

*Transforming the Adverse Conditions
of the Coronavirus Pandemic into the Path*

By Khandro Namsel Dorjé (Khandro-la)

Kyé ma kyi hu! Woe is me, O Orgyen Rinpoché!

The appearances brought on by the karma of sentient beings in this degenerate age have caused the horrid agony of infectious disease to run rampant over our planet. We have fallen into a prison, without refuge or anything in which to place our hopes. We cry out in pain, without protector or guard, nor any friend to whom we can turn. We are as though ruled by plague from sky to earth, from above and below. O, Buddhas of the past, present, and future, please listen and attend to us.

I openly confess that because sentient beings have held what is without identity to be a self, the elements of our outer environment have been shaken and disturbed.

I openly confess that the delusion which grasps what is unreal to be real has caused us, the inner inhabitants, to take up the three poisons with delight.

I openly confess that we have been captured by the black viper of grasping to “me” and taken up the conduct of exalting ourselves and degrading others.

The ignorance and delusion that grasps at self and grasps things as real holds as its sublime refuge the splendors of saṃsāra. But in a flash, when we come upon a ferociously deadly disease, the splendors of saṃsāra are like worthless gravel and dirt.

Upon this charnel ground of suffering that is the ripening of karma’s fruits the time has come for your great love and sacred compassion to surge forth.

All joys and sorrows are the fruits of actions, infallible dependent origination. It is imperative for us to experience with valid perception how all these joys and sorrows arise from causes similar in type, yet all kinds of beings look upon shimmering appearances as though they were firmly established as real, and deliberately grasp with tenacious attachment to a dream—happy outcomes in the objects of the senses.

Please bless us to see that interdependent relationships are empty.
Please bless us to see that what is empty arises in dependence.
Please bless us to realize what it means for that which arises in dependence
not to be established through any nature of its own.
Please bless us to see the actual nature of our own mind, ultimate reality.

Overpowered by the delusion that grasps what is without identity to be a self,
this ancient disease that seeks our own benefit—watching out for our friends
and trying to control those who hurt us—
ruins this and future lives in rippling waves of pain.

Not recognizing sentient beings, not knowing them to be our kind mothers,
we repay their kindness with wretched disdain. This I openly confess.

Once we have entered the door to the sublime Dharma of the Vajrayāna,
we let the samayas we received at empowerment degenerate. This I openly confess.

From the absolute space of the dharmakāya, free of elaboration,
you emerge as Vajradhara, the treasure-chest of jewels,
source of all that anyone could want or need.
You are Vajradhara, the White Lotus of emptiness and compassion.
You are the pervasive lord of all buddha families,
who illuminates the past, present, and future.
You alone are this source of refuge,
who clears away the darkness of ignorance—
You are the Buddha, but I thought of you as a human being.
This I openly confess.

Although we have entered the door to Dharma—
the infallibility of karma and its results—
we destroy the teaching with corrupted, ersatz dharma.
This I openly confess.

Although there is no other refuge but the three supreme Jewels,
we devote ourselves to the haughty claims of barbarism.
This I openly confess.

Although we have all the different vehicles of the sublime Dharma,
we transform them into the wrong views of mere psychology.
This I openly confess.

Even as there can be such great meaning in this life of leisure and opportunity,
so difficult to find, we cultivate and augment our meaningless activities.
This I openly confess.

Although we have the primordial consciousness of pristine awareness within us,
we do not see our own mind as the dharmakāya.
This I openly confess.

Because we do not understand how the appearances of the ground
arise from the ground of being, we try to create the sacred forms anew.
This I openly confess.

In brief, through the forceful means given to me by the kindness of my lama,
may I realize all that appears to the beings of saṃsāra to be unreal:
primordially free, naturally released, nakedly released.

O Guru Vajradhara, all three roots combined as one,
we have no other hope for refuge but you.
You are the three kāyas, appearing as an illusory display in whatever way you wish.
O Precious One, please look upon us with your great love and compassion,
and grant that all conflict and disease may be put to rest.

