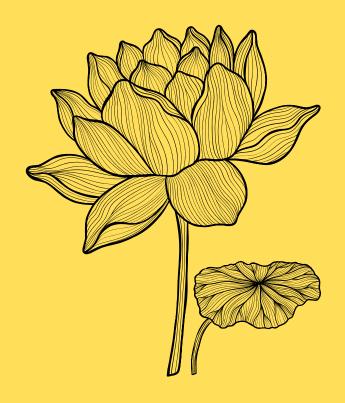


2025

THEKCHEN CHOLING SG

# HIS HOLINESS DALAI LAMA'S DAILY PRAYER EXCERPT FROM SHANTIDEVA'S WAY OF THE BODHISATTVA



"For as long as space remains,

For as long as sentient beings remain,

Until then may I too remain

To dispel the miseries of the world."

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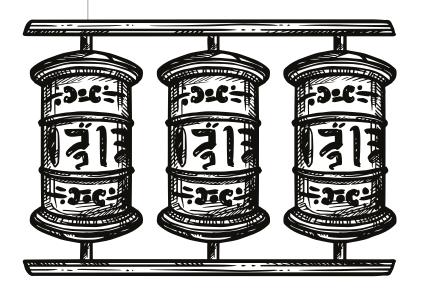
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## MISSION & VISION

### PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

Bodhisattva in Action!

- EMPOWER OUR VOLUNTEERS
   TO MAXIMISE THEIR POTENTIAL
- CREATE MEANINGFUL
   CONNECTIONS & A FULFILLING
   VOLUNTEER JOURNEY!

## **CEO'S MESSAGE**

### **EMMELINE ANG**

Dear Volunteers,

Welcome to Thekchen Choling Singapore! It is with immense joy and gratitude that we welcome you to our community. Your decision to join us as a volunteer is deeply appreciated, and we are excited to embark on this meaningful journey together.

At Thekchen Choling, our vision is to connect everyone with the divine heart, fostering a deep sense of spiritual fulfillment and universal compassion. Our mission is to empower individuals to lead meaningful lives, guided by the core values of Love, Reverence, and Altruism.

Love is the foundation of all that we do. It is through love that we build connections, nurture understanding, and create a supportive environment for everyone who walks through our doors. Reverence for the Gurus, Buddhas, dharma teachings, for each other, and for the sanctity of all life forms the bedrock of our community. Altruism drives our actions, inspiring us to serve selflessly and to contribute positively to the world around us.

As volunteers, you are the heart and soul of our temple. Your dedication and efforts help bring our vision and mission to life. Whether you are assisting with temple activities, supporting our programs, or simply offering a listening ear, your contributions make a significant impact and create an immense amount of merits for oneself and others.

We look forward to working alongside you, growing together, and making a difference in the lives of all those we touch. Thank you for choosing to be a part of Thekchen Choling Singapore. Together, let us spread love, cultivate reverence, and practice altruism in all that we do.

With heartfelt gratitude,

## ABOUT THE VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

### 2025 | MARCH | VERSION 1.6

## WELCOME TO THEKCHEN CHOLING SINGAPORE!

This Volunteer Handbook (hereinafter referred to as the "Handbook") is applicable to all volunteers of Thekchen Choling Singapore. It is designed to provide you with a comprehensive overview of our volunteer policies, procedures, and programs, ensuring that you are aligned with the essence and values of Thekchen Choling Singapore.

Please note that our policies and procedures are subject to change as circumstances evolve and laws are updated. In cases where there is a discrepancy, current policies and laws will take precedence over any outdated or incorrect information in this Handbook.





We encourage you to read this Handbook thoroughly and understand its contents. Should you have any questions or require further information on any topic covered, please reach out to our People Development Team.

We are delighted to have you join us and wish you a rewarding and meaningful volunteering experience at Thekchen Choling Singapore.

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

# INTRODUCTION TO THEKCHEN CHOLING SG



### **OUR VISION**

### CONNECTING ALL WITH DIVINE HEARTS

The vision of our temple is a special wish for all students and devotees to cultivate the divine heart of Lord Buddha. This means to practice and put into action the Buddhadharma with an open heart so as to become fully enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings.

