

~ Three Ways of Relating to Emotions ~

Abandoning

By Mingyur Rinpoche

Normally, in the Tibetan Buddhist meditation tradition, we have three ways of dealing with emotion. We call these, "abandoning, transforming," and "seeing the nature of emotions." These are the three.

The first one is the basic one — abandoning. When we feel an emotion, what we have to do is to not let us be controlled by the emotion. You bring in awareness, you notice, and you catch the emotion. Then you let go of the emotion. The main important thing for this is that you try to abandon the emotion, you try to get away from the emotion. One also tries many ways of reasoning: what is the result if you follow emotions? What is the problem? If you are free from emotions, what are the benefits?

Let us use anger or hatred. What is the result of hatred? You are not happy. You make others unhappy. When you have hatred, more than 90 percent of whatever you see is not real and not true. So you try to use reasoning. And then you try to be aware of yourself. Whenever anger comes, you try to practice the antidote — maybe compassion, or maybe emptiness — you are trying to get rid of that emotion, to get rid of anger, and you tell yourself, "I am not going to be angry. I am not going to be angry."

That is the basic idea of abandoning emotions.