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CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class One: The Principal Teachings of Buddhism

The Root Text and Author:

LAM TSO NAM SUM

The Three Principal Paths

Path Principal the three

The text is also known as the *Principal Teachings of Buddhism*

Author: Je Tsongkapa (1357 – 1419)

Je Tsongkapa was the teacher to the first Dalai Lama. The root text is four pages long and is a letter to his disciple, Tsako Wonpo, which means the “Friar from Tsako.”

The Commentary to the Root Text and Author:

The commentary to the root text is written by Pabongka Rinpoche (1878-1941), whose secret name was Dechen Nyingpo. Pabongka Rinpoche was the teacher of Trijang Rinpoche, the tutor to the 14th Dalai Lama. The introduction to the commentary is written by a disciple of Trijang Rinpoche, Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin (1921-).

The goal in this lifetime is to see emptiness directly. By doing so, you will perceive your own enlightenment and when it will happen (that is when you will exit the cycle of your current suffering known as *samsara* (sanskrit). The experience of seeing emptiness directly is triggered by intense deep study, and culminating in a deep meditative state that lasts about 20 minutes.

The 3 Principle Paths

By Path, we are referring to a stage of realization, not a road. To achieve Buddhahood, you must realize these three paths or spiritual states.

1. NGEN JUNG Renunciation

You must first realize that this life is suffering. Anything good or bad you have done (actions are referred to as karma) will produce corresponding good or bad results.

Renunciation is the first path. It means, “I recognize that only spiritual things are important. I must find a solution to the problems of this life – and I know that it is possible.” It is okay to want things in this life – it all depends on how you will use these things toward your ultimate goal of enlightenment. For example, it’s okay if you want money, in order to help others. You will know that you have developed true renunciation when you think day and night of achieving freedom from your suffering, and no longer have any attraction to the so-called good things of this life.

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2. JANG CHUB KYI SEM The Wish for Enlightenment

Enlightenment Mind

Bodhichitta (skt.)

The second path is the wish to achieve enlightenment so that you can really help others. You see that all around you is suffering, and that you will die. You empathize and seek to help others. It is thus also referred to as “Ultimate Compassion.” When you achieve this state, you will be in a state of permanent, total bliss, and you will be able to see the future and read minds, so that you can really help others. As a Bodhisattva (Enlightenment Warrior), your goal is to reach paradise as quickly as possible to help others. As an enlightened being, you can emanate other bodies to help others. The wish for enlightenment is not a selfish wish – it is the best thing for you to wish for yourself and for others.

3. YANGDAKPAY TAWA Correct View of Emptiness

Pure, Correct World View

The third path is attaining a correct understanding of emptiness, and developing a world view based on emptiness.

These Three Principal Paths make you change, and can make you an enlightened being.

The Two Bodies (Parts) of a Buddha

1. SUK KU Physical Body of a Buddha

Rupakaya (skt.)

A human body is an accident waiting to happen. You are going to die – but you don’t know when. The human body has a subtle inner invisible physical body, consisting of “chakras” and “inner wind.” Through tantric practice, you can change your body to that of a tantric deity’s. By keeping your vows and understanding the laws of karma, and practicing kindness and compassion, your body will gradually change to an angel’s body which is like light. Once you achieve the Physical Body of a Buddha, you can emanate limitless other bodies to help others.

2. CHU KU Mental and Ultimate-nature parts of a Buddha

Dharma Kaya (skt.)

The other parts of a Buddha are a Buddha’s mind, omniscience, and knowledge, which can be used to help others. The other element is the emptiness of the parts

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(e.g. emptiness of body, and emptiness of mind). In other words, the body has no nature of its own from its own side – how other see it is based on karma.

How do the bodies of a Buddha relate to the Three Principle Paths? If you get really good at the first two paths of renunciation and bodhichitta, you will attain the physical body of a Buddha.

The Dharmakaya of a Buddha is achieved by the third path, understanding emptiness. Why do things happen? As you study and understand this, your mind transforms. You will be able to see things deeply, until eventually you see your future lives and the date of your enlightenment.

Without the Three Principal Paths you will not achieve enlightenment. Tantric practice is based fully on the three principal paths, so much so that without them, one could never be successful in tantric practice, but with them, one would almost certainly succeed in the practice.

Ten Qualities of a Qualified Lama

You must have your own Lama (or teacher), and have close contact with them. A human must bring you to enlightenment, which requires a close relationship between teacher and student. The 10 characteristics of a qualified lama are:

1. DULWA

Controlled

The lama is very good at practicing morality or an ethical way of life. This means refraining from hurting others by refraining from stealing, killing, lying, sexual misconduct, etc. A Bodhisattva's life is dedicated to helping others.

2. SHIWA

At Peace

They should be able to meditate well and have deep meditative concentration.

3. NYER SHIWA

High Peace

They should have attained wisdom, or an extraordinary understanding of emptiness and karma.

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4. YUNTEN HLAKPA

Spiritual qualities better than

The teacher must have spiritual qualities that exceed those of the student so that they can help them.

5. TSUNCHE

Effort

The teacher should take joy in doing good things. They should be excited to teach you, and really enjoy helping you. They should be willing to do this for free.

6. LUNG GI CHUK

Scriptural knowledge rich

The teacher must know the holy books well, and have wide knowledge of all the great subjects. They must have had intense study and knowledge in order to help you.

7. DE-NYI RABTOK

Emptiness Perceived

This is the most important quality. If the teacher has understood this, they are forever changed. It is an extremely rare accomplishment. If the lama has not directly perceived emptiness, you should at least find someone with a deep intellectual understanding of emptiness. Note that the general etiquette of realized being is to not actually admit directly seeing emptiness. So you must base your judgment on how the lama describes emptiness and assess whether or not it matches the description in scripture.

8. MAKE DEN

Good teacher

The teacher must be able to express themselves well and communicate at the level appropriate for the student.

9. TSEWAY DAKNYI

Love image of

The teacher should be teaching you dharma because they love you, regardless of what you think or do.

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10. KYOWA PANG

Tired never

The teacher should be very patient, and should not care how many times they have to explain dharma concepts to you.

You must try to find a lama. Without a teacher, you can't learn. Find a qualified lama, then devote yourself to them and commit to serious practice. It is very difficult to find someone with all the qualities. The key is to find someone who has at least the first three (morality, meditative concentration, wisdom understanding emptiness).

Three Qualities of a Good Student

As discussed in Aryadeva's *400 Verses*:

1. Free of preconceptions – willing to reconsider their world view, think critically, and be open to new possibilities.
2. Intelligent in a spiritual sense – A good student should have a high spiritual IQ. For example, they should wonder: where they came from? why do bad things happen? They should be spiritually curious.
3. Must have high aspirations in life – they should be concerned with death and how to stop suffering.