### **OUR MISSION**

### **EMPOWERING ALL TO HAVE MEANINGFUL LIVES**

We as aspiring Bodhisattvas shall engage in the activities of divine beings to reach out and touch everyone with the essence of Buddha's teachings – Love and compassion with wisdom. Therefore, our activities can be scoped into 3 distinct areas:

- 1. Flourishing of Buddha's teachings and preserving the tradition of Buddhist architecture and culture;
- 2. Engage in spiritual development of our students and devotees and be the Voice of Buddhism by creating religious harmony with other religions; 3. BE Socially-Engaged Buddhists to care for and provide support the young, the old and the needy regardless of race, language and religion.



Named after the monastery of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Thekchen Choling means 'Great Mahayana Dharma Temple'. Our Spiritual Director, Singha Rinpoche, founded the temple in hopes that through the Dharma, both our lay and ordained followers can realise their inner potential for a life of greater fulfilment and happiness.

On March 20th 1999, the late Geshe Konchog, now reincarnated as Tulku Tenzin Phuntsok Rinpoche, instructed Singha Rinpoche to start a Dharma Centre. Geshe-la's vision was to evolve the prevailing belief that one could only practice the Dharma as an ordained Sangha. Rinpoche rented a house on Thong Soon Road to conduct his Buddhist teachings and activities.

In 2001, Thekchen Choling (Singapore) is formally registered and housed in a double-storey premise at the foot of Bukit Timah Hill, our place of worship relocated here to accommodate a growing student body.

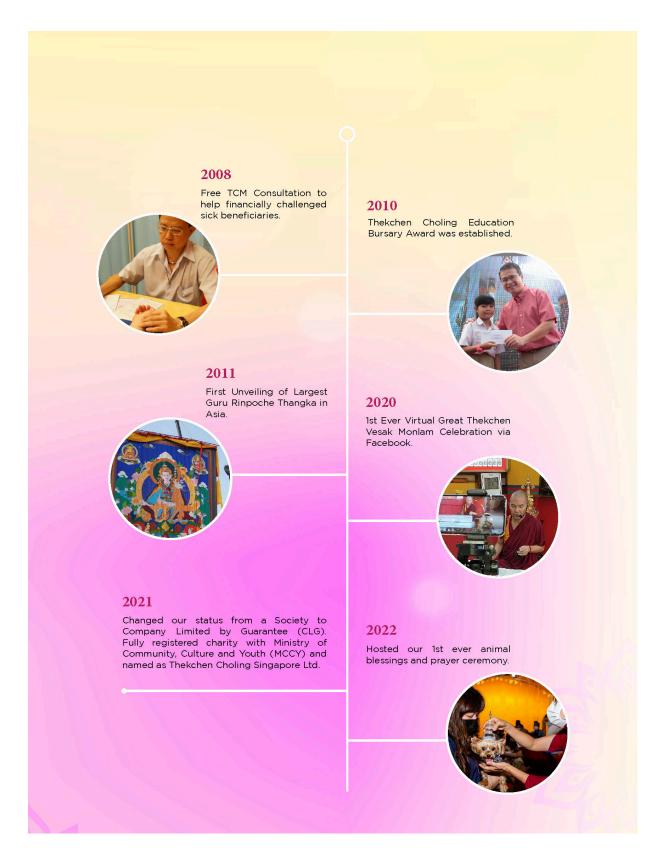
In its first two years of inception,
Thekchen Choling transformed the
lives of many followers. With the
blessing of Khensur Rinpoche Lama
Lhundrup during his visit, the
temple made plans to secure a
permanent premise within the next
five years. Meanwhile, we moved
into a commercial space in Pasir
Panjang to house our everexpanding crowd of followers.

After a long period of searching, Thekchen Choling acquires its own temple building in 2006. Having grown from a cosy apartment into a Dharma centre in the city, Thekchen Choling is proud to have become the most active Vajrayana Buddhist temple in Singapore.

On the year of our 20th
Anniversary in 2021, Thekchen
Choling Singapore became a fully
registered charity with the Ministry
of Community, Culture and Youth
(MCCY).

