

~ *Recognize, Familiarize, and Integrate* ~

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I say again and again that the view is important in Dzogchen. But maybe you do not know what the view is. I mentioned a little bit about how the “view” means the “perspective,” the “principle,” or the “belief” — these are the view. Normally, the view comes with reasoning. A logical understanding about yourself, the situation, and the world — that is also the view. The cognitive level of understanding is also the view.

In Dzogchen, the view is important, but it begins with the cognitive level. It is still on an intellectual or conceptual level. But when we practice again and again, it goes beyond the intellectual or conceptual level and comes to the meditation level. Meditation is more at the experiential or feeling level.

Normally, in all the great meditation lineages of Tibetan Buddhism, we need to unify and combine the view, meditation, and application. This is really important.

Why? Our mind has three aspects. The reasoning, intellectual, or thinking aspect is the first part. The second is the feeling aspect that we have: the emotional, experiential, feeling, or intuition aspect. These are the second part of the mind. The third is the unconscious level of the mind, almost like an automatic level. There are a lot of habitual patterns, automatic behaviors, beliefs, thoughts, and emotions on the unconscious level. Those are the three parts.

First is the cognitive or thinking level; second is the feeling or emotional level; third is the unconscious or habitual pattern level. These are the three aspects within us. When we want to transform, we have to work with these three aspects — the thinking, feeling, and

habitual levels. When we work with all three aspects, then we can transform.

In Dzogchen, this is really important, but the strongest emphasis is on the view. The view is how you try to look at the nature of reality to see what things are, and not just stay with how things appear to you. To see the way things are is the view, the nature of reality.

The view in Dzogchen is *rigpa*, to recognize primordial awareness, pristine awareness, or pure awareness. There are many translations now. In Tibetan, we call it “rigpa.” We need to recognize rigpa. Rigpa is the fundamental quality of our mind, the nature of our mind, and that is buddha nature. That is the original purity or enlightened nature, so we need to recognize that. That is the view. The first focus is on the recognition of nature of mind. After that, we learn to stay with that through meditation.

Meditation is using mindfulness, awareness, or one-pointedness to remain in rigpa. We are not lost — we come back and stay in the recognition. To try to stay with rigpa continuously — that is what we mean by “meditation” on the Dzogchen level.

In Mahamudra, we do not need to recognize nature of mind first. When you try to recognize nature of mind in the beginning, then it becomes artificial meditation. In Mahamudra, we say, “Just stay with however your mind is. Stay with a completely ordinary mind but do not get lost. You do not have to particularly meditate. Be completely natural.” That is the Mahamudra style.

But in Dzogchen, *first* we look at the essence of all these thoughts, emotions, feelings, and everything. What are all these thoughts, emotions, and feelings? The original purity, rigpa, or nature of mind. And we continue to stay there, continue to stay there, and that is meditation.

Then the third important part is the application. The application is to maintain the recognition of rigpa by bringing it into everyday life,

while you are walking, talking, eating, and especially with negative emotions.

When I was young, I tried to recognize rigpa with panic. I did not have to do anything with the panic. I did not have to look at it either. When you look at panic, that is shamatha style. Here, you do not do anything with the panic but rather just recognize the essence of panic, which is rigpa. You just drop everything and be with rigpa. Then panic comes and goes, and you do not have to do anything with it. If the panic says, "Ha ha, ho ho, blah blah blah, yada yada yada," it is okay.

This is what we call "*chok zhak*," meaning to drop and to be with the mind as it is. Practice this with panic, depression, stress, and everyday life, and not only with one activity but also while in a meeting, walking, exercising, driving, or drinking tea or coffee. Integrate that in everyday life.

There is just one thing and that is rigpa, and everything focuses on rigpa. Then, in Dzogchen we say that slowly, slowly, everything will transform. Everything will be liberated by just recognizing that one thing, which is rigpa. The traditional example in Dzogchen is that once a king sits on the throne, all the work is done by the ministers and generals, the work of the entire country is done by them. The king stays on the throne and guides and all the work is automatically done. The king does not need to go down to the police or army or clean the roads or streets. There is no need to do those things. That is the traditional example.

In Dzogchen, that is how the view, meditation, and application are integrated together. When we bring these three together, real transformation happens. Otherwise, just having the view does not get you anywhere. If you have some recognition of the nature of mind but do not practice and become lazy and busy, you will not get anywhere.

Or if you try to meditate but do not recognize the nature of mind, then your meditation is just a fantasy, you are just faking it. That is just fabrication, you make it up, it is not real, it is fake, so you will not get anywhere.

Then, even if you have some view, the recognition of rigpa and some maintenance, but do not bring this into your life, with your hatred, jealousy, depression, stress, pride, and ego, it will not be easy to transform. We say this is like "putting a target in the east and shooting an arrow into the west." If you do not integrate it into everyday life, especially with problems and obstacles, it will not be very effective. We need to combine these three.