

## **Some Principles of Chod.**

**Cutting through** what binds us, makes us not free. – This can manifest on all levels, both **inner and outer obstacles**, what we fear and what we desire, but ultimately comes down to **ego-clinging tendencies**, which arise out of ignorance; out of our identification with a fixed separate 'self'.

A lot of these concerns revolve around the physical body, will it be ok, will it get what it needs? Will it survive? We can be dominated by these concerns.

We are incredibly limited by our over-involvement with our sense experience. This is instead of being fully engaged with it, aware and alive in the 6 sense fields, but letting it all come and go.

**So, we release our identification with the limited body and instead identify with freedom, love and compassionate awareness represented by Prajnaparamita.**

**But Chod is also a practice of Bodhicitta and of healing.** In order to gain more and more freedom to feel less and less separate, we **offer**.

### **Who offers?**

Maintain a connection with that perspective of freedom, love and compassionate awareness, a sense of complete openness and lack of self-reference, a sense that it is this dimension that the practice is coming from, not 'me' doing the practice. Keep recommitting to this if it gets lost. Relax, release, open.

### **What do we offer?**

We offer the body which is seen in a very positive light, but we are no longer enslaved by it. It's the deepest, closest, most intimate, precious thing we can offer: 'when I give I give myself'.

### **How do we offer it?**

The body is completely transformed into nectar. In essence, like everything else, it is a flow of conditions, manifesting in this unique way, but totally ungraspable. So it is an expression of the nature of all phenomena, and from the perspective of Prajnaparamita this is its most important characteristic. It is also this perspective on it which is the most freeing, the most healing.

But because it actually doesn't have a fixed nature it can transform into whatever beings need. So through this offering, they are satisfied on all levels, both immediate and concrete, filled with joy and brought into connection with that ultimately freeing compassionate awareness.

The offerings are only limited by our imagination, can be far more than what they might need. And we feed them until they are completely satisfied.

### **Who do we offer it to?**

Absolutely anybody or anything that wants or needs it. Forces of nature, people closely associated with us, or anyone we are aware of that could benefit from healing or freeing from bondage. We Usually begin by offering to the Refuges, Then we offer particularly to anyone that strengthens our sense of separation, alienation, strengthens our pride and clinging to self, because that is where the energy is tied up, it's where the bondage is. So, we invite and 'feed' our enemies, whatever or whoever frightens us, whatever or whoever is a cause of pride. We are limited by our reactions and responses, but from the perspective of Prajnaparamita there is nothing to fear and nothing to protect. By feeding them with her nectar we bring our deepest fears into relationship with that perspective, which is the only way in which they will be completely freed.

So it may seem like we are offering to outer sources of attachment (our family, those who cause difficulties, forces that are harming the environment), but we are also always feeding our inner obstacles, our limiting views and attitudes, restrictive likes and dislikes, etc...

Because we keep coming from this free compassionate perspective we can call out, invite from the shadows, the forces and difficulties which influence us and hold their power over us, secure in the knowledge that they too can be freed and healed, not by 'me' but by this enlightened perspective.

In practice we can rest open and invite whatever wants to emerge to be released or healed.

Finally we all rest together, completely satisfied and healed and full of joy, beyond the 3 circles of giving (no giver, receiver or gift), in the open perspective of Prajnaparamita.