### **HOW WE STARTED**





Extracted from 2023 Annual Report

## 3 VALUES OF THEKCHEN CHOLING



<sup>1</sup> 情 LOVE

2 **不**豐 REVERENCE

3 **表** ALTRUISM

## LOVE, REVERENCE, AND ALTRUISM: A BODHISATTVA'S PATH

In Buddhist practice, love (情), reverence (禮), and altruism (義) form the foundation for personal growth and compassionate action. These qualities, guided by bodhicitta—the aspiration to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all beings—transform ordinary service into a sacred practice of the Bodhisattva path. For our TCSL volunteers, these principles take on even greater depth when combined with an open heart, proactivity, and the willingness to embrace life's challenges with wisdom and compassion.

## 情

### **LOVE: OPENING THE HEART**

Love (情), calls for an open heart that radiates unconditional goodwill. This openness allows us to see others as interconnected, nurturing a proactive attitude in offering help and support. When TCSL volunteers embody love, we develop a bigger capacity for acceptance, welcoming diverse perspectives and challenges with grace. By putting ourselves in another's shoes, we deepen our empathy, enabling service that genuinely resonates with the needs of others.

## 禮

### **REVERENCE: HUMILITY AND LEARNING**

Reverence (禮), is rooted in respect for the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, and the experiences of all beings. In our volunteer work, this reverence expresses itself as humility and a willingness to learn from every situation and person encountered. A TCSL volunteer with reverence views service not as an obligation but as an opportunity to honor others, cultivating patience and forgiveness as we navigate interpersonal dynamics.

### LOVE, REVERENCE, AND ALTRUISM: A BODHISATTVA'S PATH

## 美 ALTRUISM : COMPASSIONATE AND PROACTIVE ACTION

The wish to alleviate suffering, is central to altruism (義). It is not passive but proactive, urging us to meet the suffering with courage and action. TCSL volunteers driven by altruism look beyond surface-level challenges, striving to understand and address the deeper needs of those they serve. By practicing forgiveness and learning from mistakes—both our own and others'—we create an environment of healing and growth.

### **Bodhicitta: The Heart of Service**

At the core of these practices is bodhicitta, the aspiration to benefit all beings on the path to enlightenment. Bodhicitta fuels TCSL volunteer's dedication and allows us to embrace challenges as opportunities to expand our capacity for acceptance, compassion, and skillful action.

### Love (情) + Reverence (禮) + Altruism (義) = Bodhicitta

By integrating love, reverence, altruism, our Team Thekchen Community embody the essence of the Bodhisattva-in-Action. Through compassionate service, we learn to forgive, to accept life's imperfections, and to approach all beings with kindness and wisdom. This not only uplifts those we serve but also transforms us into a living expression of the Dharma.

## OUR SPIRITUAL LEADER



### **OUR FOUNDER, SINGHA RINPOCHE**

Singha Thekchen Namdrol Rinpoche had not always been a Lama, despite his strong affinity for Buddhism from a young age. Born in Singapore as a typical Chinese boy named Felix Lee, Rinpoche embarked on his Buddhist studies under a Thai monk, Venerable Phra Mahathongkum, at the tender age of seven. In the course of Rinpoche's training, his teacher foretold that his future spiritual teachers would don "red robes". However, Rinpoche did not think much of it as Tibetan Buddhism was not widely known in Singapore then. Following the Venerable's passing seven years later, Rinpoche went on to learn about Chinese Mahayana Buddhism in Ampang, Kuala Lumpur. Soon after, at the age of 15, Rinpoche began to experience a series of mysterious dreams - he was instructed by a Buddhist master to fulfil the vows of his previous life: to teach those who did not have teachers.





Upon following the clues in his dreams and receiving indications from Shangpa Rinpoche and Venerable Sangye Khandro, Rinpoche travelled to Nepal in search for answers. This was to become what Rinpoche now describes as "the journey that changed my life." Rinpoche first met Lumbum Rinpoche in Nepal, whose first words to him were, "We have been waiting for you." Rinpoche later learnt that the Buddhist master who appeared in his dreams was the great Tibetan Buddhist saint, Padmasambhava. This meant that his quest for answers had ended, this marked the beginning of his real spiritual journey.

After years of persistent and diligent practice at Kopan Monastery, Rinpoche was initiated as a Yogi (a lay Lama). He was advised by his root guru, the late Geshe Lama Konchog, that he would benefit more people if he did not undertake monastic vows. Following the instructions of Geshe-la, Rinpoche also started a dharma center — currently Thekchen Choling Singapore — that would attend to the needs of both the lay and ordained Sangha.

