage of the ceremony
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For fifteen minutes per day, contemplate the three kinds of sufferings and generate the desire to stop them – for yourself and others.

Class Two Outline

I. The Eighteen Root Downfalls

- A. Praising yourself and criticizing others
- B. Failing to give Dharma or material assistance
- C. Failing to accept someone's apology and striking another
- D. Giving up the greater way and teaching false Dharma
- E. Stealing what belongs to the Three Jewels
- F. Giving up the highest Dharma
- G. Taking away someone's robes and the rest, and removing someone from the status of an ordained person
- H. Committing an immediate misdeed
- I. Holding wrong views
- J. Destroying towns and such
- K. Teaching emptiness to a person who is not yet mentally prepared
- L. Causing a person to turn back from total enlightenment
- M. Causing a person to give up the morality of freedom
- N. Holding that a person cannot eliminate desire and the rest by following the way of the learner
- O. Professing the complete opposite
- P. Accepting what belongs to the Three Jewels when someone presents it to you
- Q. Rejecting the practice of quietude and giving the possessions of meditators to those who practice recitation
- R. Discarding the wish for enlightenment

IV. Meditation Assignment

For fifteen minutes per day, think about one or another of the eighteen root downfalls and how you could keep that vow in your daily life.

Class Three Outline

I. How the Root Vows are Broken

- A. The four chains
- B. Other ways
- C. How the vows are repaired

II. The Secondary Offences

- A. Vows pertaining to the perfection of giving
- B. Vows pertaining to the perfection of morality
- C. Vows pertaining to the perfection of patience
- D. Vows pertaining to the perfection of joyful effort
- E. Vows pertaining to the perfection of concentration
- F. Vows pertaining to the perfection of wisdom

III. Meditation Assignment

For fifteen minutes per day, pick one or another of the secondary offenses and reflect on how you could keep that vow in your own daily life.

Class Four Outline

- I. The Remaining Secondary Offenses
- II. Two Classical Motivations for Committing an Offense
 - A. Anger, jealousy, desire, etc.
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- III. Other Offenses Against the Wish for Enlightenment
- IV. The Four Black and White Deeds
- V. Five Steps to Keep the Bodhisattva Vows Well
 - A. Respect the speech of the Buddha
 - B. Have the three intentions
 - C. Take the vows based on the prior two steps
 - D. Respect the vows as your most precious possession
 - E. Avoid breaking your vows because you respect them
- VI. Four Reasons Why a Person Might Break their Bodhisattva Vows
 - A. They don't know them
 - B. Carelessness, laziness, or forgetting
 - C. Having a mental affliction attack
 - D. Disrespecting the vows and the Buddha
- VII. Four Antidotes
 - A. Become a master of the vows
 - B. Be mindful and catch yourself
 - C. Identify your worst mental affliction and work on it
 - D. Have respect for the vows based on the results you get from keeping them
- VIII. Meditation Assignment

For fifteen minutes per day, think about how you could cultivate in your own life the four antidotes to breaking the Bodhisattva vows.



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Reading One:

Bodhicitta, the Wish for Enlightenment, Types and Features of Morality, How the Bodhisattva Vows are Taken

The following selection is taken from the *Commentary on the Three Principal Paths*, an explanation by Pabongka Rinpoche (1878-1941) of the famous root text by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419.)

The second section in our explanation of the wish to achieve enlightenment for every living being describes how to develop this wish. As the next two verses say,

**They're swept along on four fierce river currents,
Chained up tight in past deeds, hard to undo,
Stuffed in a steel cage of grasping "self,"
Smothered in the pitch-black ignorance.**

**In a limitless round they're born, and in their births
Are tortured by three sufferings without a break;
Think how your mothers feel, think of what's happening
To them: try to develop this highest wish.**

We may begin with another pair of verses, from *The Bodhisattva's Life*:

Even just wishing you could stop
A headache another person has
Can bring you merit without measure

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Because of the helpful intent you feel.

What need then to mention the wish
That you could stop the immeasurable pain
Of every being, and put every one
In a state of measureless happiness?

The Sutra that Viradatta Requested says as well,

Were the merit of the wish for enlightenment
To take on some kind of physical form
It would fill the reaches of space itself
And then spill over farther still.

The benefits of this wish to achieve enlightenment for all living beings are thus described, in these and other texts, as limitless. And so here are the mass of living beings, all of them our mothers, **swept along** the flow of **four river currents**, all fierce suffering. From one viewpoint, while they are acting as causes, these four are the torrent of desire, the torrent of views, the torrent of the ripe force of deeds, and the torrent of ignorance. Later, when they serve as results, they are the four torrents of birth, and aging, and illness, and death.

And these mother beings are not just hurtling along in these four great rivers; it's just as if their hands and feet too were bound fast—they are **chained up tight**, they are snared, **in** their own past deeds, hard to undo.

But that's not all; the bonds which hold them tight are no regular ties, like our twined ropes of yak-skin or hair. It's more like our mothers are clasped in fetters of iron, ever so hard to sever, ever so hard to unshackle—for while they are swept along they are **stuffed in a steel cage of grasping** to some non-existent "**self**."

And there's more. If there were some daylight, these mother beings would have some glimmer of hope—they could at least cry out, and try to get some help. But it is night, and the darkest hour of the night, and in pitch-black dark they are swept downstream the mighty river: they are **smothered** completely **in pitch-black ignorance**.

In a limitless round, in an endless round, **they are** born into the ocean of life, **and in these births they are tortured by three** different kinds of **suffering**: the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change, and the all-

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pervading suffering. And their torture comes to them **without a break**—it is always there.

This is **what's happening to them**, to our mother beings, this is their situation: unbearable pain. There's nothing they can do like this to help themselves; the son though has a chance at hand to pull his mother free. He must find a way, and find it now, to grasp her hand and draw her out. And the way he must **try** is **to develop this jewel wish** for enlightenment: he must do so first by **thinking how his mothers feel**, tortured by pain; then by deciding to take personal responsibility, the duty of freeing them, upon himself; and so on, all in the proper stages....

The following selection is taken from the *Highway for Bodhisattvas* by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419), folios 527-528.

On the three sets of vows

...The activities of a bodhisattva though are limited to two: trying to ripen one's own mental stream, and trying to ripen the mental streams of other beings. To accomplish the former, there are only two types of activities, no more and no less: giving up improper behavior, and accumulating good behavior. These are represented by two kinds of morality: the morality of restraining oneself, and the morality of collecting goodness. For ripening the minds of others, you need then the morality of working for the good of all living beings. As such there are precisely three types of morality. This is an excellent way of explaining the point.