The Cycle of Life

The goal is to escape this cycle of life, or *samsara* (*skt.*)

KORWA *Samsara*

To go in a circle

The cycle of life is the condition of being forced, though the power of karma and mental afflictions, to take on the impure parts that make up a suffering being, over and over again. Beings in *samsara* get old, die, and change, helplessly. They lack control. When you break free from *samsara*, you won't have to get old, and things will work in a new way.

To break out of *samsara*, you must understand emptiness, which will change how you view phenomena and how you live. For example, human instinct is to yell back when you are yelled at. But if you understand emptiness, you won't yell back.

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Using your experience of seeing emptiness directly, you will be able to break out of the cycle of life.

The Eight Worldly Thoughts

These worldly thoughts ruin your spiritual practice:

1. Being happy when you get something.
2. Being unhappy when you don't get something.
3. Being happy when you feel good.
4. Being unhappy when you don't feel good.
5. Being happy when you become well known.
6. Being unhappy when no one knows you.
7. Being happy when people speak well of you.
8. Being unhappy when people speak badly of you.

By worrying about the above thoughts, you will ruin your spiritual practice. Things happen all the time that you perceive as good or bad – don't worry about it. Don't exacerbate the highs or lows – just accept them, and focus on your practice.

The Four Laws of Karma

1. **LE NGEPA** Karma is definite
 Karma definite

If you do good things out of kindness, they can never lead to a bad result. If you do things with a bad motivation, the results will be bad.

Don't let appearances deceive you. While lies may appear to work sometimes, they don't always work – so it should be clear that lies are not universally helping.

2. **LE PEL CHEWA** The consequences are greater than the actions
 Karma always gets bigger

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Karmic things work like organic growth. Small irritations can grow to be huge, and have implications for years.

3. LE MAJEP A DANG MI TREPA Nothing will happen from nothing

If you don't do a karma, then you will not have anything happen to you. For example, by avoiding small negative deeds, you will have the huge positive impact of saving yourself from future karmic pain. If you don't make great efforts, you won't make great changes. You must become a vow keeping expert. If you don't know or keep the bodhisattva vows, you won't change.

4. JEP A CHU MISAWA Once you do a karma, it never goes away by itself

Your record everything you do – you can't escape the consequences of your actions. The ways of committing a karmic action are doing it with the body, saying words, or thinking something. Thought is raw karma. The ultimate karma is thought, so you need to control your thoughts. If you think, you are collecting karma. The one exception to having to experience the full force of a karmic consequence is through purification or the Four Powers. The Four Powers describe how you can purify yourself of the consequences of your past negative karma.

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Bodhichitta – Ultimate Compassion

JANGCHUB KYI SEM

Bodhi *Chitta (skt.)*
Buddha Mind

The wish for enlightenment for the sake of every living being (so that you can really help others).

This wish to become a buddha can happen long before actually reaching Buddhahood. True bodhichaitta is a rare spiritual breakthrough – it's a mystical experience accompanied by visions and is extremely difficult to attain. You truly see yourself doing everything that helps others by achieving buddhahood. This requires meditation, rather than simply directly helping others. The bodhisattva has one thing in mind – to spend all their energy getting there, with others in mind. bodhichitta puts you on a one track course where each action is toward enlightenment. Uncontrollably, you will also be helping others.

Seven Steps to Develop Bodhichitta

The seven steps in the cause-and-effect method for developing bodhichitta are:

1. MARSHE

Recognize that all other beings have been your mother. Your mother bore you and equipped you with all your basic functions, worrying each minute. Every being in the world has been your mother countless times. Your mind had no beginning and has no end. Thus, you have been every type of being countless times, with no beginning.

2. DRINDEN

Kindness Recall

Consider the ultimate kindness of your mother, who provided the physical material to give you a human body, with which you can achieve enlightenment, the opportunity to exit suffering. So after recalling that all other beings have been your mother, recall their kindness.

3. DRINSO

Kindness pay back

Think of how to pay back the kindness of your mother. Gratitude is a high spiritual level in Buddhism; a wonderful emotion. In scripture, if you don't think of paying back kindness, you are considered a monster.

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4. YI-ONG JAMPA

Pretty Love

Love all people with the intensity of a mother for her only child. If a mother could only have one child, that one child would look pretty or beautiful to them, no matter what. The child looks “yiong” to the mother. If you think this of everyone, that is a high state (and very difficult to achieve). “Jampa” means love – you want to give or provide them with everything you can.

5. NYINGJE CHENPO

Compassion Big

Think that you want to remove all the problems beings suffer. Help them identify and get rid of problems (e.g. teach them how to avoid mental afflictions and the tyranny of bad thoughts). Misery is caused by one’s own mind – you want to help others stop that by stopping the impure part of the mind.

6. HLAKSAM NAMDAK

Ultimate personal responsibility

Think that “I will take upon myself to do my best to remove their suffering and give them what they need and I don’t care if no one helps me.” This is a big personal decision to no longer wait around and waste time.

7. SEMKYE

Achieve the wish to become enlightened as soon as possible so that you can show others how to free themselves.

Through study and tantric practice, you will see the importance of reaching enlightenment as quickly as possible. Upon enlightenment, you will have multiple bodies and be able to read minds in order to help others. In the Lam Rim, it is said “Eat first.” It is similar in concept to a father eating everything to get the strength necessary to find food for the entire family. In other words, you won’t really be able to help others unless you can show them how to exit the cycle of suffering. You must reach the state that enables you to do this.

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Three Versions of Dependent Origination

TENDREL

Dependent Origination

Things happen because of dependence. Things occur due to something else. First you must understand this positive aspect of how things exist, which is the flip side of emptiness (the negative aspect – i.e. everything is empty in that nothing exists from its own side without being dependently originated). Then, you will understand why things do not happen self-existently in the way that we normally think. To achieve liberation and happiness, you must see emptiness directly.

There are 3 versions of dependent origination:

1. **The Functionalist Group**, which is comprised of:
 - a) The Abhidharma School
 - b) The Sutrists (Logic) School
 - c) The Mind-Only School

Of the four great schools of India, these are the lower schools. They believe that things are dependently originated in the sense that things depend on causes and conditions. For example, they believe a tree depends upon a seed (cause) and sunlight and water (conditions). However, this fails to cover the interdependence of unchanging things such as empty space. However, understanding this does not remove unhappiness. This is not sufficient.

2. **Independence Group** is comprised of the Sautantrika Madhyamika, which is the lower half of the Middle Way school.

The Independence Group believes that something is dependently originated if it depends on its parts. This definition is better since it covers things that do not have causes, such as emptiness and empty space. Space is there even when the planets disappear. The parts of space are its directions. However, this still does not remove unhappiness.

3. **Consequence Group** is comprised of the Prasangika Madhyamika, which is the higher half of the Middle Way school. This is the school of Lord Buddha, the Dalai Lama, and the tantric schools.

This school believes in the power of consequential logic – prove things by showing the consequence of wrong ideas. The Consequence Group believes that everything is dependently originated because they exist as a projection of your own mind, as a projection forced on you by your past karma.