We ignorant sentient beings confess the nonvirtues of our
misdirected bodies, speech, and minds
within the sphere in which there is nothing upon which to focus.

Although there is nothing to confess, no one to confess it, and no object of our confession,
we confess within the sphere in which these are like an illusion, without reality.

My dear friends in the Dharma, and all those of you who attend to my words,
strive diligently in the Dharma, precisely as you recognize
your leisure and opportunity, so difficult to find.

Strive diligently in the Dharma, because this life is temporary, impermanent.
Strive diligently in the Dharma, because karma and its results are infallible.
Strive diligently in the Dharma, as you reflect upon the faults of saṃsāra.
Strive diligently in the Dharma, as you recall the benefits of liberation.

Strive diligently in the Dharma, because bodhicitta—the extraordinary resolve
to benefit others out of compassion—is the infallible source of wealth.

Strive diligently in the Dharma, because all the more so,
whoever encounters this Vajrayāna vehicle of secret mantra will be freed.

Strive diligently in the Dharma, because you possess,
perfectly and spontaneously complete within yourself,
the authentic essence, emptiness imbued with compassion.

Gain certainty that the Dharma is nothing but this:
taming yourself and benefiting others.

Do not be anxious; if you strive diligently in the divine Dharma
all suffering will arise as an aid to happiness.

Even should you come to the end of life, you will not be separated
from the Three Jewels, your infallible source of refuge.

Faith and compassion are the source and foundation for all that you need.
I beg you from the depths of my heart:
Do not be afraid.

Pray again and again for the blessings of your lama and deity.

If there is something you can do about the results of karma,
then what is there to worry or be upset about?

If there is nothing you can do about the results of karma,
then what benefit is there in worrying or getting upset?

If you can make supplication with the *maṇi*, *vajra*, or *tāre* mantras,¹
reciting as many times as you can, obstacles will surely be dispelled.

May there be the auspicious joy of our gurus and the Three Jewels.
May there be the auspicious joy of the nature of existence, free of anything to accept or reject.
May there be the auspicious joy of happiness and well-being for all our mothers, sentient beings.
May there be the auspicious joy of compassion, the guru who liberates upon seeing.

May there be the auspicious joy of the four modes of activity, spontaneously actualized.
May there be the auspicious joy of our seeing and hearing about the fine path to liberation.
May there be the auspicious joy of the fruition: the three kāyas, spontaneously actualized.
May there be the auspicious joy of the glory in which all is perfectly complete.

~ These days, people are losing their lives throughout our world, due to the condition of the coronavirus pandemic. We are beset by fear and various kinds of economic decline. In such times, all the living beings of our world are like a family living in a single household, where all are equally distraught and dependent upon one another.

I was asked for a way to quickly pacify this disease, and I think that, in accord with the detailed explanation of the guru yoga focused upon the supreme ārya, Lotus in Hand (Avalokiteśvara), who is the very image of the compassion of all the jinas, and who arises as the natural glow of the one who illuminates past, present, and future, whose essence is emptiness and compassion, everyone should recite the six-syllable mantra (*Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*), the name mantra of the Mahāguru (*Oṃ aḥ hūṃ vajra guru padma siddhi hūṃ*), and so on, 100 million times, or as much as possible. In addition, if experts in Tibetan medicine and herbal medicine can work together to create new medicines, then this will be of great benefit in freeing us from this disease.

I, for my part, being a Buddhist, am making single-pointed supplication to our infallible source of refuge, the Three Jewels, and continue to pray as much as I can for the sacred deeds of the four modes to manifest. In response to the request made by Dharma friends from around the world, I, Khandro Namsel Dorjé, have written this on March 30th, 2020, in whatever way it came to me. May there be virtue.²

¹ *Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*, *Oṃ aḥ hūṃ vajra guru padma siddhi hūṃ*, and *Oṃ tāre tuttāre ture svā hā*.

² Translated into English by Eva Natanya, May 17th, 2020, with special thanks to Fabrizio Pallotti for his notes based on a conversation with Khandro-la, in which he clarified many points of meaning.