"Why," one may continue, "is the order of the three types of morality fixed that way?" The morality of giving up improper behavior, which is shared with those of the listener way, is a cause that leads into the latter two types. As for the types of morality which are not shared with this way, you could hardly work for the sake of all other beings if you hadn't yet accomplished collecting goodness for yourself; as the text says,

You can hardly free others
Before you free yourself;
You can hardly bring others to peace
Before you reach peace yourself.

This is how the order is explained in the commentary said to have been authored by Samudra Megha, and the explanation is correct.

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Here next is the basic nature of each of these three kinds of morality. The first is the morality of restraining oneself, and it consists of the seven different types of freedom vows. These are first of all the morality observed by a full monk or full nun, an intermediate nun, and a novice monk or novice nun for the category of those who have left the home life. For the layman category, there are the lifetime layman's vows of a man or woman.

There are actually eight different types of freedom vows. The reason that the one-day vow is not mentioned in this context can be understood as explained in the *Commentary on the Difficult Points in the Twenty Verses on Vows*, which says:

Consider the one which you uphold for only a single day. It is not mentioned in this regard because it doesn't really fit: it does not involve the hardship and is not removed from desire, and it does not continue on for any extended length of time.

On the three kinds of morality

The following selection is taken from the *Commentary to the Source of All My Good*, an explanation by Pabongka Rinpoche (1878-1941) of the famed root verses of Je Tsongkapa., ff. 18A-18B.

**Bless me to see clearly
That the Wish itself
Is not enough,
For if I'm not well trained
In the three moralities,
I cannot become a Buddha.
Grant me then
A fierce resolve
To master the vows
For the children of the Victors.**

Suppose you are able, as described above, to reach the Wish for enlightenment, where you truly hope to achieve the state of a Buddha in order to help every living being. This itself is not enough. Once you do reach the Wish, you must still take on the vows of these bodhisattva princes and princesses, these sons and daughters of the victorious Buddhas. And then you must train yourself in giving

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and the other five perfections. Otherwise there is no way you could ever come to enlightenment.

This fact explains why it is so very important when holy beings have said that all six perfections are covered in the three types of morality.

The first type is called the "morality of keeping oneself from committing wrong." Here you begin by being extremely careful to keep the morality of avoiding the ten bad deeds. This type of good behavior is common to everyone, whether they wear the robes or not, and must absolutely be maintained.

More specifically, with this first type of morality, you must in addition exert yourself to the fullest, so to assure that your life is never sullied in the least by overstepping the bounds of any of the vows you have agreed to keep. Here we refer to vows that belong to any of the three traditional sets: the freedom vows, the Bodhisattva vows and the secret vows.

The second type of morality is known as the "morality of collecting goodness." This is where you use a great variety of means to gather or collect extremely potent stores of virtue into your being; these are the virtues of amassing merit and wisdom.

The third type of morality is the "morality that acts for every sentient being." Here you take care to keep the different varieties of morality mentioned above that involve restraining yourself from wrong; but instead of doing so with a motivation which is infected with any self-interest, you act only out of an intention to reach total Buddhahood for the sake of all living kind.

You must find a sure kind of knowledge where you see clearly how—if you lack a total fluency in these three types of morality, if you are not well trained and completely accustomed to following them—then you cannot become one of those who has reached the fully enlightened state of a Buddha.

Once you have found this knowledge, you must take on the vows for the "children of the Victors" (that is, the bodhisattva vows), and then with a resolve of fierce intensity you must learn and master the three types of morality. What we are requesting of our Lama here, said our Lama, is that he or she grant us the ability to do so.

On the features of morality

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The following selections are taken from the *Highway for Bodhisattvas*. The text is referring to specific passages from the *Bodhisattva Levels* of Master Asanga.

"What," you may ask, "is the very essence of this morality?" To put it briefly, it has four wonderful qualities:

- 1) The morality is accepted from others, in an excellent way; and
- 2) The motivation for taking it on is extremely pure.
- 3) If one fails in the morality, one can recover; and
- 4) One can develop a sense of reverence for the morality, maintain then a sense of recollection, and thus prevent oneself from failing.

Each one of these wonderful qualities has a specific function. The fact that vows are taken from other people gives you a sense of shame that allows you to avoid doing something wrong: when you are close to breaking one of the precepts, you stop, because you think of how this other person would reproach you.

The motivation that you have as you take vows gives you a feeling of conscience that also helps you avoid doing something wrong: when you are close to breaking one of the precepts, you stop, because of your own sense of self-respect, for yourself and what you represent.

The two qualities of being able to recover if you fail, and of not failing in the first place, allow you to live without any regrets. Once you possess the sense of conscience and of shame that you get from taking the vows in an excellent way from others and from your pure original motivation, you will be able to maintain your morality, whether through avoiding any failure in the first place, or through recovering should you incur some failure. As you continue to maintain your morality in this way, you observe how free you are from any downfalls in morality, and can live without any regrets.

Here is how this process is described. Those who have taken the vows from others should constantly examine their own mental stream with a form of wisdom that functions in an accurate way. If they see then that they are free of any kind of downfall, subtle or gross, they can enjoy the feeling of having no regrets, of realizing that their mental stream is crystal clean.

Here you should make great efforts from the very beginning never to allow yourself to be sullied by any bad deed at all. If by some remote chance you forget yourself or something similar, and thus find yourself dirtied by such a

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deed, you should never just ignore what happened. You must undertake to purify yourself, and restrain yourself in the future, and so on.

For this to happen, you have to have the emotions of conscience and shame. For these to come, certain conditions must be there when you take your vows. The person you take them from must be a spiritual friend who possesses all the necessary qualifications. The motivation with which you take the vows must come from the depths of your heart; you mustn't take them just to follow the crowd, or for any reason like that. Nor should you take them with any kind of inferior motivation, such as a fear of death or the like—let your aspirations be the highest that there are. Put a lot of effort into making the first two causes right....

How the Bodhisattva Vows are Taken

..."What kind of person," you may ask, "must you be to take the vows?" The bodhisattva can be either a layperson or someone who is ordained. They must feel a wish from the bottom of their hearts to practice the training for bodhisattvas that we have described above; that is, the three kinds of morality. They must also have raised up in their hearts the prayer of the wish for enlightenment—they must have made the prayer to achieve total Buddhahood in the proper way, following the instructions.