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For example, consider your arm. Your mind perceives the flesh colored cylinder as your arm. There is nothing in the arm itself that give it its “armness” – rather, it is your projection. If your karma was worse, you would not perceive it as a human arm, but rather as something like a dog’s leg (i.e. if you had the karma to be living a dog’s life). In other words, what you see is dependent upon the state of your mind. What you see and experience is imputed by your mind and karma. The arm is dependently originated due to a reasonable basis and the projection of the mind. If your karma was different or shifts, the arm “turns into” a dog’s leg.

Alternatively, consider yourself seeing your boss yelling at you. Objectively, all that is happening is a stream of high decibel sounds and waving body parts. The boss is empty of any inherent existence. Your mind forces you to see the situation as an angry person yelling at you. Your mind and karma caused the situation. (Another person – e.g. your enemy – might not see this as a “bad” situation).

If you yell back, you perpetuate the pain and plant seeds for experiencing this again in the future. If you are kind and do not yell back, you can break out of the cycle of suffering.

Everything is dependently originated (a projection forced on you by your mind and past karma). Nothing is not dependently originated. **You can plant the karma for yourself to project an enlightened existence in the future.**

Drastic karmic shifts can occur in minutes:

Alive -> Die -> Bardo Realm -> Rebirth -> New projection of the mind

This process can happen in minutes to radically shift your projections. That’s why it is crucial to get enlightened while you can.

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Class Three: Buddhist Refuge

The Perfection of Wisdom

Refers to the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras, which focus on emptiness. It also refers to 6th of the Six Perfections.

SHERAB KYI PARUL TU CHINPA

Wisdom Other Side Gone To
Prajnya *Paramita (skt.)*

Wisdom Gone to the Other Side refers to the wisdom that makes you perfect.

The perfection of wisdom is the knowledge of a person of the greater way with which they perceive emptiness, and which is imbued with the Wish for enlightenment (bodhichitta).

The perception of emptiness referred to here does not have to be direct – it could be intellectual. The greater way refers to the Mahayana way, doing things for the benefit of all other sentient beings.

The Root Text and Author:

NGUNTOK GYEN *Ornament of Realizations*
Realizations Ornament
Abhisamaya Alamkara (skt.)

Author: Jetsun Jampa Lord Maitreya is the future Buddha.
 Lord Maitreya
 Loving One

The text was taught by Lord Maitreya to:

Pakpa Tokme (~350 AD)
Arya *Asanga (skt)*
 Not Obstructed
 Unstoppable

Pakpa Tokme transcribed the text.

The Commentary and it's Author:

The commentary to the root text is written by Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493 – 1568) and titled *Analysis of the Perfection of Wisdom*. Kedrup Tenpa Dargye was a writer of textbooks for Sera Mey monastery.

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Refuge

KYAMDRO

Taking Refuge is to look to some object outside of yourself in hopes that the object will be of assistance to you. Normal refuge usually involves fear and an object that helps protect you (e.g. you go to the police for help). In Buddhism, the Three Jewels are the refuge. Other refuges (e.g. people, authorities, money, etc.) don't last.

The Three Jewels are: the Buddha Jewel, the Dharma Jewel, and the Sangha Jewel.

The Dharma Jewel

A truth or reality relating to the greater way, and to the enlightened side of the four truths, and which involves either a cessation or a path.

The Dharma Jewel is the most important of the Three Jewels. Your understanding, and the realizations in your mind and in others' minds protects you.

Especially important is the direct perception of emptiness. During this 20 minute experience, you see the day of your enlightenment, how many future lives you will have before your enlightenment, and you know you have met a buddha directly. Once you have glimpsed emptiness, you will be born into good conditions, propelled by the power of your good karma.

You gain a cessation in the form of a permanent end of doubt regarding Buddhism. You perceive that your perception is correct and you will put all your effort into saving others. An example of a path would be reaching true renunciation, which is known as the path of accumulation.

The Five Paths

1. **Accumulation** – cultivate virtue, renunciation and bodhichitta. You have reached true renunciation when you are unceasingly thinking about ending your suffering.
2. **Preparation** – reaching an intellectual understanding of emptiness.
2. **Seeing** – the direct perception of emptiness.
4. **Habituation** – Using your perception to permanently remove mental afflictions; using your experience to recondition your life.

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5. **No more learning** – nirvana or enlightenment, depending upon the level of your practice. Hinayana practitioners reach nirvana. Mahayana practitioners reach full enlightenment and buddhahood.

Sangha Jewel

Anyone who has seen emptiness directly is the sangha jewel. Seek protection in those who have seen emptiness directly, which requires great effort, training, and meditation. When you see it directly yourself, you become one who others pray to.

Buddha Jewel

The Buddha sees all that exists (deceptive reality - past, present, future) and the emptiness of everything (ultimate reality) all at the same time. Unless you are a Buddha, you cannot perceive emptiness itself and deceptive reality at the same moment. Buddhas are not omnipotent, but rather are omniscient. They help through teaching.

The common theme of the Three Jewels is emptiness, which is the protection. You yourself supply the reality – things have no inherent reality of their own. In bad situations, you must have love and compassion. What happens is a product of your karma. Take refuge and maintain an understanding of emptiness.

Ways of Describing Bodhichitta

The first way of dividing the Wish into two types:

- 1) **MUNSEM** The Wish in the form of intention
Prayer State of Mind
- 2) **JUKSEM** The Wish through action
To Enter

There are two stages: to think like a Bodhisattva, and to take vows and act like Bodhisattva.

The second way of dividing the Wish into two types:

- 1) **KUNDZOB SEMKYE**
Deceptive Bodhichitta

The Wish as it is normally spoken of. It is deceptive in being focused toward objects existing as deceptive reality, as seen by an average person. When you see a person, you think it's a person from its own side. To a normal person, the object deceives even whilst the normal person wants to help.

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2) **DUNDAM SEMKYE**

Absolute Bodhichitta

The Wish in its ultimate form, which is a code word for the direct perception of emptiness.

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Class Four: Buddhist Refuge

Nirvana

NYUNDRIP MALUPAR PANGPAY SO-SOR TANGOK

Mental In entirety eliminated one-by-one Seeing 4 Arya Truths
Affliction

Nirvana (NYANGDE in Tibetan) is defined as “The permanent cessation in which one has eliminated the mental affliction obstacles in their entirety, due to one’s individual analysis.”

The ‘individual analysis’ refers to a person’s realization of the various individual details of the Four Arya Truths, one-by-one, after the direct perception of emptiness. After seeing emptiness directly, you are a “stream-enterer” or Arya (literally, one who has seen emptiness).

The Four Arya Truths

1. All is suffering in this realm
2. You see the cause of the suffering (mental afflictions)
3. You see the end of suffering
4. You see the cause of the end of suffering (the path)

To reach Nirvana, you need to stop all mental afflictions. Seeing emptiness directly gives you that capability.

