

Prayer Wheel

My artifact, the prayer wheel is called mani in Tibet and Nepal. It is either a hollow metal cylinder or a wooden cylinder that has mantras written inside the cylinder. "The mantra is printed on very thin tissue paper as many times as possible, in some cases numbering in the millions. The paper is wrapped around a spindle and covered with a protective cylinder"(Khan Academy editors). Prayer wheels range in size from the size of hand to large wheels set in the wall of temples. When going into a temple, you have to circle the building and then walk clockwise while turning the wheel.

Why do we use it? The reason why we use it because it is to purify negative karma. People say it can be used to stop harm from spirits and also disease. Anyone with a disease such as aids or cancer can use the prayer wheel for meditation and healing- you don't need to have knowledge about dharma to use this. "The first visualization, you visualize light beams coming from the mantras in the prayer wheel, illuminating you and purifying you of all your disease and the causes of disease, your negative thoughts and the imprints of these left on your mental continuum. You then visualize the light illuminating all sentient beings and purifying all their sufferings, as well as their negative karmas and obscurations. The second visualization is beams are emitted from the mantras, like a vacuum sucking up dust, they hook all the disease and spirit harms and, most importantly, the cause of disease, the negative karmas and obscurations"(Zopa). All these are absorbed into the prayer wheel and let out when you spin the wheel while saying the mantra.

The prayer wheel that I have was from my dad. It was kept in Nepal and used throughout my dad's childhood. This prayer wheel is about 10 years old. It was given to his family as a gift from my great aunt. Every since then, it has been used. We use it every morning and evening. When we put water in the 7 cups and when we take water out of the 7 cups -than; we spin the prayer wheel. Spinning the wheel is purifying the bad karma- negativity out of your system and gaining wisdom. My dad brought this here to America because it was one of the artifacts that was important and a way of meditation. It's like a good luck charm.

This is one of the artifacts I have at home that shows my cultural heritage. Anyone can use this artifact as a way of meditation. For example, if you cheated on a test because you didn't study; and you feel bad about it. Then you use this artifact as a way of purifying the bad action you did. The spinning wheel can be used by everyone and everywhere.

Citations:

Lywa. "The Benefits of Prayer Wheels." The Benefits of Prayer Wheels, 8 Apr. 2016, www.lamayeshe.com/article/benefits-prayer-wheels.

Khan Academy editors. "Prayer Wheel." Khan Academy, Khan Academy, 2011, www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/himalayas/tibet/a/prayer-wheel.