One should not grant the vows to someone who is only taking the vows, but who has no interest in practicing the training for bodhisattvas; neither should one give these vows to someone who has not yet felt the wish in the form of a prayer in their hearts.

If there is a person who does have the right intention to take the vows, there is something you should do then first before you grant them, for it will make their vows more firm. This is to inform the candidate thoroughly of the various points in which a bodhisattva must train himself or herself, and of the various mistakes they must avoid, as described in the great mother work within the body of bodhisattva literature: this very *Bodhisattva Levels*.

The reason for explaining all this to the candidate is so that he or she can look into his or her own heart and see whether or not they will be able to keep the vows; it is so they can analyze the situation intelligently, and then take the vows, and do so with joy. The point is not to somehow force the person into accepting the vows against their will. It is important as well that the person not see themselves as trying to keep up with what others are doing and take the vows for

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this reason. Understand that if you give the vows thus properly, and with the proper ritual, they will be strong; be certain to do everything with your eyes open.

In this sense the bodhisattva vows are unlike the freedom vows; before you take them, you must go for teachings on them and understand them thoroughly. With this your intentions to keep the vows carefully will be strengthened, and then you are ready to take them. It is said that if you do have these intentions the vows will form within you as you take them, and that they will not form if you do not....

Here secondly are the details of the person from who you receive the vows. "And what kind of person is it," you may ask, "from whom we must take the bodhisattva vows?" The person should be one who has made the bodhisattva prayer; that is, who has raised within himself the wish in the form of a prayer. He or she must also be someone who is "acting consistently," which means that they are keeping the vows of the bodhisattva well. They should be a master of the teachings of the greater way, and should be able to memorize the words of the ceremony and communicate them clearly in speech to the person taking the vows, and so on. Finally they must be able to hear and comprehend the responses of the candidate.

"What kind of person," one may continue, "should we *not* take our bodhisattva vows from?" Bodhisattvas should not accept the bodhisattva vows from just any bodhisattva that there is, even if they seem very learned; rather they should avoid those whose intentions or practice have degenerated. The person's intentions have degenerated if they have lost their faith, which means on a gross level that they no longer wish to keep the vows, and on a medium level that they no longer practice them, and on a more subtle level that they are no longer "thinking," which means making good efforts in their vows. The practice has degenerated when the person's attempts to follow the six perfections have failed....

To put briefly, you should first sweep and clean the area well, and then decorate it. Then you should set out many holy images, with an image of the Teacher at their head. Try first then to feel an intense emotion of faith, which you can bring on by imagining that you can actually see the victorious Buddhas and their sons and daughters, come before you from every corner of the universe, and then concentrating upon their fine spiritual qualities.

With this feeling in mind, focus upon your Lama, seated upon a lion throne, and

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think of him or her as they are described in the ritual—as actually being the Buddha himself. Set forth excellent, lovely and plentiful offerings: flowers, and scents, and incense, lamps and all the rest. Make prostrations and then recite verses of praise, followed by a mandala and offerings presented individually to each of the three Jewels, and to your Lama. The Lama should instruct the student well in the proper procedures, and show them how to carry out this ritual....

We may summarize all these points by quoting the *Twenty Verses on Vows*:

Prostrate with reverence, offer as you are able
To the enlightened Buddhas, and to their sons and daughters.
Take upon yourself the code of every bodhisattva
In every time, in every corner of the universe.

This code is a mine of gold, every merit lies in it;
With the highest of intentions, take it on yourself
From a Lama keeping all these vows very well himself,
One who is a master of them, one with ability.

At that time, because of all the virtue that there is,
The Buddhas of the victory, along with their sons and daughters
Look on you forever, from the virtue of their hearts,
As if you were their daughter, as if you were their son.

The first two lines here represent the entire process of the preparation stage of the ritual for taking the bodhisattva vows. The next six lines describe what you should take, and the motivation for doing so, and then the person from whom you should take these vows. The final four lines show how you uplift the candidate by speaking of the great benefits of the vows, which is meant to represent the concluding stage of the ceremony.

Reading Two: The Eighteen Root Downfalls

The following selection is taken from the *String of Shining Jewels*, by Geshe Tsewang Samdrup (c.1835).

*Ways for those who have received these vows
to keep them, and prevent their decline*

Next we describe ways for those who have received the bodhisattva vows to keep them, and prevent their decline. You must first submit yourself, in the proper way, to a holy spiritual guide, one who is learned in the scriptures of the bodhisattva way, and in the commentaries which explain the true intent of these scriptures. Then you must educate yourself in all the various bodhisattva precepts. You should especially learn the eighteen root downfalls, the forty-six secondary offenses, and so on.

The eighteen root downfalls

We begin then with the eighteen root downfalls:

(1) *The root downfall of praising yourself, and criticizing others*

You commit this when, out of attachment to gain or honor, you praise yourself, and criticize others who in actuality possess good qualities. This can be divided into two separate root downfalls, those of praising oneself and of criticizing others.

(2) *The root downfall of failing to give Dharma or material assistance*

You commit this in a situation where you should be giving the Dharma that you know, or the material things that you own, to those who are suffering, to those who have no protector. Instead though you fail to give them these things, due to feelings of possessiveness. This can be divided into the two root downfalls of failing to give the Dharma and of failing to give material assistance.

(3) *The root downfall of failing to accept someone's apology, and striking another*

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You commit this when someone comes to you in the appropriate manner and explains themselves in some way, such as asking your forgiveness or the like. Instead though you remain angry and commit various kinds of harm towards them physically or verbally. This can be divided into the two root downfalls of striking another and of not accepting a person's explanation of themselves.

(4) The root downfall of giving up the greater way, and teaching false dharma

You commit this when you give up the scriptures of the bodhisattva way, saying: "These were not spoken by the Buddha." Then you take pleasure in some false dharma yourself, and teach it to others as well. This can be divided into the two root downfalls of giving up the greater way and of teaching false dharma.

(5) The root downfall of stealing what belongs to the Jewels

You commit this in the following way. There is some material wealth or object which has been dedicated to the Three Jewels. Although you have no right to do so, you intentionally take the thing for yourself. You do so either by yourself or by having someone else do it for you, and by any of the various ways: thieving in stealth, robbing by force, or taking away through some clever means. The downfall is complete when you obtain the thing. This can be divided into three different root downfalls, one each for stealing what belongs to each one of the three different Jewels.

