

If you practice bodhicitta practices—mind training, loving-kindness prayers, exchanging oneself and others (tong len), and so forth—these practices may seem conceptual and relative, but they actually include the absolute truth that is the very nature of Dzogchen: vast openness, big mind, purity, freedom, and non-grasping.

The word for bodhicitta in Tibetan is sem kye. This literally means “the opening or blossoming of the mind.” It is the opposite of small mind, of self-preoccupation, self-contraction, and narrowness.

Whatever practice-path we find ourselves on—be it Dzogchen, Vajrayana, the Bodhisattvayana, the fundamental Theravadin Vehicle, or another spiritual path—if we have a pure, wholesome attitude and a spacious and tolerant mind, then our practice is really Buddhist practice; it is in line with practice that really blossoms and unties the mind.

This is the real meaning of bodhicitta. It may be that the sky is always limpid, clear, vast, infinite, and so on, but when the moment of Dzogchen arrives it is as if the sun has suddenly risen. It is not that the sky of our inherent nature has improved, but something definitely does seem to happen. This metaphor of the rising sun refers to the *rangjung yeshe*, the spontaneous, self-born awareness wisdom or innate wakefulness dawning within our nature. This is the moment of Dzogchen, the dawn of the self-arisen awareness wisdom, innate wisdom.

From Natural Great Perfection, Nyoshul Khenpo