Your mental continuum is a product of your karmic seeds, and of their configuration or impression on your mind. The imprints come together, or configure, leading to outcomes. Every perception you have is a ripening of karmic seeds. After you have seen emptiness directly, you will never do anything except think, speak, and behave in a way so as to create the positive imprints leading to the configuration of your nirvana.

Nirvana is the elimination of all negative imprints and seeds. Emptiness gives you the insight to perform constant virtue, planting positive imprints and potentials. Without knowledge of this, you do not have enough power to achieve nirvana. It gives you the ability to stop creating negative imprints.

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Types of Nirvana

1. **HLAKCHE NYANGDE** Nirvana with something left over
Something have nirvana

This is also referred to as nirvana with remainder. This means the state of nirvana where you still possess a body that was produced by impure karma.

The body is made up of the **five heaps**, or piles of stuff:

- a) Physical form
- b) Feelings (sensory, emotional, pleasure, pain)
- c) Ability to discriminate (to tell the difference between two things)
- d) Main mind (consciousness, senses, mental functions)
- e) Other factors

Feeling and discrimination are two of the 46 mental functions – they are highlighted specifically because these two mental functions cause your suffering.

2. **HLAKME NYANGDE** Nirvana with nothing left over
something nothing nirvana
left over

This refers to nirvana where you no longer possess such a body.

3. **MI-NEPAY NYANGDE** Nirvana that does not stay
not stay nirvana

This refers to nirvana that does not stay in either the extreme of suffering, or pure bliss. This is the nirvana of a totally enlightened being.

SITA – wheel edge - the extreme of suffering, where we are now.

SHITA – peace edge - the extreme of peace, which refers to the nirvana of the lower way (hinayana), where a person has eliminated their mental afflictions forever, but not attained total enlightenment.

Three Paths to Nirvana

1. Train in the wisdom of realizing emptiness.
2. Undertake the above training under the influence of fine morality and concentration (meditation).
3. Become very familiar with the realizations seen when perceiving emptiness directly.

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The Object We Deny

GAKJA – the object we deny; a self-existent thing.
deny object

This is what we think is out there, but which is not really there. Emptiness is the absence of something. It is a negative state. A “gakja” is what we negate. Without first knowing what a self-existent thing is, you cannot prove that it is not there, which is necessary to realize emptiness.

A gakja is something which exists from its own side. Our usual perception is to think objects exist from their own side. However, it is not true – things only exist in dependence of something. Things exist in dependence on parts, causes, or projections. Things do not exist by radiating their own nature. Things are empty of any self-existent nature.

When you have a negative emotion, you think it is from its own side. But that’s not true. You see things that way as a projection, forced upon you by your past karma.

Types of Beings

There are those who haven’t seen emptiness, and those who have.

1) **SOSO KYEWO**

ordinary person

2) **JETOP JANGSEN PAKPA**

after get bodhichitta arya

A bodhisattva who has seen emptiness directly. However, things still appear to them to be self-existent, but they don’t believe what they see.

3) **TONGNYI NGUNSUM DU TOKPAY LOPA**

emptiness directly in seeing practitioner

A person who is not a Buddha but who is in the direct perception of emptiness

To see emptiness directly, there are stages. First, you need to lead an ethical life. This enables you to concentrate clearly and achieve deep meditation (unethical living has subtle effects on the mind that prevent deep meditation). Deep meditation enables one to see emptiness.

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The metaphor of the Magic Show

In the metaphor of the magic show, a magician throws a small stick on the ground and casts a spell, making the people standing there see the stick as a horse or cow. Other people who join the crowd later do not see the stick as an animal because they weren't there when the spell was cast.

The spectators to the spell are like people who have not yet seen emptiness directly since they see things as self-existent and also believe that they are. The magician is like a bodhisattva who has seen emptiness directly – things appear to them as self-existent, but they don't believe what they see. The latecomers are like someone who is not a Buddha but who is in the direct perception of emptiness: things neither appear as self-existent to them, nor are they believing them at that time to be self-existent.

Proofs of Emptiness

In Buddhist logic, there are four elements to a proof:

- 1) Basis of consideration
- 2) Assertion of characteristic
- 3) Reason
- 4) Example

#1 and #3 must connect. #2 and #3 must be valid. If #3 holds, then #2 must hold. If you negate #2, it negates #3 also. Each element must be acceptable individually.

For example:

- 1) Consider the sun
- 2) The sun is not blue
- 3) The sun is yellow

The Emptiness of One or Many

The subject, or basis, of the proof is the "three knowledges".

- 1) Consider the three knowledges
- 2) The three knowledges do not really exist (i.e. are not self-existent)
- 3) Because they do not exist really as one, nor do they exist really as many
- 4) For example, they are like a reflection of an image in a mirror

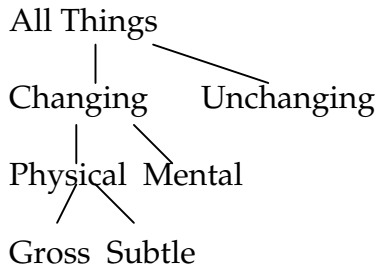
If you disprove something as singular, then you automatically disprove something as plural. Therefore, we must prove that the three knowledges do not really exist as one thing.

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Class Four: continued

Things can be organized as follows



If something has parts, then it cannot exist as one thing on its own since the thing exists in dependence upon its parts. Therefore, we must prove that all things have parts.

Gross physical things have parts, so they cannot exist as one. Subtle physical things (like atoms) also have parts (e.g. top and bottom of an atom), so they cannot exist as one. Mental things are composed of moments. The stream of the moments are the parts of the mental things. Unchanging things like emptiness, empty space, and cessations also have parts. The parts of emptiness are the emptinesses of all different things (all things have an emptiness). Empty space has directions. There are different types of cessations. Therefore, everything has parts.

Thus, we have proven that there is no one thing that really exists (since all things have parts, and things with parts do not really exist as one thing). And since we have proven that no one thing really exists, it follows that things do not really exist as many either.

Tantra

The open path of Buddhism and the secret path of Buddhism (tantra) are not to be mixed. There are two elements that must be present in order for tantra to work:

- 1) The person who has spoken the tantra must be a being of exceptional spiritual power.
- 2) The person who practices the tantra must be someone who is leading a very pure life.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Five: Applied Meditation

GOMPA Habituation

Fixing the mind on something spiritual so the mind will be imbued and imprinted with the qualities of the spiritual object

SAMTEN

The 5th of the Six Perfections – Meditative Concentration.

There are three realms in samsara: the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm. Humans are in the Desire realm. Strive in your meditation to get to the 1st level of the Form realm where you can have the direct perception of emptiness.

TING NGE DZIN

Samadi (skt)

The ability to fix mind on anything, single-pointedly, for a moment.

SHI-NE

Shamata (skt)

The Highest form of *Samadhi*.

