

2011-08-01

Tenets/Drupta

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Questions from audience to Geshela:

Question refers to doing tonglen/taking and giving practice in relation to the guru.

What the questioner says is confused so I am not transcribing it word for word to prevent readers getting the wrong instruction.

Answer: When doing the taking part in tonglen practice it involves taking imperfections from the person, which cause a lot of trouble. We see nothing imperfect about gurus so there is nothing to take from them. As for giving you can dedicate your life, learning etc to the success of the guru and Buddha's activities. According to some interpretation you could do taking especially when guru is manifesting signs of passing away, although in reality there is nothing imperfect about the guru yet I see these and I will take them on to myself so that the guru is restored to their original state of perfection. So that was a question about lojong. Are there any other questions please?

Question about Karma and 12 links of dependent origination especially the 2nd link. Is karma referring to mental karma or all kinds of karma?

Answer: In Tibetan language – le means work – and pertains to physical and verbal exertion etc. That's not karma may be called karma yoga. Karma in the sense of experience of pain and pleasure is necessarily karma as mental action.

Question: There must be a relation between karma and the fourth aggregate/volition/compositional factors then?

Answer: The fourth aggregate is very encompassing. It encompasses all impermanent phenomena – excluding the aggregate of mental consciousness, and the aggregates of discriminating awareness, sensation and form. So karma encompasses all excluding those four. Karma as a mental activity itself is the fourth aggregate.

Question: Bodhisattva vows are so easy to transgress – is a mere negative thought a minor example of transgression?

Answer: Yes they are so much more easily transgressed than the vows of ordination and tantra vows are even more easily transgressed unless ones human activities are grounded in working for others. Whatever you do if you do it with a view of working for other people, you'd succeed in safeguarding your bodhisattva vows. The easiest way to save any vow is to educate yourself by being in touch and having access to the service and advice of a qualified Mahayana guru is said to be a key factor in safeguarding bodhisattva vows.

Another helpful tip to save bodhisattva vows is to set the tone for the days work right from start. Think you don't own yourself, but feel you are a public servant at behest of vast numbers of sentient beings who are your bosses. For example a public servant who holds key positions of public service does what they do for the country, because they carry that label and position, and are elected to it rightly. Think, I am not my own, I am owned by sentient beings; whatever I do I will do for them. At a particular time you may not be able to ground it always but it is subsumed in the tone you set in the morning.

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President doesn't feel their eating, drinking walking, talking is for others but their actions would be seen to be done automatically for the public; so see yourself too as a public servant.

Bodhisattva vows and deeds are very complex issues and fragile. One way to suffer a minor transgression is to criticize or say something nasty to a bodhisattva. Obviously wouldn't if you knew them to be bodhisattva, but they take many forms, sometimes of the wretched, prostitutes etc. If you put them down on grounds of seeing faults, you'll suffer serious downfall. It is of that reason one is advised to learn to see all beings as Buddhas. If one does that it will hold one back from doing unkind things.

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Continuing the Four Truths:

Lately I have been talking about the four truths –

We covered the first two truths. In the first truth we talked about the 3 types of suffering, especially concentrating on pervasive conditioning which is the real target we need to address. The remaining two sufferings of actual pain and the change of pleasure into pain were not covered so much because they will be covered in the Lam Rim teachings on Sundays.

Then I talked at length about the truth of origin of suffering, karma and delusions. Now we will cover the truth of cessation and truth of path to it.

Truth of Cessation and Truth of Path

These two truths are issues we need to know well because truth of cessation and truth of path are the real dharma that we need to cultivate and develop.

What is true path? It covers a raft of knowledge, ranging from selflessness of person to knowledge of impermanence and so on. All correct knowledge or wisdom constitutes true path. Between true path and true cessation, what develops first? According to this school we develop true path first. This is developed when one develops the actual/direct antidote to psychological drawbacks/ faults.

**Continuing the Four Truths:
Continuing Truth of Path:**

The first true path is called:

The Uninterrupted Path of the Path of Seeing.

There are eight uninterrupted paths.

Let us go through it slowly – so you can get all of the details.

There are four uninterrupted paths pertaining to delusions of desire realm.

There are four pertaining to the two upper realms – form and formless realm.

There are forty delusions of the desire realm abandoned on the uninterrupted path of seeing.

Those abandoned on it are the *ten root delusions*;

five non-view delusions; desire, hatred/anger, deluded doubt, arrogance and ignorance; and *five views*; the view of transitory collection, view of extreme views, perverse distorted view, false supremacy of views, view of false supremacy of ethics.

These ten delusions observe the four truths, of suffering, origin, cessation and path, wrongly, so they become forty distortions with regards to the four truths. There are ten distortions in relation to each of the four truths; - suffering, origin, cessation and path.

The Buddhist description of particular world systems has the desire, form and formless realms. Before we move on we need to understand that there are *two types of obscurations* to overcome. One is *intellectually acquired\ artificially acquired* (the 40 delusions) and the other is innately acquired\ formed delusions.

The forty delusions of the desire realm abandoned/tackled by the uninterrupted path of path of seeing are called intellectually acquired/imagined. These forty are tackled by the four aspects of the uninterrupted path.

These four aspects are called:

The Four Forbearances of Dharma

There are 72 delusions of the form and formless realm – 36 in each. These are also abandoned by the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing.

These 72 delusions are the same 40 delusions of the desire realm with regard to four truths – so what do we exclude? We exclude anger in relation to the four truths from the form and formless realms. (That reduces the number of delusions by eight). There is no anger with regards to the four truths in the form and formless realms, because anger is necessarily a non-virtue and there are no non-meritorious actions in form and formless realms. That is why anger which is completely negative is excluded.

