Chapter 2 Compassion the Entrance to the Mahayana

Colour scheme used

- View / Wisdom / Emptiness
- Practice / Method / Path
- Motivation / Bodhicitta / Compassion
- Pitfalls / Errors
- Foundational / Structural

- 1. Why Compassion Is the Entrance to Mahayana
  - Without compassion, Mahayana cannot begin
  - Bodhicitta arises only from great compassion
  - Compassion differentiates Mahayana from other paths
- 2. What Is Great Compassion
  - 2.1 Definition
    - The wish that all sentient beings be free from suffering
    - Includes responsibility to remove suffering
  - 2.2 Not Mere Empathy
    - Not sentiment or emotional warmth alone
    - Active, courageous, and enduring
- 3. Compassion as Cause, Companion, and Result
  - 3.1 Compassion at the Beginning
    - Motivates entry into Mahayana
    - Gives rise to bodhicitta
  - 3.2 Compassion in the Middle
    - Sustains bodhisattva practice
    - Prevents discouragement and retreat
  - 3.3 Compassion at the End
    - Motivates enlightened activity
    - Prevents falling into personal liberation
- 4. Compassion Grounded in Wisdom
  - 4.1 Seeing the Real Cause of Suffering
    - Suffering arises from ignorance
    - Ignorance grasps at a truly existent self
  - 4.2 Emptiness Prevents Distorted Compassion
    - Avoids pity and despair
    - Avoids reifying self or others
  - 4.3 Dependent Arising and Compassion
    - Beings suffer due to causes and conditions
    - Suffering is neither fixed nor permanent
- 5. Cultivating Compassion Systematically
  - 5.1 Gradual Expansion of Compassion
    - Begin with close friends and relatives
    - Extend to neutral beings
    - Extend fully to enemies
  - 5.2 Why Gradual Training Is Necessary
    - Prevents artificial or unstable compassion
    - Ensures emotional authenticity
- 6. Relationship Between Compassion and Bodhicitta
  - Compassion is the direct cause of bodhicitta
  - Bodhicitta is compassion joined with wisdom
  - Without compassion, bodhicitta cannot arise
- 7. Common Errors in Practising Compassion
  - Sentimental compassion without wisdom
  - Partial compassion limited to friends
  - Burnout due to lack of emptiness understanding
  - Mistaking emotional intensity for realization
- 8. Integrating Compassion into Daily Life
  - See every interaction as an opportunity for compassion
  - Use irritation as a mirror for self-cherishing
  - Let compassion inform speech, action, and intention
- 9. Pocket Reminder
  - Compassion without wisdom binds; wisdom without compassion dries
  - Great compassion is courage grounded in emptiness