(6) The root downfall of giving up the highest Dharma

You commit this when you discount the scriptural collections of the three ways, which present each and every aspect of the path, by saying "This is not the word of the Buddha." This can be divided into three different root downfalls, one each for giving up the respective scriptural collections of each of the three ways.

(7) The root downfall of taking away the golden robes, and the rest, and removing someone from the status of an ordained person

You commit this when you take an ordained person, whether they be one who is maintaining their morality or not, and take away their golden robes, or beat them, or incarcerate them; or else remove them from the status of being ordained. This can be divided into the two root downfalls of taking away a person's golden robes or the rest, and of removing a person from the status of an ordained person.

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(8) The root downfall of committing an immediate misdeed

You commit this when you commit any one or combination of the following: killing your father, killing your mother, killing an enemy destroyer, creating a schism in the Sangha, or drawing blood from One Thus Gone with evil intent. This can be divided into five separate root downfalls, corresponding to each of the five immediate misdeeds.

(9) The root downfall of holding wrong views

You commit this when you hold to ideas such as "There is no relation between the deeds we commit and the consequences we experience," or "There are no past or future lives," or anything of the like.

(10) The root downfall of destroying towns and such

You commit this when destroy towns, or cities, or whole areas, or entire countries.

This can be divided into the four different root downfalls of destroying towns, and then each of the rest.

(11) The root downfall of teaching emptiness to a person who is not yet mentally prepared

You commit this with a person who has not yet reached a level where he or she can absorb the teachings on emptiness, and yet who has been able to develop the wish to achieve total enlightenment. The downfall is completed when, as a result of your teaching them emptiness, they become frightened—in such a way that they turn back from their wish to achieve full enlightenment, and develop instead a wish to achieve the goals of the lower way.

(12) The root downfall of causing a person to turn back from total enlightenment

Committing this begins when you say the following to a person who has already developed the wish to achieve total enlightenment:

You will never be able to carry out the six perfections, and actually reach Buddhahood. If you strive instead for the goals of the listeners and self-made Buddhas, then you will manage to liberate yourself from the circle of suffering life.

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When because of your talking this way the person turns back from his or her wish to achieve full enlightenment, the downfall is complete.

(13) The root downfall of causing a person to give up the morality of freedom

You commit this with a person who is keeping properly the morality of individual freedom. You say to him or her, "What's the use of keeping the morality of freedom pure? You should rather develop the wish to achieve full enlightenment—you should come over to the greater way." And then you say, "If you do so, you'll be able to stop each and every bad deed committed through any of the three doors of expression."

When because of your talking this way the person turns away from the morality of individual freedom, the root downfall is completed.

(14) The root downfall of holding that a person cannot eliminate desire and the rest by following the way of the learner

You commit this when you hold that the realizations of listeners and self-made Buddhas could never liberate a person from the circle of suffering life: you discount the lesser way, saying "Regardless of how much a person might train himself in the ways of the listeners and the self-made Buddhas, he could never thereby eliminate the mental afflictions in their entirety."

The root downfall of criticizing someone else due to one's desire for the adulation of others

With this root downfall you are reciting teachings of the greater way, or reading them, presenting them to others, or anything of the like, all out of an attachment to material gain or the respect of others. At the same time though you claim, "I am a practitioner of the greater way who has no concern for material gain, the respect of others, or any such thing. That other person though is not this way at all." The downfall is complete when you have expressed the praise on one hand, and the criticism on the other.

It is stated that, since this root downfall is subsumed by the first downfall—that of praising oneself and criticizing others—it should not be counted as a separate downfall.

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(15) The root downfall of professing the complete opposite

You commit this as follows. In actuality, you have yet to perceive emptiness directly. Nonetheless you teach the subject of emptiness to others and say, "Meditate as I have taught you, and you will come to see emptiness; then you'll be just like me." The downfall is completed as soon as the other person grasps the meaning of your words.

(16) The root downfall of accepting what belongs to the Jewels when someone presents it to you

Suppose a king and his minister or any such official is exacting some punishment, and has taken an object that belongs to the Jewels, or to the Sangha, or to an individual monk. And suppose that they offer it to you. You commit this downfall when you accept the thing, and come into possession of it.

(17) The root downfall of rejecting the practice of quietude, and giving the possessions of meditators to those whose practice is recitation

You commit this as follows. Out of feelings of dislike for them, you take away the possessions of meditators who are average people engaged in balanced meditation on quietude. Then you give these possessions to persons whose practice is recitation.

(18) The root downfall of discarding the wish for enlightenment

You commit this if you ever give up the wish for enlightenment.

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Reading Three

Reading Three:

How the Vows are Broken and Repaired, and the Secondary Offenses

The following selection is taken String of Shining Jewels, by Geshe Tsewang Samdrup (early 19th Century), a tutor of His Holiness the Tenth Dalai Lama.

In the case of two of the root downfalls—that is, with this last one and also with the ninth, where you hold to wrong views—it is not necessary for all four of the “binding” mental afflictions to be present in order for a root downfall to occur.

With the other sixteen root downfalls though there must be what we call a "major" instance of the binding mental afflictions. For an instance of the binding mental afflictions to be "major," all four must be present. These four binding mental afflictions are as follows:

- 1) A desire to commit still more of the particular wrong deed;
- 2) A lack of any shame or consideration;
- 3) A sense of enjoyment, and satisfaction; as well as
- 4) Failing to consider one's deed as something wrong.

If one possesses the fourth mental affliction, and on top of it the first three as well, then this is a "major" instance of the binding mental afflictions. There are other cases where one possesses the fourth affliction and in addition to it only two of the first three, or else only one of these three, or perhaps no more than the fourth on its own. All these cases are said to represent a "medium" impurity. The first three are said to be a “lesser” impurity....

How to restore the vows, should they happen to decline

This brings us to the third part in our presentation on the vows of the bodhisattva, which concerns how to restore them, should they happen to decline. Any time you commit one of the root downfalls and a "major" instance of the binding mental afflictions has occurred, or else when something happens like giving up the prayer for the wish for enlightenment or developing wrong

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views, you must take the vows over again.

Whenever you commit offenses that involve a medium level of impurity, you should confess them before a group of three or more persons. Whenever you commit offenses involving a lesser level of impurity, or else any of the forty-six secondary offenses or anything of the like, then you should confess them before a single person.