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**Continuing the Four Truths:
Continuing Truth of Path:**

So there are in total 112 delusions (40 in desire realm and 72 in the form and formless realms) in the three realms tackled and eradicated by the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing. Please remember these key figures because we will be returning to them repeatedly.

How do we get the 112? We have the ten root delusions – which each observe the four truths – multiplying them to forty.
We apply these to three realms, subtracting anger from the form and formless realms.
These are the 112 overcome by the uninterrupted path of path of seeing.

The uninterrupted path of path of seeing has eight uninterrupted paths.

Let us consider the three vehicles of Buddhism; the first is the Shravaka\Hearers, then solitary realisers\ Pratyeka Buddha and thirdly is Mahayana/ bodhisattva vehicle.

A hearer practitioner/meditator on 4th stage of path of preparation has a powerful understanding of selflessness of person but his or her knowledge is just conceptual - not direct. Such a one on the path of preparation has gone into meditative equipoise on selflessness of person with a strong conceptual understanding of this topic. In that meditation session it becomes an empirical/direct understanding of selflessness of person. At that point the person has moved from the path of preparation to path of seeing.

As soon as that meditator moves from conceptual understanding to direct understanding of emptiness of person, that first moment is called:

***Forbearance of Dharma (of truth) of Suffering.
That is the first of the eight uninterrupted paths.***

This very first moment of the Path of Seeing and also a direct understanding of selflessness of person directly eradicating the first ten delusions of the desire realm- i.e. distortions pertaining to truth of suffering of desire realm. This is also direct yogic perception.

When the ten distorting delusions of truth of suffering are eradicated fully, that first moment of an uninterrupted path becomes **knowledge of dharma**. It is a state of being free from those ten delusions. It is called the liberated path.

When you achieve this state of being free from the first ten distortions pertaining to truth of suffering you achieve the truth of cessation. They have ceased completely and so you achieve an instance of truth of cessation.

These two together, forbearance of dharma of truth of suffering and the knowledge of dharma of truth of suffering, constitute the first of eight interrupted paths.

**Continuing the Four Truths:
Continuing Truth of Path:**

***The second uninterrupted path is called:
Subsequent Forbearance of Dharma of Suffering.***

This path tackles nine distortions about the truth of suffering with regard to form realm and nine distortions in regard to truth of suffering in the formless realm - eighteen distortions tackled in all.

Tackling these eighteen distortions of truth of suffering in form and formless realm and successfully eradicating them the meditator achieves liberation/cessation of these delusions. This moment is called *subsequent knowledge of truth of suffering*.

How many uninterrupted paths have we covered tonight so far? Two. (not clear here???)
What are their names? How many distortions/delusions are eradicated on these two? 28.

These twenty eight delusions are called dung.nge/truth of suffering/delusions about the truth of suffering eradicated\abandoned on path of seeing.

Have you heard of the 16 moments of the path of seeing?
There are sixteen moments of path of seeing. They are eight directly counteracting uninterrupted paths and eight liberated uninterrupted paths. These all happen within a single meditation session. Just now we only covered four – two and two. Each time you achieve a liberated path you achieve an example of truth of cessation of the 112 delusions in relation to four truths.

***Third uninterrupted path is called:
Forbearance of Dharma of Origin of Suffering.***

The third uninterrupted path tackles ten distortions pertaining to truth of origin of suffering in the desire realm. They are delusions in the form of distortions in the minds of people of the desire realm. When they are challenged for some time, then tackled and eradicated totally, you achieve the liberated path which is called knowledge dharma of truth of origin.

***The fourth uninterrupted path is called:
Subsequent Forbearance of Origin of Suffering***

This path tackles eighteen delusions pertaining to truth of origin of suffering in the form and formless (upper) realms. When liberation is achieved from these eighteen, then you achieve what is called *subsequent knowledge of origin of suffering*.

**Continuing the Four Truths:
Continuing Truth of Path:**

With this we have covered how half of the hundred and twelve delusions pertaining to the four truths are eradicated.

***The fifth uninterrupted path is called:
Forbearance of dharma of truth of cessation.***

There are ten delusions which are distortions in the desire realm with regard to truth of cessation. After tackling these in fifth and uninterrupted path, whenever these completely cease you achieve ***knowledge of dharma of cessation.***

***The 6th uninterrupted path is called:
Subsequent Forbearance of Cessation***

This path has eighteen delusions which it tackles. The state of permanent freedom which is attained by it is called ***subsequent knowledge of cessation.***

***7th uninterrupted path is called:
Forbearance of (dharma of) Path***

This serves as a direct antidote to the last ten distortions of the desire realm which are distortions to true path. The state of freedom from these ten delusions of the desire realm about path is called ***knowledge of dharma of path.***

8th uninterrupted path is called Subsequent Knowledge of Path

It tackles eighteen distortions with regard to true path in the upper two realms, form and formless realms. When permanent cessation from these eighteen is achieved you achieve the liberated path. It is called ***subsequent knowledge of path.*** That would become the sixteenth moment of path of seeing/ the uninterrupted paths.

These *eight uninterrupted paths* become the true paths and constitute third of four noble truths – true path.

The *eight liberated paths* during these eight uninterrupted paths constitute the fourth noble truth – true cessation.

These 112 delusions truths (in the desire realm) with regard to the four are called delusions eradicated on the path of seeing.

Next we talk about how delusions are eradicated on the path of meditation. How the ten delusions form distortions with regard to the four truths is complex. We will deal with this slowly in time.