With *shiney*, one can achieve enlightenment. There are nine levels of attainment in this meditation (which is discussed below). When you can achieve them, then you must focus that concentration on emptiness.

Five Parts to Every Meditation

1. Preparing to begin meditation (the six preliminaries)
2. The six conditions of an ideal meditation environment
3. Assume the correct posture for meditation
4. Engage in the actual mental process during meditation
5. Select the object of meditation

These are explained in detail below.

Preparing to Begin - the Six Preliminaries

- 1) **NEKANG CHI DANG TEN DRAM** Set up a sacred place.
Place Clean and Arrange Altar
- 2) **CHUPA** Make Offerings.
Offerings

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Five: continued

- 3) **KYAMDRO SEMKYE** Go for refuge and cultivate bodhichitta.
Go for refuge chitta

Develop the Wish for enlightenment (bodhichitta) while sitting in meditative posture

- 4) **TSOKSHING SELDEB** Visualize the Merit Field.
assembly place to beseech

Visualize the collected Lamas and Holy Beings in front of you – those who you are going to for refuge.

- 5) **TSOKSAK DRIPJANG** Collect energy and purify obstacles.
together collect obstacle purify

This process is comprised of seven elements and is referred to as the **Seven Ingredients** (see below).

- 6) **SULNDEP** Request blessings from the Holy Beings
to beseech

Request the Lamas (who you envision) to give you blessings (*jinlap*). Ask them to help you increase your spiritual abilities (e.g. to see emptiness).

The Seven Ingredients

These gather positive potential and purify obstacles. The point of spiritual practice is to change the mind. This is the 5th step of the six preliminaries.

- 1) **CHAKTSEL** Prostration

Bow to holy beings, to the Dharma (the teachings), and to the Sangha (those who have seen emptiness directly).

- 2) **CHUPA** Visualize making offerings to the Holy Beings

- 3) **SHAKPA** Confessing

Open yourself up – confess your bad deeds to remove negativity. Recall taking refuge and generating bodhichitta, recall your past unkindness and regret the deeds. This is the one step in the seven ingredients that has to do with removing/purifying obstacles (the others have to do with gathering positive energy).

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Five: continued

4) **YI-RANGWA** Rejoice in the good deeds of yourself and others

5) **CHUNKOR KORWAR KUL** Requesting teachings
Dharma wheel turn urge

Urge Holy Beings to teach.

6) **SULNDEP** Beseech Holy Beings to stay near you

7) **NGOWA** Dedication

Dedicating the goodness you have done for the sake of all beings.

The Six Conditions of the Environment

1) **TUNPAY YUL** Stay in a place which is supportive of concentration.
conducive place

For example, places that are quiet and safe.

2) **DUPA CHUNGWA** Have few wants.

Cultivate an attitude where you don't need many things (i.e. live simply).

3) **CHOK SHEPA** Be satisfied with the things you have.

4) **JA MANG PANG** Give up activity
activity a lot give up

Give up being too busy – do the minimum necessary so as not to distract yourself from meditation.

5) **TSULTRIM DAKPA** Maintain an ethical way of life.
ethics pure

Negative energy is detrimental to your focus. Therefore you should live ethically. Teaching Dharma is the highest virtue.

6) **NAMTOK PANG** Give up sense objects
sense object give up

Try to withdraw from the six senses – withdraw the mind and get out of attachment to sensory things.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Five: continued

The Eight Point Posture

- 1) **KANGPA KYILNTRUL** Cross your legs however you can.
 legs cross

Usually it means full lotus or half-lotus, but the point is to sit however you can and not distract the mind from focusing.

- 2) **MIK MIYE MIDZUM** Don't keep your eyes completely open or closed.

Keep them slightly open – this helps avoid external distraction and helps keep you from falling asleep. You should not have any visual distractions in the field of vision.

- 3) **LU DRANG** Sit up straight. The need to sit up straight has to be with the subtle spiritual body.

- 4) **TRAKPA NYAM** Make your shoulders level (both at same height).

- 5) **SO MITU MIMA** Make sure your head is neither tilted up or down.

- 6) **SU CHU RANGLUK** Let your teeth and lips stay in their natural, loose position. Do not clench your jaws – relax.

- 7) **CHE YASOY RANGLUK** The tongue should be in a natural position, near the upper palate behind the front teeth.

- 8) **UK JUNG- NGUP** Make your breath completely quiet. Count each breath beginning with the exhalation part of the breath.

Habituation to the meditation posture is very helpful because it keeps these variables fixed. Keep the left hand below the right hand – this has to do again with the subtle spiritual body and is discussed further in Tantra.

The Five Obstacles and Their Corrections

- 1) **LELO** Laziness – not wanting to meditate.

Antidotes:

- a) **DEPA** - Faith in the results of meditation (moving along the five paths).
- b) **DUNPA** - Decide you want to be a good meditator because you want the results.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Five: continued

- c) **TSUNDRU** – Make efforts to be a good meditator because you want the results.
 - d) **SHINJANG** (practiced ease) – If you have meditated enough, it becomes easy and you feel good doing it, and you enjoy it.
- 2) Losing the Object. Antidote: Recall the object.

3) **JINGGU** Having dullness or agitation (coarse or subtle)

Fixation is the ability to fix the mind on its object.

Clarity is how clear the mind is, not how clear the visualization is.

Intensity is a matter of degree.

JINGWA RAKPA Coarse dullness is fixation with no clarity.
Dullness gross

JINGWA TRAMO Subtle dullness is fixation and clarity, but with a lack of
Dullness subtle intensity.

Dullness is the biggest enemy because it can fool you into thinking you are progressing (but it can actually make you dumber).

Antidote: **SHESHIN** Watchfulness

4) **DU MIJEPA** Fail to take action to correct dullness or agitation when you should

Antidote: Tighter focus. Make efforts to correct dullness or agitation.

5) Making corrections when it is not necessary to do so. This can be caused by doubt, which makes it difficult to keep the mind content in single pointed concentration.

Antidote: Self-confidence in what you are doing.

The 9 Levels of Shamata

These are the nine stages of Attainment leading to full shamata.

1) **SEM JOKPA** Putting you mind on the object

At this stage, you place your mind on the object, but the mind has little ability to hold its concentration. Graphically, it can be represented by: * * * * * * *
(The locations of the * signify moments of concentration on the object, and the spaces in between signify moments where there is lack of concentration.)

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Five: continued

- 2) **GYUNDU JOKPA** Put your mind on an object in a stream

Here the times of concentration become longer in duration, and can be represented graphically by: - - - - -

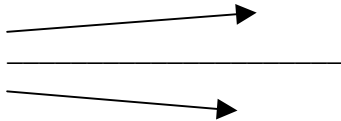
- 3) **LENTE JOKPA** Patches of concentration

Here you are able to focus on the object longer with strong fixation and recall to quickly patch the gaps when your focus breaks off, represented graphically as:

— — — —

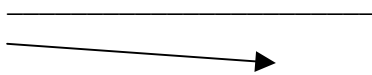
- 4) **NYEWAR JOKPA** Placing the mind on the object closely.

