

Meditation Master JinBodhi's Dharma Teachings :**Understanding Greed, Hatred, Ignorance,
Arrogance and Suspicion**

Good day everyone. (Good day Master.) Please sit down. (Thank you Master.) At this retreat, we're intensifying the cleansing of bodily toxins and purification of mind and thoughts. The root cause of many of our worries and problems is accumulated karma from our many lifetimes, and our parents. To an even larger extent, it's caused by our greed, hatred and ignorance. You might think I'm talking about Buddhist concepts. Some say they want to learn truths instead of religious concepts, especially if they're non-Buddhists. It doesn't matter what you believe in since I'm talking about basic truths.

Greed, hatred and ignorance were emphasized by the founder of Buddhism, Sakyamuni Buddha. I've also studied the concept extensively. Generally, our troubles arise from our thoughts. Where do troublesome thoughts come from? From greed, hatred and ignorance. Foremost, many troubles begin with greed. For example, you'd like better clothes, better food, a bigger house, a better school and university for your kids, and a better car. Those are all beyond basic needs. After owning something, you desire better things beyond the basics. Should you possess these things? I'd say it's not wrong to own things. Things in this world aren't absolute. Poverty and wealth are relative. There are no inherent definitions. So greed is the root of all evil. We're worried and pained due to greed. Our daily struggles and worries also come from greed. At the least, greed is the root cause. Many people who make large investments lose their money. Why? Everyone knows the answer is greed. Greed led to monetary losses. Many people talk to me about this subject, more than 100 people a year.

"Master, please help me. I lost 20 million US dollars in investments. Can you help me get it back? If you can, we'll split the money 50/50."

I said, "It's neither a game of cat and mice nor cop and thief. Split what?"

"I'm suffering so much!"

Are people with so much money smart or stupid? Smart of course. Why would such smart people do such foolish things? With \$10 million, you could live the good life in the US, right? (Right) You can spend \$1 million to rocket up to see the goddess of the moon, Chang'e. There's that possibility these days. Even in developed countries, \$10 million gives you a wealthy, leisurely life in a big house with two dogs. What a leisurely life, right? You swim in the summer, ski in the winter, and eat KFC every day. Anyway, you can have a luxurious life. Why bother investing? Do you think it's smart of them or not? People with so much money are normally smart. But they invest only to lose it all. They're the fools among the smart, right? Why do smart people do such stupid things? (Greed) Yes, you're right. The people in this corner are so sincere that they've quickly understood. I like you! (Got it!)

Greed can trap you. There's a Facebook video of a clever inventor of countless mousetraps. I had a look. No matter how clever the mouse, all the traps had delicious bait to lure it. Thus, the mouse falls into the bottle and can't escape. When greed arises, people cannot behave rationally. When someone has \$10 million and loses it all in an investment, this foolish behavior is born out of greed. A lay Buddhist practitioner in Vancouver said to me,

"Master, punish me. Discipline me, please."

I asked, "It's early in the morning. What happened?"

He said, "Oh. Last night, I lost \$200,000."

I asked, "Did you get robbed?"

He said, "No, I went to the casino."

"Back in the day, in Macau, I made a lot of money gambling. How come I lost money here?"

I said, "Stop bragging about gambling. Who can win against the casinos?"

He said, "If I'd known, I'd have been better off donating this money."

I replied, "Oh, you're right."

"When we built the Bodhi Center, you asked for an IOU to lend me \$2,000. You even charged me interest. How could you lose so much last night?"

This is a so-called smart person. These types are mathematically gifted and have a strong nose for speculation. When they do business, they don't go for hard-earned money. If he thinks there's an opportunity, he casts the net where he thinks there's a school of fish. By casting the net, he reaps lots of fish and gets rich easily. He didn't have to endure the long, difficult process of growing his business. So, he got rich in a speculative act. Do you plan to get rich gambling? What do you think casino bosses do? Their job is to rob. If you're a thief, then he's a robber. Do you think a thief can win out over a robber? Greed, whenever you're not careful, can trap you. At its worst, it'll leave your family broken and you without a safe haven.

Greed is the root of all evil. Greed is the excessive pursuit of things beyond one's basic needs.

