

Study Guide
Enlightened Society Assembly 2014

Texts: by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche

Ruling Your World

Turning the Mind Into an Ally

The Enlightened Society Treatise

The Shambhala Principle

Texts by Chögyam Trungpa

Myth of Freedom

Shambhala The Sacred Path of the Warrior

Sanity We Are Born With

I. Questions drawn from *The Shambhala Principle*

The following are questions meant to encourage us to contemplate what the Sakyong is presenting in *The Shambhala Principle*. At the same time, these questions are meant to help surface our hidden doubt about basic goodness and the possibility of good human society on this Earth. Indeed, this journey of examining doubt is an essential part of the Sakyong's own journey as he describes it in the book. If the Sakyong needs to look at these themes and his own doubt, surely it is useful for us to do so too!

Prologue

1. What is the importance of human nature—who we feel we are—in human society? "At this crossroads, how humanity views itself at some deep level is going to make or break the situation."
2. Why is the transference of the wisdom of basic goodness of ourselves and society nonverbal?
2. How are mind and society interdependent?
3. Can trusting Basic Goodness alter the nature of our reality?
4. How does interpersonal dialogue help us reflect to see what is meaningful?

1. Beginnings

1. What is a Sakyong? What is the Sakyong's duty?(10)
2. Given what Trungpa Rinpoche had experienced in losing his homeland, how could he trust basic goodness? Wasn't he naive in doing so?

2. The Shambhala Principle

1. What does the Sakyong do? "The sakyong wakes people up to their basic goodness." How does he do this?

2. The Shambhala principle is an underlying universal theme that exists throughout obvious and not-so-obvious threads of human thought." (16) Can you recognize Shambhala principles in historic traditions and philosophies you may have studied?
3. How is Shambhala "the source of happiness?" How is it a place? How is it a path? (17-18).
- 4". No matter how difficult and painful life may be, basic goodness is undiluted by conditions for it cannot change." (19) Why isn't basic goodness subject to change?
 "There seems to be a lot of evil in the world, and many of us experienced great skepticism about human nature." (20) How do you experience this skepticism? How does doubt in basic goodness affect you, your experience of the world, and society?

3. Essential Instructions

1. How does being in nature help our understanding of basic goodness become less conceptual and more experiential?
2. "Basic goodness cannot be transmitted, but only pointed out." Why?
3. How can spirituality be misunderstood to mean closing down or sense perceptions? (27)
4. "[Confidence] unlocks something that has been a prisoner for a long time." (32) What is held prisoner?

4. Creation vs. Destruction

1. How does raising windhorse address the problem: "We pretend to eat our food, wear our clothes, and put up our hair—but in whatever we do there is a notion that everything is half-done. There is no sense of dignity at all." (34)
2. Why is it the case that, "The more unenlightened society gets, the more powerful the possibility of enlightening it"? (35)
3. How does invigorating our sense of worthiness give us the bravery to be here for the planet? (43)

5. Chaos is Good News

1. Why is chaos a "pivot point" for touching our goodness? (46)
2. Why is it the "human vocation to make the impossible possible? (47)
3. What distinction is the Sakyong making between "the survival of the fittest" and "the survival of the aggressive." (49)

6. Being Brave

1. Why doesn't worry help? (53)
2. How does bravery relate to *ziji*, (59)
3. What is the meaning of virtue in the warrior's path?

II. Questions drawn from *Ruling Your World* , *Shambhala The Sacred Path of the Warrior*, *Turning the Mind Into an Ally*, and *The Enlightened Society Treatise and Myth of Freedom*:

Level I and Meditation in Everyday Life:

What is the relationship between the practice of meditation and discovering basic goodness? (TMA Ch. 1, 3, SSPW Ch. 2)

What is the relationship between basic goodness, creating an Enlightened Society and the genuine heart of sadness? (SSPW Ch. 1-3)

Level II and Contentment in Everyday Life

What is the relationship between the cocoon, fear and suffering? (SPW Ch. 7,

What is Maitri? Why is it important to have gentleness and friendliness toward oneself on the path of warriorship? (SSPW, Cp. 2)