Here you have good fixation and clarity, but low intensity. You have coarse agitation (arrow above the line) and dullness (arrow below the line), represented as follows:



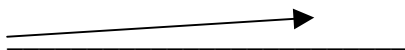
- 5) **DULWAR JEPSA** To bring the mind under control
to tame do

You have good watchfulness and no longer lose the object. Good fixation and clarity, but still not very intense. There is still subtle dullness that results from too much taming of coarse agitation, represented by:



- 6) **SHIWAR JEPSA** Making the mind calm
peace do

You have powerful watchfulness, and can detect the subtle agitation that results from the uplifting of the mind of the previous state.



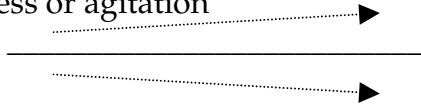
CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Five: continued

- 7) **NAMPAR SHIWA JEPÄ** Make the mind totally calm
totally peace do

Recollection and watchfulness are total, and there is only very faint, subtle dullness or agitation



- 8) **TSE CHIKTU JEPÄ** Making the mind single-pointed
One pointed make

Effortlessly staying focused, once you have brought the mind there. It requires minimal effort to get your there.



- 9) **NYAMPAR JOKPA** Effortlessly abiding in meditation
Even place mind

You effortlessly abide in meditation, automatically, without effort. This is the final stage of shamata, and is required for you to see emptiness directly.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Six: Applied Meditation

Three Types of Meditation

The mind is like a mirror. There must be content to your meditation. It is pointless to meditate on nothing.

There are three types of meditation:

1) **JOKGOM** Single pointed meditation

Set the mind single pointedly on an object or idea. Success comes from single-mindedness (even in worldly pursuits). For example, visualize the Buddha. Start with the silhouette, then the face, colors, the breathing, the smell, the warmth – it is an all sensory meditation. Feel the entire being. That's real jokgom.

2) **SHARGOM** Review Meditation

Like holding pictures to your mind in a certain order. Create new habits by thinking through the connections. For example, review meditation on Death Meditation will create new thinking in your mind.

3) **CHEGOM** Analytical Meditation

This is problem solving meditation. Set a Buddhist question in your mind and examine it from all angles. For example, ask yourself what is the most important Buddhist thing to do? Each day, struggle with the question – intellectual questioning. Resolve the question. Once you have decided on the answer, apply jokgom meditation.

Lam Rim Meditation

LAM RIM Steps to the path to Enlightenment
Path steps

This is the most important object of meditation. The name is from the Buddha's *Perfection of Wisdom* sutras. They provide a certain order to follow – steps in your spiritual career (although some contest this idea). As in any pursuit (like playing a piano), you need a teacher, guidance, and practice. In Buddhism, the practice is very subtle. If you follow all the steps, you must become enlightened.

The Lam Rim covers the theory of Buddhism and the traditional teachings in a complete though abbreviated way. A course of study based on the steps is referred to as LAM RIMPA.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Six: continued

The Lam Rim encompasses parts of the five great texts that form the basis of the Geshe course of study. "Tsen nyipa" is the monk's way, relying upon reasoning, as is the case in the great monasteries. Tsen Nyipa covers the same material as Lam Rimpa, with very great depth and detail. The results are therefore much greater if you are willing to work hard and understand the details as a geshe does.

Each of the four great schools in India had studies in conjunction with meditation and retreats. Anyone with the perseverance can excel greatly. The five great texts are:

1) **PARCHIN** Perfection of Wisdom Sutras (*Prajnaparamita*, skt.)

This is the study of the lower-half of the middle way school (the Independent School), and takes 12 years in the monastery.

2) **UMA** Middle Way (*Madhyamika*)

This is the study of the upper half of the middle way school, which contain the highest teachings on emptiness, and the Mind-Only School. (4 years in the monastery)

3) **DULWA** Vowed Morality (*Vinaya*)

This is the study of ethics to lead a moral life. Presentation of the Detailist school. (2 years in the monastery.)

4) **DZU** Higher Knowledge (*Abhidharma*)

This is an encyclopedia of Buddhist philosophy from the 1st of the four great schools, covering topics such as the parts of the mind, how the universe forms, time, cosmology, karma, meditation and mental afflictions (2 years in the monastery.)

5) **TSEMA** Logic and Perception (*Pramana*)

In the traditional course of study, every year three or four months is devoted to the study of logic and perception, based on the Sutrists of Logic School. Theories of perception, how it works, and why we recognize things are very important to understand to facilitate seeing emptiness directly. How to think clearly is a doorway to seeing. This study typically culminated in the Winter Debates.

The Lam Rim is an abbreviation of all five great texts. To be a teacher, knowledge of the full details of the five great texts is necessary in order to be able to be equipped to confront what arises in meditation.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Six: continued

Lama Meditation

YUNTEN SHIR GYURMA The Source of All My Goodness
Good Basis Book about
Spiritual
qualities

This book is about the source of all subtle virtues. The source of all goodness is your Lama, or teacher.

The first Lam Rim discusses the benefits of devotion to your Lama. You must find this person. They need to be qualified, and should have a tight relationship with you to monitor your progress. All the great spiritually realized being have mentors.

To meditate on the Lam Rim do a review meditation, then single-pointed meditation.

The 4 steps of Lama meditation are:

1) **DEPA JANGWA** Develop faith and admiration in your Lama
faith develop

Check out the Lama and see if they know what they are talking about. Come to a point where you have faith in the Lama because you have thoroughly investigated the Lama. Once you are satisfied, develop faith in your Lama. Be careful of your choice; you will think and become like them.

2) **SAMPE TENPA** How to think about your Lama
in your take self to
thoughts

How will you relate to and think about the Lama? Don't break your connection. Think about the Lama as the person (or persons) who will save your life.

The Lama will seem to you as good for a while – then your karma will change and wear out. You think the Lama has changed, but really, your own perception has changed. You must deal with this and handle it. Understand and fight your karmic shift. Understand that the Lama is your challenge – make the connection and place your faith in the Lama. This is Tantric practice. If you view this as someone testing you to get you to enlightenment, that is a good way to think. You must be grateful. Your Lama will keep pushing you forward. Once you decide to shift your mind, you will see their actions as a challenge to you. You must do what you know is right.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Six: continued

- 3) **JORWE TENPA** How to act towards your Lama
 Act take self to

To succeed spiritually, you will progress level by level. For example:

Level I – you just soak in information from your Lama

Level II – you help your Lama a bit

Level III – you help your Lama more

Level IV- you help your Lama with a major project

etc...