What does "hatred" in "greed, hatred and ignorance" refer to? Resentment, hatred and anger. When someone is angry, they talk nonsense and offend people. Generally, if someone is resentful, our initial impression of this person is that they're bad-mannered and hateful. But if you'd been cheated of all your money, wouldn't you hate? Is it a mistake to hate? No, it's the result of causality or karma, right? You hurt me. So, I hate you. This is not a mistake. Regardless, hatred generates negative energy, which may result in revenge. There's no limit to the retaliation, right? You hit me. So, I kick you. You defraud me of \$20. So, I cheat you of \$60. Generally, this is the case. But in our self-cultivation, when greed, hatred or ignorance arises, significant trouble also arises. The expression for this phenomenon is "If revenge breeds revenge, will there ever be an end to it?"

It refers to the escalating, cumulative negative energy in vengeance. Greed, hatred and ignorance lead to tremendous emotional fluctuations. Superficially, we call it emotions. In fact, it eventually leads to harm of oneself and others. We don't get so emotional when we're alone. Usually, we get emotional when interacting with others. No matter who is right or wrong, emotions always play out the way small flames turn into a huge forest fire. Many forest fires start from loggers who are smoking and leave behind partially extinguished cigarettes, which

leads to embers. When the embers land in a pile of dry leaves, they ignite a blaze. Similarly, emotions constantly accumulate and escalate. Sometimes when two people bicker over a trivial matter, it can lead to vengeance and vendettas. In the end, it causes the demise of two families.

So, I've had first-hand knowledge of trivial financial arguments or disputes between counterparts which ended in murder and prison sentences. For example, if a man were sentenced to prison, his wife might commit suicide, his children become mentally ill, and his elderly mom driven mad. His family had been fairly prosperous, making a good living, but when he saw a money-making factory, he started a copycat business. Naturally, he began to worry a lot. Finally, quarrels escalated to murder. He didn't just kill one person. Two families were destroyed in the end. Buddha taught us that to attain a healthy body and mind, we need to recognize the source of our illnesses and troubles. Only if we identify the root cause, will we quickly resolve our problems. If you don't realize this, meditation won't be of much use. You may feel good physically after meditating for 2 weeks, but once home and faced with minor family conflicts, you'll get angry again. You get greedy and invest poorly, get lustful, or die in a speeding sports car. All these things could happen. Emotions can in fact severely impact our bodies. The human body cannot withstand these emotions. In fact, these are fluctuations in emotion. Some scientists study, let's say, a loyal person's life. Loyalty makes them more vulnerable. After a few break-ups, they have a few cracks in their DNA, similar to engravings on stone. People say, "I've fallen out of love."

How would you say it in English? (Heartbroken) "My heart aches" and "I'm heartbroken" express the same emotion. The Chinese express it similarly. When asked why someone is crying, they reply, "My heart hurts" or "My heart is broken". All approximately the same. We think broken-heartedness is an emotion. Would broken-heartedness hurt our health? Think about it. It would. Today's medical technology may not be advanced enough to detect the damage to your heart. But damage to your brain is inevitable.

Hatred, encompassing resentment and anger, leads to revenge. Revenge will produce an endless cycle of damage. Greed, hatred and ignorance are the source of trouble and disease. It's better to solve the problem fundamentally, at its root. Greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance and suspicion. Ignorance signifies

stupidity, foolishness and an inability to learn. With no desire to learn anything, you know nothing. You can't contribute to society in any way. In order to contribute to society, you need a skill. What if you had a job as a shoe shiner or a cobbler? Is that okay? Of course. Some shoes leak when the seams split. It's a waste to throw them out, but they're leaking. A cobbler could make them good as new with a few stitches. A good job, right? You spend \$10 fixing a \$100 pair of shoes. A little handiwork is completely worth it. You can make a living in this world while helping others. If you were more capable, you could instead invent shoes that moved people along without them having to walk. You'd benefit society even more. You may become a teacher, a principal, CEO or a president. If you have a compassionate, kind heart, you can truly improve the welfare of people. So, your ability might be large or small. Do your best to learn more so that you can make a living. You can be ignorant of skills, knowledge and understanding of universal laws.