On 24 Oct 2014, Rinpoche was officially recognized by Lama Zopa Rinpoche as a high Gelug Lharampa reincarnate. This was confirmed by Lama Zopa's Guru, Chobgye Trichen Rinpoche, who is also the Guru of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Today, Singha Rinpoche is the Spiritual Director of the various Thekchen Choling centers in Singapore, Malaysia (Kota Tinggi, Malacca) and the United States (Syracuse).



### THEKCHEN CHOLING LOVES OUR VOLUNTEERS

At Thekchen Choling, the lifeblood of our community has always been our cherished volunteers. Our volunteers have been integral to our Team Thekchen community since our humble beginnings in 1999. Their dedication, skills, enthusiasm, and passion for practicing and propagating the Buddhadharma have been at the heart of every milestone we have achieved.

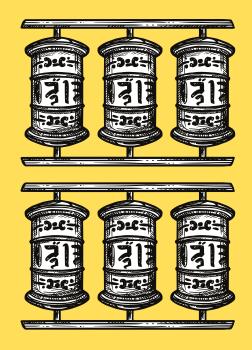
Our volunteers are the heart and soul behind our events, the advocates of Buddhadharma within the Singaporean community, and the compassionate hands and hearts of our outreach programs. Through their selfless service, they have enabled us to transcend our limitations and extend our impact far beyond what we could have ever imagined.

We are immensely grateful to our volunteers. It is through their efforts that we are able to touch lives and foster a community grounded in love, wisdom, and compassion. To ensure that our Volunteers contribute their time with a peace of mind, we endeavour to provide our Volunteers a safe place. We take the safety of our Volunteers seriously and want everybody to return home safely after every Volunteering opportunity.

Looking ahead, we look forward to our Volunteers' continued growth, fulfilment, and many more meaningful connections in the years to come. Thekchen Choling cherishes every step taken together.



# THE BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING



THE RIPPLE OF KINDNESS: FROM ME TO WE A LIVING PRACTICE

### Being a Volunteer at Thekchen Choling helps us:

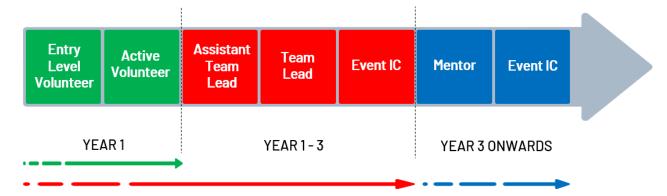
- Cultivate empathy with a mindful and supportive approach to life.
- Create meaningful relationships and compassionate connections.
- Make new friends.
- Accumulate merits and generate positive karma through your offering of time, skills & service, leading to beneficial outcomes in this life and the next.
- Align with Buddhist teachings on the importance of service with Hands-On Compassion through practical, everyday actions.
- Match interests with diverse volunteer roles and experiences.
- Learn new skills and enhance existing ones.
- Contribute meaningfully **to make a positive impact** in our family and community.

## OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME



**OVERVIEW** 

## VOLUNTEER PROGRESSION & LEARNING PATHWAYS



Each volunteer - Preferably not more than 2 roles

Providing our Volunteers different pathways to develop their understanding & enrich their Dharma practice through their volunteer service to our temple and community.



## **TYPES OF VOLUNTEER ROLES**

**EVENTS SUPPORT** 



**LOGISTICS FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**  **ADMINISTRATIVE** 



**AV & MEDIA SUPPORT** 



**DHARMA PUBLICATION MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS** 



**TEMPLE FRONT DESK** 



**TEACHERS, FACILITATORS & BEFRIENDERS FOR DHARMA PROGRAMMES** 



**FUND RAISING** 16

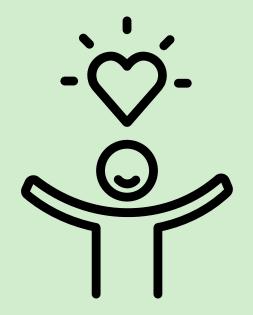
**RITUAL & OFFERINGS PREP** 

## VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION



- Certificate of Appreciation
- Volunteer Awards / Long Service Awards
- Yearly Volunteers Appreciation Event
- Team Get Togethers & Celebrations
- Training / Workshops
- Care Packs / Lamp Offerings for Blessings / Special Dedication for Service Excellence
- Celebratory Social Media Posts

## YOUR RIGHTS AS A VOLUNTEER



AS A VOLUNTEER AT THEKCHEN CHOLING SG, YOU ARE ENTITLED TO:

Serve in a safe environment - Physical & Psychological.