Eventually, you can't distinguish your needs from your Lama's needs. In service with them, you are like family. You need that sort of relationship. Find a Lama that fits you, and who has a mental connection with you. You help them in what they are doing (which should be helping people get enlightened) and eventually, it becomes a total commitment to take the load off their shoulders. Remember, it's not for the Lama (who is already enlightened) but rather it's for you. It should be an honor for you to help and have an opportunity to work for the Lama. To see emptiness directly, get into a dynamic relationship with your Lama. Don't hold back anything and you'll get everything.

- 4) **GUPA KYEWA** Develop reverence for your Lama

You will feel this devotion – it is an important sign of spiritual development. He has been patiently waiting for years and years, setting up to guide you, so you feel devotion.

Taking the Essence of this Life

What should be your motivation in this life? There are three parts to the subject of taking the essence of this life, as discussed in the Lam Rim.

1) Steps shared with those of lower capacity – motivation to stay out of the lower realms and avoid rebirth in the lower realms.

2) Steps shared with those of medium capacity – motivation to avoid any rebirth at all, for their own sake.

3) Steps for those of great capacity – motivation to benefit others; to avoid lower realms and rebirth and to help every living being do the same. There are two parts to this: learning how to think like a bodhisattva, and learning how to act like a bodhisattva.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Six: continued

Death Meditation

This is one part of the Lam Rim.

- 1) Death is certain. Only your deeds shall remain. Do review meditation, then single-pointed meditation -- try to think of anyone who didn't die. Understand this point.
- 2) There is no certainty when you will die.
- 3) When you do die, only the Dharma can help you.

The Three Trainings

Morality, Concentration, and Wisdom (understanding emptiness).

Morality is the basis of the other two trainings. One must have morality to concentrate well, which is necessary to see emptiness directly

Quietude and Insight

Quietude (*shamata* in Sanskrit and *Shi-ne* in Tibetan) is that single-mindedness which is imbued with the exceptional bliss of practiced ease due to deep, single-pointed meditation on its object.

Insight (*vipashyana* in Sanskrit and *hlak-tong* in Tibetan) is that wisdom which is full of the exceptional bliss of practiced ease by power of the analysis of its object, and which is founded upon quietude.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Seven: The Proof of Future Lives

Buddhist Logic and Perception

TSEMA Correct or valid perception

Pramana (skt.)

Tsema is a valid, correct perception that is tied to a mental image. With a correct mental image, you can see emptiness directly. The use of Logic is in part to see emptiness.

Definition of existence

TSEME MIKPA YUPAY TSENNYI
By a valid that which to exist definition
perception is perceived

That which is perceived by valid perception.

I perceive, therefore it is. If I see a thing with a valid perception, then it exists.

Valid vs. Correct

I can buy a stock for valid reasons, but I might not be correct. That is, given the information at hand one can have valid reasons for doing something. Generally, valid means correct, but not necessarily.

Some say that you can have no correct perceptions until you have seen emptiness. Subtle blockages in the mind prevent you from seeing reality correctly. In meditation, these blockages can break down. You can logically work through the blinders. Being with reasoning to see with the mind. Later, you will then be able to perceive ultimate reality directly.

Purpose of Buddhist Logic

**NGA-AM NGA DANG DRAWA GANGSAK GI TSU SUNG GI, GANGSAK GI
GANGSAK GI TSU MISUNG TE, NYAMPAR GYUR TA RE**

Lord Buddha said: "I or someone like myself can judge a person, but no normal person should judge another, for he will fall (to the lower realms)." (From the *Compendium of Stories from the Sutras* by Lord Atisha.)

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Seven: continued

That is, a Buddha, someone who can read minds can judge other people, but no normal person should try to judge another normal person because he will fail and fall to the lower realms. A normal person should not judge other people, but can judge their actions. A normal person can never be sure why another does something. Know the limits of your direct perceptions.

Types of Valid Perception

1) **NGUNSUM TSEMA** Direct perception

This is the direct perception of things like color, shapes, sounds – obvious reality. The perception of evident objects (**NGUNGYUR**).

This is different from emptiness, which is difficult to see, and the subtle effects of karma, which are very difficult to see.

2) **JEPAK TSEMA** Deductive valid perception deductive valid perception

A perception based on deduction is just as valid or correct as a direct perception. Deductive perception is used to perceive hidden or deeply hidden objects.

To see emptiness, start with deductive perception, and then progress to a direct perception. Get used to deductive perceptions as being valid. However, a direct perception of emptiness gives a certain power, including seeing the Four Arya truths. The effect on the mind stream is not the same as a deductive perception.

KOKGYUR Hidden realities, hidden level of reality (second level of reality)

An example is emptiness itself. To enlightened beings, there is no kokgyur – everything is direct.

To a blind person, everything is kokgyur – it's a deeper level of reality, a mental perception.

SHINTU KOKGYUR Deeply hidden reality

An example is the very subtle workings of karma – levels of reality that are difficult to perceive from deduction. For example, first prove the Buddha does not lie. Then use that fact, plus statements, to deduce truths. For example, Lord Buddha told the truth that all is suffering (no one else had said that), which gives him a certain level of credibility. Of all beings, Lord Buddha alone describes our daily suffering

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Seven: continued

accurately. This alone allows us to believe that he is possibly unerring, which cannot be said of those who do not describe our suffering in this way.

The Christian view of God is that he is omniscient and omnipotent. But this raises questions about certain phenomena, such as “why do babies die?” The Buddhist view of Buddhas is that they are omniscient, but not omnipotent. They know what is right and what is wrong, what brings joy and what brings pain. They understand and teach the way to get out of suffering. This is a beautiful vision of omniscience – one who knows perfectly what it is that we must give up in our behavior and worldview, and what we must take up in our behavior and worldview.

Master Dignaga’s famous opening statement was as follows:

“I bow down to the Protector, Those Gone to Bliss, the Teacher, those who wish to benefit living beings, and those who have turned into ones with valid perception.”

Definition of Valid Perception – a fresh, unmistakable state of mind.

Definition of Person of Valid Perception – an enlightened being (they only have valid perceptions), with the connotation of a person who cannot lie.

Three Main Ways to Show the Buddha is Correct

- 1) The Teachings cannot be disproved by any direct valid perception.
- 2) The Teachings cannot be disproved by any airtight reasoning (logic).
- 3) The Teachings are free of any internal inconsistency.

Three Ground Rules to Interpret the Buddha

- 1) True Intent: the Buddha must have had something else specific in mind when he said something that was not literal.
- 2) Contradiction: the statement that was made must contradict what we know to be actually true.
- 3) Need: there must be some compelling need or purpose served by the Buddha saying something which is not technically true.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Eight: The Proof of Future Lives

Three Types of Compassion

- 1) **NYING JE** Compassion
karuna (skt.)

The wish that others be freed from common suffering

- 2) **NYINGJE CHENPO** Great Compassion
maha karuna (skt.)

The wish that all others be freed from all suffering, and the decision to make this happen oneself. Work your whole life to try, each second focusing on helping others. We should seek this state – thinking that if I’m enlightened, I will emanate bodies to help others. This level of compassion is rare.

