



Tilogaard in cyberspace

Principles of web policies

Basics

The purpose of a presence in cyberspace is based on the wish to provide information. Such cannot be done without **packaging** the content of information, which is marketing, design, lay-out, pictures, video, audio, fonts, presentation and whatever else is published in support of such presence.

Tilogaard Meditation School want to provide information to both members and the general public. So this service has two different target groups. Both aims should be served by the information as well as the packaging.

The packaging could be provided by a marketing strategy, but it is the nature of marketing, that it may in fact hide or distort the information, that I want to communicate. *Marketing will easily become propaganda*. Buddhadharma is so self evident, that there is no reason for propaganda. On the contrary, propaganda will by its very nature distort the Dharma and alienate both the members and the general public.

Considering Shamar Rinpoche's approach to transparency and propaganda, which is well known from his writings, it seems to effectively and definitely rule out a primary emphasis on marketing. Instead, information comes first, and marketing must be subservient and a more secondary consideration.

The packaging should be in support of the information. The wish to provide information should of course not develop into an overload of data. It is at the discretion of the editor, what information is provided in cyberspace. Tilogaard Meditation School aims to provide *adequate* information.

Ethics

The basic and principal consideration for both the information as well as the packaging of it, should be viewed in the context of the 10 virtues and the 10 non-virtues, because Shamar Rinpoche has described those as the ethical base for the Bodhi Path Curriculum.

Any discussion about publishing information and the packaging of such, should basically and principally be viewed in this context. From this ethical foundation, specific consequences may be deducted and put a limit on marketing, design, lay-out, pictures, video, audio, fonts and presentation.

Here is the citation of Shamar Rinpoche in his paper: *Bodhi Path, Sutra and Tantra*:

Bodhi Path centres are established as learning centres. They are places where you can learn Dharma, learn and practice meditation, and continue to lead a normal life. Bodhi Path is not an organization that enforces compulsory rules of behaviour. The moral conduct that we encourage is simply the avoidance of the **10 non-virtues**: avoid the physical non-virtues of **kill**ing, **stealing**, and **sexual misconduct**; the verbal non-virtues of **lying**, **slander**, **harsh speech** and **divisive speech**; and the mental non-virtues of **hatred**, **desire**, and **ignorance**. In addition to that, practitioners should avoid **intoxication** and **blind faith**.

Keeping these guidelines of moral conduct is your *protection*, not a set of laws to be followed for their own sake. You should learn what these non-virtues are and learn to avoid them. The Buddhist view of moral conduct is that it will shield you like strong armour.

In addition to avoiding the 10 non-virtuous actions, intoxication and blind faith, you should learn and implement the attitude of a Bodhisattva: *Bodhicitta* [the enlightened attitude of compassion and the wish of happiness for others].

This may easily be formulated into web policies:

I. Information and packaging ought not contain elements, that encourages:

- A. - people to kill or steal (or commit violent assault on other sentient beings, execute ill treatment of them or even just steal the rights and liberty of others).
- B. - people to commit sexual misconduct.
- C. - people to lie, spread slander, use harsh speech or divisive speech.
- D. - people to develop and accumulate hatred, desire and ignorance and bring the 3 *kleshas* into action.
- E. - people to indulge intoxication by alcohol and drugs.
- F. - people to develop and cultivate blind faith.

(Particularly points C and D are often applicable to websites. Point F is often seen on religious websites).

II. Information and packaging should encourage (- if applicable to the actual page or posting in cyberspace):

- A. - protection and aid to other sentient beings.
- B. - the highest ethical standards for sexual relationships.
- C. - to speak the truth with gentleness and consideration, and use communication to bring alienated people together and reconcile them, if possible, and stay silent, when gossip spreads.
- D. - the use of antidotes to emotionality and a development of relative – and the discovery of absolute – Bodhicitta.
- E. - a clear, natural and open-hearted mind.
- F. - an investigative and curious mindset, mindful and poised to examine and remove doubts about Dharma, whatever and whenever such arises. The result of this is **certainty** in the view and application of Dharma.

(If these points are not applicable *directly* to any actual page or posting in cyberspace, they never the less express quite clearly in what kind of *spirit* information and packaging should be provided in cyberspace).

III. Information and packaging ought to imply the presence of Mahamudra, the taste of freedom, if the webmaster or contributors to the website are able to do so.

This is not easy – therefore it cannot be a rule, but only an aim.

(You may argue, that Mahamudra is not a subject among the 10 non-virtues, but Teaching Mahamudra, both as view and practise, is the aim of Tilogaard Meditation School.)

One general rule

So, a general principle is established from the points above:

The quality of information is a priority, while the packaging comes second, and it should all be presented by the high ethics of the 10 virtues in the spirit of Mahamudra and Bodhicitta.

This is therefore the aim of Tilogaard Meditation School in cyberspace.