Have a volunteer role description & agreed service hours.

Have access to resolution procedures.

Be provided with sufficient & relevant training to perform your volunteer role.

Have your confidential & personal information respected in accordance to your Volunteer Application Form.

## SUPPORTING EACH OTHER ON THIS VOLUNTEERING JOURNEY

### BY:

Treating everyone with dignity & respect.

Allowing others to make their own choices.

Honoring the privacy & confidentiality of fellow devotees' & volunteers' records.

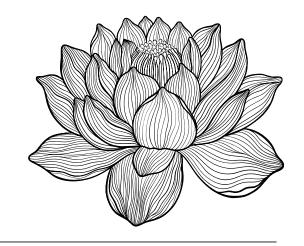
Joining hands to create an environment free from discrimination based on race, nationality, religion, gender, age and disability.

Not subjecting anyone to abuse, exploitation, retaliation & humiliation.



# CODE OF CONDUCT

2024 | JUNE | VERSION 1.1



### **POLICY**

The Volunteer Code of Conduct aims to ensure that all volunteers understand the standard of conduct required. Volunteers are expected to uphold the Volunteer Code of Conduct at all times when carrying out their duties and interactions.

### **VOLUNTEERS ARE EXPECTED AT ALL TIMES TO**

- Be present for their duties, otherwise to inform their Volunteer
   Manager / Leader as early as possible.
- Carry out their duties responsibly, safely and in a competent manner.
- Be appropriately dressed for their duties.
- Maintain confidentiality of all data and information obtained while volunteering. The obligations pertaining to confidentiality data and information shall persist even after the termination/completion of the volunteer service period.
- Observe all safety procedures and guidelines.
- Partner our Staff to achieve the program or event objective(s).

- Seek clarification from their Volunteer Manager / Leader when unsure of the role(s) and responsibilities in any volunteering activity.
- Conduct themselves respectfully with devotees, fellow volunteers and staff.
- Practise good hygiene and put on gloves and mask during meal preparation.

### **VOLUNTEERS ARE EXPECTED NOT TO**

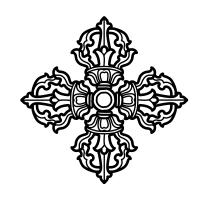
- Act in any way that may create liability or bring into disrepute
   Thekchen Choling Singapore Ltd and its name.
- Disclose confidential information to unauthorised person(s).
- Use Thekchen Choling Singapore Ltd property, resources, information or funds for any purpose other than authorised uses.
- Seek or accept rewards, benefits or gifts without authorisation.
- Engage in any activity that may bring harm (e.g. physical or mental) to another person or property.
- Be under the influence of alcohol and/or medication that causes symptoms that make you unfit for duty while volunteering.
- Falsify or change any documents or records.
- Post any photographs or videos on reports, advertisement, promotional material or social media without obtaining permission from relevant personnel.
- Act as a spokesperson for the Thekchen Choling Singapore Ltd unless prior permission or authority has been given.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Volunteers are expected to avoid situations which may have conflict
of interest with the organisation. If any potential area of conflict
arises, please consult with your volunteer manager / leader or staff.

### VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN DUTIES THAT SERVES VULNERABLE SERVICE USERS WILL BE EXPECTED TO

- Maintain good moral conduct and serve as role models.
- Report any ethical violations to the Volunteer Manager / Leader.
- Be mindful of the beneficiary's age, gender, developmental stage, personality and past experiences, and be wary of their choice of words, tone and pace.
- Exercise discretion and be guided by the following principles:
- a) there should be no unwarranted and inappropriate touching, unless in emergencies such as a fire evacuation or a medical emergency.
- b) Intent of the physical contact/touches shall be for appropriate comfort, reassurance, encouragement with no possibility of harm, and must be restricted to the head, shoulder, upper back, arms and hands of the service user.
- c) As far as possible, settings should be at spaces where other volunteers are present or areas with adequate surveillance.
- d) a buddy system should be in place to have 2 volunteers paired up for activities involving direct contact with service user. When there is a need for one-to-one contact with a service user (e.g. during counselling sessions), it is important to ensure that another volunteer is kept informed of the session. Room doors should not be locked during these one-to-one sessions.