You learn a skill to become a chef, barber, beautician, tailor or doctor. It's a skill to learn and practice. Once you possess this skill, you can benefit others and make a living. Second, you learn morality which is in the realm of self-cultivation. A moral person is virtuous and was thus called a sage in the past. Citizens relied on the emperor's virtue. Are you virtuous as a governor or a mayor? If a school principal had no virtue, students would suffer. Who knows what sort of depravity might occur. So, to be a leader of many, you not only need to have ability but, more importantly, noble virtues and morality. Well, do universities offer a major in morals and virtues? No, right? A virtuous and moral person can affect the well-being of others. If a politician with great morals were in office, people under his rule would benefit greatly. This is all a specific type of knowledge called good knowledge (kalyāna-mitra). According to Dharma, people with kalyāna-mitra have the noblest character and the utmost merit and virtue. Feelings and attitude toward things and situations may seem trivial. In fact, different attitudes lead to different outcomes, including warfare between two countries. The leader of one country picks on another country over trivial matters. That's because his tolerance, endurance and macroscopic viewpoint are lacking. Other than these traits, he also lacks cultivation of compassion and morality. So, disputes resolved between two countries with economic cooperation or other means result in peace. But once military force is used, the outcome is destruction.

Dispute outcomes depend on the leader's fortitude, wisdom and compassion. When he is sufficiently virtuous, he'll be able to peacefully handle things well. I'm not noble enough to try to persuade everyone to become a Buddha. My understanding of the Buddha's teachings can be applied to our lives, to a larger or smaller extent, whether it be for kings or ordinary people. If you can handle things well, you'll be at ease and free. Great ease doesn't mean you're hiding in the mountains. You'd hardly be at ease hiding in the mountains alone, right? You'd be filthy, having had no bath for more than a year. So, no need to be a hermit. A woman who realizes universal laws can have great ease as her husband's helpmate and mother of their kids. Her mind is free, though she cares for her kids, because she understands universal truths. So, she's naturally at ease and free, as if she were above the mundane.

Ordinary people become irrational and confused over little things. The irrational amongst us act like kids. When you tell a kid not to touch electrical outlets, he'll poke at it until he gets a shock. You tell the kid not to touch wild dogs. He still grabs the dog and only becomes afraid after he's bitten. If an adult doesn't understand universal laws, he'll have a hard life. That's why I always teach youth to learn to love reading. It's also mentioned in Master JinBodhi's Golden Words. I love to read. Why? Reading is the most cost-effective business deal. Everyone wants to make money, right? Using a little to win big is the highest state of doing business, right? Then, the best deal is reading. Even a careless person will research carefully in order to write a book. They'll write all their wisdom and the essence of their knowledge into the book. The author doesn't want to be mocked. He consolidates his life and wisdom into a 100,000-word book. You'll read his life's wisdom in 2 days maximum. You may read the book at 15, 20, 30, 50, or 70 years old. But that's just the whole or 1/2 or 1/10 of your own lifetime. Reading enables you to absorb someone else's wisdom of a lifetime. So, the best deal is to read books on morality, compassion and loving-kindness. These books are the greatest help to us.

Ignorance means a lack of knowledge and inability to learn. Reading is the easiest and most effective way to grow your wisdom. I'm briefly explaining greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance and suspicion. What is arrogance? The arrogant feel that they're better than others. An arrogant person may have some skills. But a greatly talented and wise person wouldn't be arrogant.

Those with some skills but no higher morals easily become arrogant. Arrogant people we meet in our daily lives tend to annoy us as they're slick. In fact, the emptier, the more arrogant they act to armor themselves. No one is allowed to comment on their shortcomings. If a northerner is skilled at making noodles, after being complimented, she'll arrogantly announce herself China's noodle queen. In fact, 8 or 10 women in her village make better noodles. Lack of insight means you don't understand the world. A good portion of Chinese village chiefs talk to me in a certain way. "Bro, free food and board in my territory. Anyone annoys you, I'll fight them. I'm the emperor here. My word is law."

