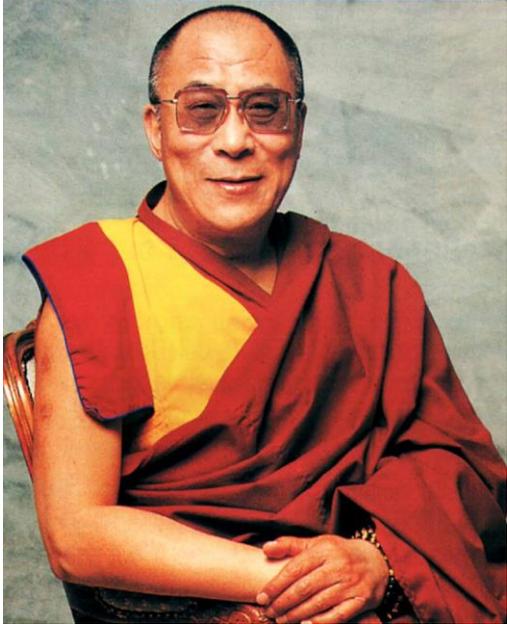


# Excerpt from *The Power of Compassion*

## S.S. The Dalai Lama



### CELIBACY

**Question.** Is celibacy necessary to reach enlightenment?

**Answer.** I do not think so. Therefore one might ask why the Buddha ended up wearing the monastic garment. From the point of view of the Viniya Sutra, the main goal of celibacy is the reduction of desire or attachment.

The Tantrayana, especially the higher form of Tantra Yoga believes that the flow of energy - the energy drops or state of bliss generated by their particular fusion - helps to dissolve the grosser levels of the mind and of related energies to achieve Bliss, or the most subtle of experiences. The drops of life, or more precisely the fusion of these in the energy channels, provoke the State of Bliss: they are the key.

When one is interested in the iconography of the deities and their consorts, we see many very explicit sex symbols that can give a false impression. In fact, the sexual organ is used, but the energetic movement it generates is ultimately controlled completely. One must never let out the energy, that is to say the seed. It is controlled and redistributed to other parts of the body. In order to practice Tantrism correctly, one should cultivate the ability to use Bliss and the experiences that lead to it; these arise from the flow of regenerative fluids within the energy channels of the individual. It is essential to protect oneself from emission, which would be a mistake in that moment. This is not the ordinary sexual act. This is where is found the connection with celibacy.

The practice of Kalachakra Tantra particular insists on this absence of emission of the energy, considered essential. These writings also refer to three kinds of experiences of bliss: the first is induced by the flow of energy, the second by the immutable experience and the third by the mutable experience. Buddha, by taking the vow of celibacy, did not give all the explanations of this commitment. To understanding its meaning requires perfect knowledge of the Tantrayana, which can answer your question. Hence my answer a little "ambiguous," no, celibacy is not really necessary to achieve enlightenment, but yes it is still a bit.

### WOMEN AND CELIBACY

**Question.** Your Holiness, the answer you just gave concerned the male perspective. Why do we never mention the feminine aspect in these practices? How should a woman use her energy to achieve enlightenment through Bliss?

**Answer.** The principle and technique are the same. If I believe some of my Indian friends, practitioners of the hindu Tantrayana also use the practice of Kundalini and Chandralini. The woman has the same kind of energy, life drops and seed; so the method is the same.