Any time you commit any other offenses, the best thing you can do is to confess it before a single person, and so on. If you can't do that, then you should confess before an altar with representations of the body, speech, and mind of the Buddha, with a strong feeling that you are performing your confession in the presence of the victorious Buddhas, along with their bodhisattva sons and daughters.

You should also confess and purify yourself through the practices of going for refuge and praying to develop the wish for enlightenment, performing a confession of downfalls, a general confession, meditation and recitation on the practice of the Warrior of Diamond, and so on.

Whenever you perform any of the confessions mentioned throughout here you must do so with all four of the antidote forces complete....

The following selections are taken from the *Highway for Bodhisattvas*, by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419).

We may summarize these points as follows. If a person commits even one of the "defeats" [root downfalls], it is impossible for him or her to attain the first bodhisattva level within the same life. One also loses the spiritual fortune to see the close cause of this attainment, the great collection of virtue necessary to reach the first bodhisattva level, increase in its power (for whatever amount one has already collected) or occur in the first place (for whatever amount one has yet to collect). I need not mention then what happens when you commit these defeats over and over again.

Therefore you must never think to yourself: "Well, even if I did commit one of the defeats, it doesn't matter, I could take my bodhisattva vows over again." Rather you must, at the cost of your very life, avoid ever being defiled by a root downfall of the vows....

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Again we can summarize as follows. Suppose you commit a root downfall, but from the point just after you do so, and on, you do not lose your wish for enlightenment in the form of a prayer. The power of this kind of wish then prevents the fact that you have committed a root downfall from acting as a block that would stop the vows from ever growing again in you. If you lack this kind of wish though there would be nothing to block the power of the root downfall, and this would make your vows something that you could not restore. This is the point of the quotation....

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One may ask the following question:

You've said that, for a major instance of the "chains" to occur, the following case must hold. As for the aspect where something is missing, there must then be a failure for the emotions of shame and consideration to occur, and one must not consider his or her actions something wrong. As for the aspect where something is present, there must a desire to repeat the action in the future, and also pleasure and gladness with what one has done. Both of these aspects must be complete. From what point up to what point must the two lacks of something be, and from what point must the two occurrences of something be?

As for the two lacks of something, they must be continual from the point where one intends to do the action on through to the end of the actual commission of the deed. If though during this interval one feels any sense of shame or consideration, or else during this same interval considers his act to be wrong, then the necessary components of a major instance of the "chains" are not complete.

The case is similar for the two thoughts that must be present. They must occur during the same interval, and on from the completion of the commission of the deed on, in such a way that they are not stopped. It would be too much to say though that they had to occur in one's mind in an unbroken stream throughout this whole period....

Concerning this point, suppose someone gives back his or her bodhisattva vows. He or she has first agreed to accomplish the help and happiness of an infinite number of living beings, and then stopped keeping their vows altogether. As a result they will fall to the lower births, and then be forced to wander there for a very long time; for if one must pass to the lower realms for destroying the happiness of even a single living creature, what need is there to mention what happens when you destroy the happiness of a limitless number of beings? For this and many other reasons is the point above proven....

The above reasons all relate to a case where one gives up the wish for enlightenment in the form of a prayer; and even if one were not to give it up, yet still gave up the great pledge of taking on oneself the deeds of a bodhisattva, it would be nearly the same thing. Therefore it is totally wrong to give back one's vows. Thus too one should consider everything very carefully before one even takes on the vows, for it is very grave if one goes wrong.

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The following reading is taken from the *String of Shining Jewels*, by Geshe Tsewang Samdrup (early 19th Century).

The forty-six secondary offenses

Here next we will explain the forty-six different secondary offenses against the vows of a bodhisattva.

(1) *The secondary offense of failing to make offering to the Jewels through the three doors of expression*

You commit this when a single period of 24 hours passes, and you have not yet made offering to any one or combination of the Three Jewels by means of the three doors of expression; that is, through bowing down with your body, and praising with your words, and admiring with your thoughts.

(2) *The secondary offense of allowing thoughts of desire to go on*

You commit this when you fail to try to stop a thought that comes up in yourself such as an inordinate desire for an object, or not being satisfied with what you have, an attachment to having others pay you honor, or anything of the like.

(3) *The secondary offense of failing to pay respect to one's elders*

You commit this with a person who is your elder in the sense of having taken the precepts of the bodhisattva before you, and who has good qualities, and is worthy of your honor. The offense is done when you fail to pay them respect by honoring them in some way, or the like.

(4) *The secondary offense of failing to answer questions*

You commit this when out of anger or laziness you fail to give an appropriate answer to a person who has asked you a question in a sincere and well-meaning way.

(5) *The secondary offense of failing to accept an invitation*

You commit this when someone invites you to partake of a meal, accept some article of clothing, or anything of the like, but out of pride, or a wish to hurt them, anger, or laziness, you refuse to come.

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(6) The secondary offense of failing to accept gold or the like

You commit this when, out of a desire to hurt them, or out of anger or laziness, you refuse to accept gold or silver or any other kind of material wealth that a sponsor has tried to offer to you.

(7) The secondary offense of failing to give the Dharma to those who wish it

You commit this when—out of a desire to hurt them, or out of anger or envy or laziness – you fail to give the Dharma to those who wish it.

The seven secondary offenses just listed all work against the practice of giving for collecting goodness.

(8) The secondary offense of rejecting persons with sullied morality

Suppose you encounter persons with sullied morality: those who have committed one of the immediate misdeeds, or one of the root downfalls. You commit this offense when, because of what they have done, and with feelings of wanting to hurt them, or out of anger or laziness, you reject and ignore them completely.

(9) The secondary offense of failing to follow the rules, which leads other persons to develop faith

You commit this when you fail to follow the rules of the teachings on discipline, just as though you were someone who belonged to the tradition of the listeners, for this is something that protects the minds of others.

(10) The secondary offense of performing deeds which are only of lesser benefit for all living beings

A bodhisattva need not necessarily observe certain kinds of proscribed morality from the teachings on discipline in the same way that a person of the listener tradition would. An example would be the downfalls which are exclusively proscribed, such as the one in the "abandonment" group, where a monk has kept cloth for over ten days. If it is not incumbent on you to do so and yet still you observe this vow in exactly the same way that someone of the listener tradition would, then you have committed this offense.