They posture and pose, fueled by liquor, and act like a head bandit. But whenever he encounters someone tougher, even an old lady, he cowers. When his office is succeeded by another, he becomes a nobody. He becomes so depressed that he doesn't talk to people anymore. Arrogant people don't realize there's always someone better. There's no limit in the Universe. Arrogant people are ignorant and have a narrow perspective. Their worldview isn't elevated or broad enough. People with great wisdom aren't arrogant. Let's talk about suspicion. For example, I may doubt things I don't understand. That's not wrong. But the 5 poisons are usually negative. Some even elicit a sense of guilt. Suspicion refers to skepticism that you feel toward the words of your master or the Buddha. You ask, "Is it absolute truth?"

In fact, it's not easy to be a Buddha. If his higher realm teachings turn out to be false or aren't absolute truths, his teachings will be debunked and he'll have no believers or followers. We wish to use our human wisdom to follow in the footsteps of sages to understand the world thoroughly. So, the truth they teach and the world they lead us into cannot be wrong. We learn from sages to truly understand this world and to be free of suffering and to gain happiness. Thus, once the fundamental Dharma is wrongly taught, it'll truly harm people. Therefore, I won't easily lecture on Buddhist sutras, because each sutra speaks to a specific level of understanding and situation, cognition of certain things, or teachings of the Buddha. So, it's useless for me to go over a sutra with you. Even worse, if you don't get it, you might decide to stop self-cultivating. You'll incorrectly understand teachings in Buddhist sutras. Thus, you'll lose normal perceptions on how to behave and act. You'll be disillusioned and disappointed with it all. So when I explain things, I don't joke about the most important

subjects. That's to say, what I teach must be correct. I've understood it well and explained it in the hopes you'll understand. In this way, you'll be able to reach the final state of freedom and ease. Suspicion refers, especially in Buddhism, to mistrust of the Buddha. This includes when I teach you Dharma in order for you to benefit, and you react by saying that you trust the Buddha but not me. What I share with you are Buddha's teachings. I explain my understanding of Buddha's teachings in order that everyone will be free from suffering and won't make those mistakes again. Don't doubt what I say. If you're always scrutinizing, you might doubt for a lifetime. You should practice what you've learned immediately after hearing it. Instead, you suspiciously ask, "Is this right? Is it okay?"

You'll miss out on self-cultivation for a lifetime. Though there's reincarnation, the concept of past and present lives, sometimes if you miss the chance to learn Dharma in this lifetime, you might not be born a human in your next life on this Earth. There won't necessarily be an appropriate Dharma for you to learn. You might not reincarnate as a human, and even if you do, you might not be born in Asia, but rather Africa. There won't be many opportunities for you to learn Dharma.

This is a manifestation of virtues, causality and karma. For example, my teaching today is meant to help everyone to be happy. I hope Buddhadharma can easily be understood by everyone. I hope you'll think deeply about what I've left unsaid but have hinted at. Your confidence determines whether you'll understand in this lifetime. If you're confident, you'll practice it in this life. Today, I've explained to you Buddha's teachings. So, you should take action sincerely. If you don't have confidence, you won't act. It would be a missed opportunity. It's rare to be human and to encounter Dharma. The sutras go into details about the opportunity to learn Dharma. To be human and hear Buddhadharma is rare. The result depends on your intention and level of cooperation. But when I teach Buddhadharma, I don't usually use the sutras' exact words. There's no need to stress everyone out. I want to make it easier for you to absorb and understand. Only then will you be able to better apply it in your lives.

Since we're talking about "suspicion" in the 5 poisons, I need to be clear. What I've just taught is somewhat different than my usual teachings. This is in the hopes that everyone can gain confidence. As an ordinary person, our knowledge,

wisdom, understanding, experience and meditation practice isn't enough for us to have the wisdom to tell right from wrong. How do we differentiate then? It's just like going to see a doctor when we're sick. Should you take the doctor's prescribed medicine? You go home to mull over whether you should take it or not. Generally, there's no need to be suspicious of the doctor's prescription. You're better off just taking the medication, which is usually effective. So, doubting your master is the same as doubting the doctor's prescription. You wonder if the doctor diagnosed you correctly, and delay taking the medicine. In the 1990s, I met a famous Traditional Chinese Medicine doctor in Beijing. When I saw his business card, I said, "Wow, you're the famous expert of Chinese medicine!"