What is the connection between the steadiness and mindfulness of the tiger and contentment?
(RYW, Chs 4 & 9)

Discuss these approaches to working with emotions: outer (mindfulness discernment & refraining from causing harm) and inner (stay, neither acting out nor suppressing); and give some examples of how you work with these approaches in your practice.
(RYW, Ch. 5; MF, section on Working With Emotions,

What does the expression, “The confidence of contentment” mean to you personally. How do you experience this as a warrior practitioner on the Path of the Tiger.
(Ruling Your World, chap. 9.)

Level III and Joy in Everyday Life

Briefly describe each of the six paramitas. What is the relationship between the six paramitas and windhorse?
(TMA, Ch. 21)

What are the four limitless ones? What is the relationship between practicing the four limitless and the joy of the snow lion? (TMA, Ch. 18; RYW, Ch. 12, 13, 14)

What is the relationship between renunciation, virtue, and the joyful discipline of a warrior in the world? Comment on the statement “The only way to loosen the grasp of karma is to engage in virtue”.
(SSPW, Ch. 8 and 9.)

Level IV and FIEL:

What is the relationship between fear and fearlessness? Describe how you personally work with fear and fearless in your daily practice, in your life?

(SSPW Chap. 4.)

What is the role of inquisitiveness on the warrior's path? How does that connect with prajna and the paramitas of the bodhisattva path?

(SSPW Chaps. 7 & 9)

What is "letting go," and how is it connected with the discipline of renunciation? Give an example of this from your own experience.

(SSPW Chaps. 8 & 10)

Why do we need to contemplate impermanence and death? What does this have to do with the outrageousness of the Garuda.

(RYW, Ch. 15; SSPW, Ch. 20: "The Warrior of Outrageous")

Level V and WIEL

What is the difference between the inscrutability of the dragon and the conventional notion of inscrutability? What is the relationship between the level 5 meditation instruction and the inscrutability of the dragon?

(SSPW, Ch. 20, "The Warrior of Inscrutable")

What is drala? How sense perceptions the gateway to the experience of drala? Give examples of invoking external, internal and secret drala?

(SSPW, Ch. 12, 13)

What is "sacred world"? What is the relationship of "sacred world" to great, east and sun? Give an example of your own experience of joining heaven and earth.

(SSPW: Ch. 16)

Rigden:

What is the difference between conventional confidence and unconditional confidence? Give examples from your own experience. (RYW, Ch. 9 & 19)

Why is it important to relate with the Rigden as the embodiment of unconditional confidence? (SSPW, Ch. 19)

What is windhorse and how is it related to unconditional confidence? Describe the three-step raising windhorse practice. (SSPW, Ch.'s 10, 13, and 20; RYW, Ch. 24)

What is the relationship between the Shambhala Vow of Basic Goodness and unconditional confidence. (SSPW, Chaps 2 & 9; RYW, Ch. 19)

Basic Goodness 1:

Describe the process of the development of ego through the five skandhas.

How do you experience the three types of impulses (three poisons) described in the third skandha? (SBW, Ch.9; Myth of Freedom: Styles of imprisonment)

What is egolessness? Describe ego from the point of view of the 8 consciousnesses.

What is the difference between the “primordial basic ground” and ego’s ground of the 8th consciousness? (SBW, Ch. 10)

What insight has arisen for you with regard to basic goodness and cocoon by contemplating the skandhas, realms and consciousnesses?

Basic Goodness 2

Please describe the practice of tonglen. Why is this an important practice on the warrior bodhisattva path?

Enlightened Society Treatise (If you have received the lung)

Contemplate the statement “We are not contorting human principles to convince ourselves of enlightened society. The reason for enlightened society is the basic goodness of society itself.” What arises for you when you contemplate this?

How does “unenlightened society” come about? What is your personal experience of this?

What are the qualities of an awake society? How have you experienced this in relationship to others?

What would cause a culture to flourish or decay? How are these causes evident in the society you live in?