

## Luminosity and Equality

Jetsün Milarepa said that in order to realize luminosity, one must realize equality. To realize equality, one must recognize that there is no difference between such things as good and bad or clean and dirty. In a dream, for example, there may arise many contradictory phenomena, but they are equal in the context of their true nature. In truth, there are no contradictory phenomena. However, from the perspective of how things appear, there are contradictory phenomena, that is, many pairs of opposites. There may be appearances of enemies and friends, but enemies are only existent in relation to the fact that one perceives friends. As well, there may arise many things that are perceived to be clean and things that are perceived to be dirty and so forth. However, all these perceptions of contradictory phenomena—things that are pairs of opposites—are only from the point of view of confusion. From the point of view of their true nature, there is no difference in their essence—they are equal. It is said that by realizing equality, one is able to realize luminosity.

Equality, or equanimity, should be mainly understood in relation to the mind. The mind has attachments and aversions, nonvirtuous thoughts and virtuous thoughts such as faith and so forth, pleasant thoughts and thoughts of suffering, and so forth. From the point of view of thought, there is some difference, but there is no difference in terms of their essence. They are equal. There may be many different kinds of mental factors that are seemingly contradictory, or are pairs of opposites, but only from the point of view of confusion is there a difference between them. From the point of view of their true nature, there is no difference. All are the inseparability of clarity and emptiness. If you recognize that all thoughts are equal in being the inseparability of clarity and emptiness, you will be able to realize luminosity. The principal mind, virtuous and nonvirtuous mental factors, contradictory types of thought such as clean, dirty, and so forth, all of these are only different from the point of view of confusion. There is no difference in their true nature, luminosity. They are equal. If one recognizes equality, one is able to recognize luminosity. If one regards virtuous thoughts as being good and nonvirtuous thoughts as being bad, one is taking them to be truly existent. If one does that, one will not be able to realize luminosity.

—From *Mahamudra Shamatha and Vipashyana*, Rocky Mountain Shambhala Center, 1991, p.194. Translated by Elizabeth Callahan.

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