(11) The secondary offense of failing to break a rule out of compassion

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There are certain extraordinary situations where specific misdeeds—the seven of taking life and the rest—are allowed for a person who possesses the wish for enlightenment, and who is practicing the precepts of the bodhisattva in the proper way. If you are this kind of person and it would be of extraordinary benefit to others if you did commit such a deed, then you have committed this offense when you fail to do so.

(12) The secondary offense of taking up wrong livelihood

You commit this when you take up any one or combination of the five kinds of wrong livelihood, and fail to take some corrective measure. These five are trying to obtain things through pretending, flattering, hinting, forcing, or baiting.

(13) The secondary offense of forgetting yourself and acting wild

You commit this when you forget yourself and act wild, distracting yourself with fun and games or chattering on in a silly way. You also do so if you try to get others to act wild and so on.

(14) The secondary offense of thinking that you only have to travel through the circle of suffering life

You commit this when you think to yourself, and also say to others, the following: "Bodhisattvas don't like to reach nirvana; in fact, they work for the opposite. They have no fear of the mental afflictions, and they do not try to keep their minds totally away from these thoughts. They only want to achieve Buddhahood, and they wander around in the circle of suffering life for three 'countless' eons."

(15) The secondary offense of failing to put a stop to rumors about yourself

Suppose you have said or done something that has led to some vile rumors or slanderous talk which might cause people to doubt the veracity or purity of what you say. You commit this offense when you fail to take steps to clarify the situation and stop the rumors.

(16) The secondary offense of failing to correct someone when it must be done in a negative way

Suppose another person is committing bad deeds in their actions or speech, and

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you realize that if you took some very forceful action towards them you would be able to set them straight. You commit this offense when, for no more reason than to have them maintain their good opinion of you, you fail then to take this step.

These nine secondary offenses, from the offense of rejecting those with sullied morality down to this last one, work against the practice of morality.

(17) The secondary offense of losing the four points of the practice of virtue

Suppose another person has done any of these four, or something similar, to you: scolded you, gotten angry at you, beaten you, or criticized you. You commit this offense when you respond to them with the same.

(18) The secondary offense of simply ignoring those who are angry

Suppose you have done something wrong towards another person, or even that this person just believes you have done so. You commit this offense if, out of a desire to hurt them, or pride, or laziness, you fail to explain yourself to them in an appropriate manner.

(19) The secondary offense of refusing to forgive another person when they apologize for doing something wrong to you

Suppose another person has done something wrong to you, and they come to you in an appropriate way to explain themselves. If out of a desire to hurt them, or thoughts of malice, or simply because you don't feel like it you refuse to accept this apology, then you have committed the offense.

(20) The secondary offense of allowing thoughts of anger to go on

You commit this when you start to feel anger towards someone, and then continue to hold this anger, and willingly let it go on, because you see nothing wrong with it.

The four secondary offenses just listed all work against the practice of patience.

(21) The secondary offense of collecting a group of disciples out of a desire to have others pay honor to you

You commit this when you collect a group of disciples in hopes of having people

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pay honor to you, or serve you, or make material offerings to you.

(22) The secondary offense of failing to dispel your laziness and the like

This offense refers first of all to the entire day, and to the first and final periods of the night: all but the middle part. Suppose that during this time you quite willingly give yourself up to the pleasant feeling of sleep; or to the pleasure of laying down, staying in bed, or anything of the like. And you do so because of sloth, out of laziness. When you act this way and fail to dispel these tendencies, then you've committed the offense.

(23) The secondary offense of spending time with busy talk because you enjoy it

You commit this offense when you just pass the time in a lot of busy talk that you are all wrapped up in, discussing politics or crimes or the opposite sex or whatever.

The three secondary offenses just listed all work against the practice of effort.

(24) The secondary offense of failing to seek the meaning of meditative concentration

You commit this offense when, despite the fact that you want to learn how to put your mind into balanced meditation, you fail to go to a person who could impart to you the necessary instructions for developing concentration, and you do so out of a desire to hurt someone, or laziness.

(25) The secondary offense of failing to purge yourself of the obstacles to meditation

Suppose you have any one or combination of the five typical obstacles to meditation: the pair of restless desire and missing something or someone; feelings of malice about someone; the pair of drowsiness and mental dullness; attraction to the objects of the senses; and unresolved doubts. You commit this offense when you allow yourself these five, and fail to act to dispel them.

(26) The secondary offense of considering the pleasant sensation of meditation to be an important personal attainment

You commit this when you start to develop a craving for the pleasant feeling you get during meditation, and begin to consider the experience of this to be an

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important personal attainment.

The three secondary offenses just listed all work against the practice of meditation.

(27) The secondary offense of rejecting the way of the listeners

You commit this when you entertain and express to others the opinion that "Those who belong to the lesser way must learn the scriptural collection of the listeners, grasp its meaning and memorize its words, train themselves in it and so on. This is not however necessary for bodhisattvas."

(28) The secondary offense of making efforts in the other system, when our own is available

You commit this in an instance where you do have available to you an opportunity to exert yourself in the scriptural collection of the bodhisattvas, and yet you discard this opportunity, and make efforts instead with the scriptural collection of the listeners.

(29) The secondary offense of making efforts in non-Buddhist texts where no efforts should be made

You commit this in an instance where you do have available to you an opportunity to exert yourself in the word of the Buddhas, and make efforts instead with non-Buddhist texts.

(30) The secondary offense of being attracted, even in a case where one must make efforts

Suppose even that there is a case where there is some compelling need for you to make efforts in non-Buddhist texts. You commit this offense when you engage in this study with feelings of attraction for it throughout the process: at the beginning, during the interim, and in the end.

(31) The secondary offense of rejecting the greater way

You commit this when you say the following words, and thereby discount any particular part of the scriptural collection of the bodhisattvas: "This part is not as good," or "The composition at this point is inferior," or "The author of this part was not the best," or "This part won't contribute to the welfare of living beings."

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(32) The secondary offense of praising oneself and criticizing others

You commit this when, out of pride or anger, you praise yourself and criticize others.

(33) The secondary offense of not going to hear the Dharma

You commit this when, out of pride or laziness, you fail to attend a teaching where someone is explaining the Dharma, or a discussion about the Dharma, or something of the like.

(34) The secondary offense of focusing on the vessel and the letters

You commit this when you fail to think of the person giving you the Dharma as the Teacher himself, and pay him or her the proper respect, and so on. Rather you dismiss them completely, or criticize them behind their backs, and focus on whether the way they express themselves is beautiful or not, instead of focusing on the meaning.

