

Protector Principle

Averting the Negativity of the Old Year

by Dorje Loppön Lodrö Dorje

The year end Mamo Days practice is a means of clearing up the environmental negativity of the whole year. It is traditional at this time to invoke the transforming power of realization in the form of the Dharma Protectors' practice. The karmic forces which shape our world are both personal and collective. We are caught up in the momentum of conditions around us, for good and ill. We share virtue, exertion, beliefs, conflicting emotions, prosperity, difficulty and sickness with our family, our community and our country. We are continually reacting to and contributing to the general energy.

Just as the motion of the earth and the cycle of the seasons take place, there may be also a cycle of the karmic forces on a psychic level. Traditionally the end of the old year is seen as a time of the ripening of karmic tendencies. The Protectors' practice at this time is a way of actively purifying and transforming the accumulated negativity.

Outwardly, this negativity manifests as discord, opposition, desires, accidents. Inwardly, it manifests as emotional fixations, sickness and unbalanced inner energy in the psycho-physical body. Secretly, it manifests as fixed beliefs concerning ourselves, and the reality of subtle and spiritual aspects of existence. For instance, we might think that the psychic and spiritual forces of life are solidly and definitely external from our own awareness. Or we might think that such dimensions positively don't exist and don't function at all. Both extremes create trouble for us.

To help deal with this accumulated karmic force, we attune ourselves to the lineage blessing in the form of the larger and compassionate mind of practice, and invoke the Dharma Protectors, who are the form of enlightened energy with the role of transmuting and overcoming such environmental negativity, outer, inner and secret. The Drala Principle also has this function, in part.

What makes this a real communication, rather than just a religious practice done with wishful thinking? Perhaps we could think of our four factors: First, keeping our own conduct and awareness straightforward and kind. Second, keeping openness to the fundamental nature of our awareness, which is inseparable from the awakened Masters of our tradition. Third, keeping familiarity with taming, riding, and transmuting our own personal energies, through our lungta and our vajrayana practice. Fourth, paying attention properly to the details of our lives. These factors tune us into the energetic background of our life in a sane way.