- 3) **TUKJE CHENPO** Holy Great Compassion

The compassion of an enlightened being: of someone who actually does help all living beings. This type of compassion is the mindstream of an enlightened being, who does what it takes to help automatically and without thought. It is the result of extraordinary karma.

These three stages usually take lifetimes to develop.

The Charvaka view

The Charvakas did not believe in future lives for 3 reasons:

- 1) The mind is a quality of the body (the way the ability to make someone drunk is a quality of alcohol).
- 2) The mind depends on the body (the way a picture hangs on a wall).
- 3) The mind is a result of the body, like a lamp and its light.

The Material Cause of the Mind

NYERLEN GYI GYU That which turns into a result
material cause

For example, seeds turn into a tree, or clay turns into a pot. What is the “material” stuff that became your mind? The consciousness you had an hour ago became the consciousness you have now. Each moment is a seed for the next moment of consciousness. What about the first moment of consciousness at conception?

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Eight: continued

Your mind is not bounded by the body – it has awareness beyond. The mind has the ability to recall and to know logically that there is some probability of an outcome. Mind/Awareness is not physical and is different from the body. Awareness is pure and continuous. Awareness is ineffable and cannot be hurt – it is just there. The mind has a relationship with the body, but it is not the same as the body. The mind is different stuff from the body (invisible, beyond the limits of the body, crystalline awareness).

The mind has no beginning – this explains how Buddhists understand causation. There is no original cause.

Why can't the cause of your mind be living physical matter?

WANGPOY SUK

sense power living

There must be similarity or continuity between cause and effect. Living physical matter, such as the parts of the body, is involved with our sense powers of sight, smell, taste, feeling, and hearing. Does the mind do this? No. There is no similarity. Without similarity, there is no cause/effect relationship. Since the mind is not equal to living matter associated with sense powers, it is different, therefore your present awareness is not the result of living matter.

Why can't the cause of your mind be outside physical matter?

CHIY SUK

outer form

Can the mind be created by chemicals? It's never been done. Non living physical matter has not been used to create a new, ineffable awareness that's invisible, an ever present mind.

Why can't the cause of your mind be another mindstream?

SHEN GYI GYU

other mindstream

For example, does your mind come from your parents' mind? If your tendencies are different from your parents, it shows your mindstreams are different.

Ultimately, awareness is a projection of mind – a much more detailed explanation of this can be found in the study of Madhyamika.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Eight: continued

The Mind at Death

At death, a normal person has desires due to ignorance. As the person dies, the emotion of desire causes the mind to cross over into the next life as a continuation of similar mind.

Proof of Future Lives

The three parts of Master Dharmakirti's main proof for future lives are as follows:

- 1) Consider the mind of a normal person at the moment of death
- 2) That mind will cross to a future mind
- 3) Because that mind possesses desire

Three types of Craving

There are three types of the 8th link of the chain from the Wheel of Life:

- 1) Craving Desire – an emotion of craving where you desire, out of ignorance, not to lose an attractive object, which you are willing to hurt someone to get.
- 2) Craving fear – an emotion of craving where you desire, out of ignorance, to avoid an unpleasant object, even if it hurts someone.
- 3) Craving for existence – an emotion of craving where you desire, out of ignorance, that the “me” continues to exist; this happens at the moment of death, when you are gripped by fear that your being is ending.

Four Levels of Focusing on the Self

How you focus on yourself at death is the key to why craving triggers karma.

- 1) Focusing upon yourself in an ordinary way – “this is me” – does not trigger existing karma to give a result such as rebirth.
- 2) Seeing yourself in an ignorant way -- that is self-existent -- and then believing that you do exist this way does trigger existing karma for rebirth.
- 3) Seeing yourself as self-existent, but not believing what you see since you have previously seen emptiness directly triggers rebirth.
- 4) Neither seeing or believing yourself as self-existent (Buddhas, or someone in the act of perceiving emptiness directly) does not trigger rebirth.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Nine: How Karma Works

There are no notes for class nine.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Ten: How Karma Works

The Connection between Emptiness and Karma

Lord Maitreya described six different steps in the process through which the tendency to grasp to some self-nature creates karma.

1) DAKDZIN NYI KYI BAKCHAK

The tendency of seeing things as self-existent comes from a prior life.

2) DAKDZIN NYI KYE

You have a tendency to see the self as self-existent and you hold the parts (e.g. body, mind) to be self-existent. All non-arhat beings have this tendency to see things the wrong way. If something was self-existent, than all beings would see that thing in the same way (e.g. a bug would recognize a “pen” to be a pen).

3) YI-ONG MI-ONG TSUL MIN TOK

nice things not nice wrong way think of
things

Things appear either to be attractive or undesirable from their own side.

4) DUCHAK SHEDANG KYE

You feel liking or disliking of things in a stupid (ignorant) way. If these feelings are based on ignorance they are dangerous, as they will cause you to react in ways that are harmful.

For example, if you want to collect wealth it’s okay, if you have the right intention and want to give it all up to help others. However, ignorant desire to collect wealth can lead to harmful negative deeds.

5) LE SAK

karma collect it

This step connects emptiness to karma. By doing something in an ignorant way (with wrong motivation), you do things with the emotion of ignorant liking or dislike, and collect karma. For example, you may react with an eye for an eye attitude, which leads you to collect negative karma.

6) KORWAR KOR

circle

You perpetuate your own pain, causing you to circle around in the circle of suffering life.

CLASS NOTES

Course XVI: The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part One

Class Ten: continued

You cannot actively understand this process and have feelings of anger and desire. Wisdom always prevails over ignorance.

The Glass of Water

The Consequence section of the Middle-Way School explains what is happening when three different beings sitting around a glass of liquid see it as being three different things.

A hungry ghost see the glass as being full of blood or pus, due to its karma of always being frustrated. A human sees the glass as being full of water. A tantric deity sees the glass as being filled with nectar. These are three valid, simultaneous perceptions.

The glass contains “liquid”, but there are three different perceptions of the liquid. Each beings karma causes the perception. In other words, there is no base reality, other than that there is “liquid” present.

Four Elements of a Path of Action

For a complete karma (e.g. of killing), there is:

- 1) The basis or object – the person that you kill.
- 2) The thought or intention, which has three parts:
 - i) Identification – do you conceive of it as what it is? For example, if you are killing, do you recognize the object as a living thing? (if you recognize something as living, then by wanting to kill, the karma is more complete than if you did not recognize the object as a living thing).
 - ii) Mental affliction – did you have an affliction like anger, desire, jealousy or hatred?
 - iii) Motivation – did you intend to kill? Something that is pre-meditated is more serious.
- 3) Undertaking the action – pulling the trigger.
- 4) Finalization – taking ownership of the action (I killed him, and I am happy).

If all these pieces are in place, the result is a complete karma. If an element is missing, then you do not have a karmic path or full karma, and the karmic consequence is lesser.