The eight secondary offenses just listed all work against the practice of wisdom; and thus the thirty-four up to here represent offenses that work against the six perfections for collecting goodness.

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Reading Four:

The Secondary Offenses Continued, the Four Black and White Deeds, Keeping the Vows Well, Breaking the Vows, and Antidotes to Breaking Them

The following selection is taken from the *String of Shining Jewels* by Geshe Tsewang Samdrup (early 19th century), a tutor of His Holiness the Tenth Dalai Lama

(35) *The secondary offense of failing to assist someone in need*

Suppose a circumstance arises where it would be appropriate for you to assist someone. We could list eight different kinds of people who might need help:

- 1) Someone who is just undertaking a particular task;
- 2) Someone who is trying to get somewhere;
- 3) Someone who is trying to learn a language;
- 4) Someone who is trying to learn a skill (as long as it is not something harmful);
- 5) Someone who is trying to protect their belongings;
- 6) Someone who is trying to fix a split between people;
- 7) Someone who is planning a virtuous event of some kind;
- 8) Someone who is undertaking some more general virtue.

You commit this offense if, out of anger or laziness, you fail to assist such persons

(36) *The secondary offense of failing to serve the sick*

Suppose a situation arises where it would be appropriate for you to serve and attend to the sick. You commit this offense if, out of anger or laziness, you fail to do so

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(37) The secondary offense of failing to remove suffering

Suppose a person is suffering due to any one or combination of the following seven problems: they are blind, deaf, handicapped, weary from traveling, tormented by any of the five mental obstacles, haunted by thoughts such as malice towards someone, or suffering from defeat at the hands of someone else. You commit this offense if, out of anger or laziness, you fail to make some attempt to remove the suffering they are undergoing due to the problem they have.

(38) The secondary offense of failing to give good reasons to those who are acting in a dangerous way

Suppose someone is acting in a way that is going to be detrimental to their interests in either this or the future life. You commit this offense when, out of anger or laziness, you fail to give them reasons that are clearly logical and also fitting for them, to show why they should stop.

(39) The secondary offense of failing to repay someone who has helped you, by helping them back

You commit this when, out of a desire to hurt someone or out of laziness, you fail to return a kindness done for you.

(40) The secondary offense of failing to dispel another person's grief

You commit this when, out of a desire to hurt someone or out of laziness, you fail to dispel the grief a person is feeling who has lost someone or something dear to them.

(41) The secondary offense of failing to give money or other material things to someone who wants them

You commit this when, out of a desire to hurt someone or out of laziness, you fail to give food and drink or anything of the like to a person who is asking you for them.

(42) The secondary offense of failing to fill the needs of your circle of disciples

You commit this when, out of a desire to hurt someone or out of laziness, you fail

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to grant spiritual advices to your circle of disciples, or when you fail on their behalf to seek out, in the proper way, the things which they need, from householders with faith and the means to help.

(43) *The secondary offense of failing to get along with someone*

You commit this when, out of a desire to hurt someone or out of laziness, you fail to get along with another person.

(44) *The secondary offense of failing to praise someone's good qualities*

You commit this when, out of a desire to hurt someone or out of laziness, you fail to praise another person's good qualities, or else fail to tell them how good something they said was.

(45) *The secondary offense of failing to cut someone off when the time has come to do so*

Suppose a problem has reached a point where the proper thing to do is to chastise someone, or punish them, or even expel them. You commit this offense when, out of mental afflictions or laziness, you fail to do whichever is necessary.

(46) *The secondary offense of failing to use your supernormal powers to threaten someone or such when needed*

Suppose you do possess various magical powers, and a situation has arisen where it would be the right time to use them to frighten a person, or inspire them, or prevent someone without vows from trying to make use of offerings that have been made [to the Sangha] in true faith, or anything of the like. If in such a case you fail to use your powers to frighten the person, or inspire them, or to prevent someone without vows from trying to make use of offerings that have been made in true faith, or anything of the like, then you commit this offense.

The twelve secondary offenses just listed all work against the morality which acts for the benefit of all living beings.

Secondary offenses against the precepts of the prayer for the wish for enlightenment

Here we will list additional offenses, which are committed against the precepts of the prayer for the wish for enlightenment. One would be failing to support those

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whom it would be proper to support, either with Dharma or with material things. Another would be failing to let go of your anger about something someone else had done to hurt you, or else discriminating between people, in the sense of liking some and disliking others.

There is also failing to take yourself to a holy lama, and giving up the practices of learning and contemplation upon what you have learned. Another is failing to have helping others in mind as you partake of food or clothing or any other thing you make use of. A final example would be to engage in any virtuous activity without having in mind the wish to reach enlightenment for the sake of all living beings. All these are spoken to be secondary offenses against the prayer.

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The four black deeds and the four white deeds

There are certain causes that will, further, prevent you from losing the wish for enlightenment in your other lives. For these you will have to give up the four black deeds, and then take up the four white deeds. Here is how to do so.

The first black deed is to intentionally deceive your Lama, or those to whom we make offerings, or any such person, by lying to them. The antidote for doing this is the first of the white deeds, which is never intentionally speaking a lie, even if only in jest, to any single living being there is.

The second black deed is to cause another person to regret some virtuous thing they have done. The antidote for doing this is the fourth white deed, which is to bring a person that you are cultivating to strive for total enlightenment, rather than bringing them to the path of the lower way.

The third black deed is to say something unpleasant to a bodhisattva out of anger. The antidote for doing this is the third white deed, which is to try to conceive of every sentient being as the Teacher himself, and to see all beings and things as totally pure.

The fourth black deed is to act in a devious way with any living being, without any sense of personal responsibility for their enlightenment. The antidote for doing this is the second white deed, where you maintain an attitude of total honesty towards every living being, free of any kind of deception.

The following selections are taken from the *Highway for Bodhisattvas*, written by Tsongkapa the Great (1357-1419).

Here secondly are instructions for protecting your mind from these offenses. Let us first say a word about all the details we have given thus far about the rules that bodhisattvas must follow. There is not one of them which is not taken directly from the sutras themselves; everything from the explanation of the three types of morality on up can be found scattered throughout a variety of sources spoken by the Teacher in the collection of sutras. These scattered references were then explicated, in their entirety, by the realized being Asanga, as he brought them into a single work, and a single lineage, here in the great grandfather of all the books in the scriptural collection for bodhisattvas.