## **ESCALATION PROCEDURES**

	ROLE	TIME	RESPONSE	ESCALATION
LEVEL 1	VOLUNTEER	15 - 30 min	Attempts to solve the problem. Takes down information for follow up.	Unable to resolve. Request Team Lead support.
LEVEL 2	TEAM LEAD	1 – 2 hrs	Review Issue & gives assurance that issue is not taken lightly. Offers alternative. Document issue & hot fixes.	Unable to resolve. Requests to speak to management. Requires skills beyond Team Lead capabilities.
LEVEL 3	VOLUNTEER MANAGER OR STAFF	1/2 – 1 Working Day	Review Issue.  Determine if immediate resolution is needed. Formulate improvements to prevent a repeat of issue. Follow up with on any investigation.	Informs CEO. Decides if further investigation is needed. Formal approval required from higher management.
Level 4	CEO	Immediate resolution	Review issue. Sign off on course of action	Board of Directors

## VOLUNTEER REASSIGNMENT / EXIT

### **EXIT INTERVIEW**

If you decide to end your volunteer position, please inform us and we will require you to complete a confidential exit interview.

The exit interview will help us improve our programmes and the volunteer experience.

### **CESSATION / REASSIGNMENT**

If we find that you do not adhere to Thekchen Choling SG's policies, rules, and procedures, or are not suited to the volunteer role, then we shall either reassign you to another volunteer role or withdraw you from the volunteer placement at our discretion.

### RETURN OF THEKCHEN CHOLING SG PROPERTY

Volunteers must return all property of Thekchen Choling SG including any keys, access cards, thumb drives, and other materials entrusted to them when they leave their volunteer role.

## THEKCHEN CHOLING SG WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

### TO WHISTLE-BLOW IS TO ENABLE THE REPORTING OF CONCERNS BY

- Staff
- Devotees
- Members of public
- Monastics
- Suppliers

or other stakeholders in good faith on misconduct or malpractice that may be detrimental to Thekchen Choling (TCCL) and/or public interest. The policy addresses the Board's commitment to proper ethical behaviour where all of these stakeholders are encouraged to report concerns without fear of reprisal or unfair treatment.

The report can be made verbally to any Board or staff or in writing via email to whistleblow@thekchencholing.org and the e-mail will directly reach the Head of Audit & Risk Committee.

TCCL respects the confidentiality of the whistle-blower and is committed to preserving confidentiality by keeping the report and case information secure and accessible only to the Head of Audit & Risk Committee and Whistle Blowing governance officer in the first instance of a report.

Please speak to a staff or refer to the policy document on our website for complete details.

## VOLUNTEER FEEDBACK



We need your ideas to help us improve our support for a pleasant volunteer experience. At the same time, if you spot a risk during volunteering, do provide us with your feedback at **9815 7838**, or email to:

volunteers@thekchencholing.org

Last updated: 2025 | MARCH | VERSION 1.6

### STAY CONNECTED

We hope you will have a wonderful volunteering experience in Thekchen Choling Singapore.

Remember, this community is as much yours as it is ours. We hope you find as much joy, fulfillment, and peace in giving as those who are blessed to receive it from you.

We're here to support you always.

With all our love and appreciation,
The People Development Team at Thekchen Choling SG

### **OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY**







"Volunteering is the most meaningful way to go outside of yourself.

Volunteering requires us to sacrifice the attachment we have to our own time and to our own targets. Our lives now are mostly only about ourselves. So we all must be willing to stretch our minds, stretch our time and to expand our consciousness. If we cannot do this then we are just like the fish swimming around in an aquarium. We are limited when there is no room for expansion and when we don't see ourselves as part of the whole world."

If I do not exchange my happiness, for the suffering of others, I shall not attain the state of Buddhahood. And even in Samsara I shall have no real joy. The source of all misery in the world lies in thinking of oneself; The source of all happiness lies in thinking of others.