"That's an undeserved reputation," he said. After we got to know each other, his students told me about the situation. When patients come face to face with the doctor, many begin to get better. They'd been hoping to see this incredibly famous, god-like doctor. So, having the prescription in hand or chatting while the doctor takes their pulse was enough for the patient's headache to ease. His confidence induced self-healing. The pain was gone before any medication was taken. The patient asks if he needs the medicine. "You'd better take it," the doctor says. So, meeting a well-known doctor produced self-healing without medication. Patients felt better without medicine. So, we don't have the wisdom to verify fundamental truths that help us end suffering. There's no way to tell if it's right or wrong. Especially with Buddhadharmas, I say just believe. We don't have the wisdom to judge it. Just believe. Having the chance to learn is good enough. But in terms of Dharma teachers, they vary in their practice and understanding. Some masters have a deeper cultivation and understanding. So, you'll easily understand their teaching.

Others aren't able to teach well due to karma or lack of life experience. So, the Dharma they teach will be difficult to understand. Some intend to teach clearly, but the more you listen, the more confused you are. There are such masters. There are yet others who can become a Buddha themselves but are unable to teach. It all depends on each self-cultivator's fate and karma. So, to practice well and gain wisdom, don't self-harm or harm others. Begin by understanding the 5 poisons: Greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance and suspicion. If you can understand all this, you can even self-heal without meditation. Simply put, self-healing begins with a state of nobility in one's heart. Some problems and

diseases come from a lifetime of bad habits. I believe that with our understanding of this lecture, even a tumor or bone spur, which is not easily healed, can be managed or healed through our thoughts. At the very least, it won't reoccur or get worse. It's as easy as that. But we still need to recognize Nature's Law. No matter how well we meditate, Nature has a way and a reason for us to leave this world.

Sometimes, a person passes without reason. In a survey of centenarians, many passed without illness. They died of organ degeneration. They didn't have diabetes, heart disease or cancer. They simply left this world. After we understand all this, reincarnation aside, we should stop making mistakes, causing harm or being greedy in this life. Only then will we be physically and mentally healthy and free. In such a state of mind, when we practice today's teachings, we'll find it easy to be one with that realm and benefit greatly. So, we focus on practicing the Meditation of Greater Illumination (GI). Let me explain GI a bit. What's the illumination in GI? What's the opposite of illumination? (Darkness) The opposite of illumination is darkness or ignorance. Darkness refers to a dark external environment. Ignorance refers to darkness within our minds. So, we cannot clearly see our life path. Many of us don't know how we became wealthy or how we wound up in Toronto or Canada. Dazedly, you went with the flow and wound up here due to good luck. The pulsation of life led you here because of your luck and merits. But many of you can't differentiate between right and wrong. So, the real purpose of GI is to illuminate the darkness within us. Why? So that we know what to do in life and are able to see through our own behavior.

What's the meaning of "Greater" in GI? It means infinite. If my heart is illuminated with compassion, I hope that my heart becomes a light that lights up my entire body. After my body has been illuminated, it in turn becomes a light that illuminates the world around me. When light falls on any sentient being or human, their bodies turn into lights as well. May everyone's heart be bright. May everyone's body turn into a light that illuminates the world around them. This continues to light up the whole world. That's why it's called Greater Illumination. If people's hearts were illuminated, clear and wise, this world would be extremely peaceful and perfect.

How many people live in fear their entire life? Almost everyone bumps around in pitch black darkness. That's spatial ignorance. Our brains' so-called rational wisdom neither shines any light nor shows us any path. So, you do drugs, visit prostitutes and murder when life guides you to do so, because you have no idea how to behave. That's why illumination is so important. If our lives and bodies were illuminated, our mind would be illuminated too. Without greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance and suspicion, you'd be able to quickly attain the state of great ease and freedom. OK. Thank you everyone. Suspicion in Buddhism refers to mistrust in the Buddha or the master who teaches Dharma. Practicing doubtfully is a waste of this lifetime. To gain wisdom and illumination, begin by understanding the 5 poisons and practicing self-reflection.