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Since this code of life is such, since it is anything but something that someone just made up, bodhisattvas should develop a sense of respect for it, and follow its rules. This respect should lead them on to three excellent intentions, which bring them to take the vows from another person, and then develop—from the very depths of their hearts—a regard for the code that treats it as the highest of all objects. Finally then they must keep to the code, never violating the rules they have been given.

The three excellent intentions are as follows:

the pure intention where you wish to follow the rules;
the intention where you wish to reach enlightenment; and
the intention of working for the benefit of every living being....

Here thirdly is the method by which the vows can be restored, should one break them. We should of course make every effort to keep our vows from ever being sullied. We may though come to commit an offense through one of the four causes of a downfall: through not knowing the vows, or through carelessness, or an attack of bad thoughts, or else through a lack of respect for the vows. Even should an offense thus occur, we can fix our vows by restoring them in the proper way.

All offenses against the code of the bodhisattvas which are not in the category of "major defeats" belong to the group known as "secondary offenses." It is not though the case that, as with the vows of freedom, there are many different categories of offenses.

If one should commit one of these offenses, then he or she should make a confession to a person who can belong either to the way of the listeners or to the greater way, but who should be able to grasp and comprehend the meaning of the words you are using to communicate your confession.

If the person to whom you are making the confession is someone with freedom vows but without the bodhisattva vows, then they must be either a full monk or a full nun, since it is improper for a novice monk or the like even to be the person to whom you confess a downfall of the freedom vows. Furthermore, I believe that, if the person making the confession were ordained, it would be improper for him or her to do so to a layman, if there were available another ordained person to whom they could confess.

The present text states that, should a person commit one of the actions that

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resemble the major defeats of a monk or nun, and should it further be a "major" instance of the mental afflictions called "chains," then the vows are lost, and must be taken again, for a second time....

Some people have said that secondary offenses committed in an afflicted state of mind must be confessed before someone, should a person be available; but that those committed in a state of mind which is not afflicted may be purified simply in the mind, through the intention of restraining oneself in the future, even though there is available a person to whom you could confess. This practice though is incorrect, for it is stated in the *Levels of the Bodhisattva* that there is no difference between the two cases.

Therefore, in a lesser or medium instance of impurity, and with any of the 45 secondary offenses, one cannot be purified simply with the intention of restraining oneself, should there be available a person to whom you can confess. As such, one should follow the course of action described in the text.

With all the other offenses, it is very desirable if you can confess them before someone, since this will make it easy for you to feel the emotion of shame and embarrassment. If though this is not possible, you should bring to mind all the Buddhas, along with their sons and daughters, and make your confession to them. This is in keeping with the *Chapter on Morality*, which states:

You must admit completely your mistakes, and view them as something wrong; with this knowledge, and this realization of how wrong they are, you must give these actions up. These mistakes too you must confess, as offenses, before the Buddhas and the bodhisattvas, and before those with whom you share the Dharma....

The fifth part of our discussion concerns the division of the downfalls into those which are more serious, and those which are less. As for the instigation, those downfalls committed through ignorance of the vows or through carelessness are the least serious. Those committed through an attack of mental afflictions are moderately serious. And those committed through a lack of respect for the vows are the most serious of all.

As for a person's state of mind, those downfalls committed through the three mental poisons [of liking, disliking, or ignorance] in either lesser, medium, or greater strength are—respectively—serious to a lesser, or medium, or greater degree.

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As for the object of the deed, there can also be cases where the downfall is serious to a lesser, or medium, or greater degree even if it is committed in the same state of mind towards different objects which share a common quality. Suppose for example that an [ordained] person overwhelmed by the same mental "chain," the same kind of dislike, kills any one of the following:

- 1) an animal;
- 2) a human or human fetus who is not their father or mother; or else
- 3) a human who is their father or mother.

In the first case, you commit the kind of deed known as a "fall." In the second, you commit a full defeat which is not one of the immediate misdeeds. In the third case, you commit a full defeat which is one of the immediate misdeeds.

Here next is how downfalls become more or less serious through accumulation. If you commit from one to five downfalls, and fail to rectify it in the proper way, it is considered serious to a lesser degree. If you commit downfalls of a quantity that is countable, and fail to rectify it in the proper way, it is considered serious to a medium degree. If you commit a number of downfalls which is beyond all estimation—that is, more than you could ever say just how many there were—then it is considered serious to a greater degree.

This is how it is explained in scripture; of the three different descriptions presented there, the ones based on the nature and the object of the deed should not be applied literally, but rather in the present context. The other three though are just the same.

Here is what we mean when we say that a person has committed a downfall out of "ignorance." This is where the downfall is committed because the person fails to conceive of the downfall as a downfall; this in turn occurs because the person has not learned what the downfalls are: they have never studied them, or understood them.

Next is a case where you commit a downfall even though you know it's a downfall. This happens when the downfall occurs because, despite the fact that you have learned what all the downfalls are, you fail to keep your mind on what you are doing. This itself occurs because you forget yourself, or fail to stay watchful.

Here's what an "attack of mental affliction" refers to. This happens when one of

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the three poisons takes over your mind, and you are helpless to keep yourself from committing the bad deed; you do it even as you think to yourself, "This is not something I should be doing."

Committing a downfall out of a "lack of respect" means that you do so because, even though you have already learned what the downfalls are, you commit one of them anyway, for one of the nine reasons that follow: (1) You are still attracted to a lower level of behavior; or (2) you fail to live the proper causes in the past, and so you have no appreciation for the way of the practice of virtue; or you have no respect for (3) the state of nirvana; or (4) the dharma; or (5) the community; or else (6) you admit no object of veneration; or (7) you have no sense of shame; or (8) you have no desire to follow the code; or (9) you feel a kind of disrespect where you will do whatever you feel like doing. The first two of the above lead to the kind of downfall which does not involve mental affliction; the latter two lead to the kind which does. All the above is quoted from the abbreviated form of the principal text on the practice of discipline.

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Here are the antidotes for these four causes that lead you to commit a downfall:

- 1) Make yourself an expert in knowing what the downfalls are.
- 2) Keep a high level of mindfulness and vigilance.
- 3) Determine which of the mental afflictions is most prevalent in your character, and make serious efforts to apply the appropriate spiritual antidote.
- 4) Develop a sense of shame, and consideration; maintain deep feelings of respect for the Teacher, and for the precepts.