

Samsara & Nirvana

January, 25, 2010

Homework - Class Three

Readings: Finish reading *The Meaning of Life* by His Holiness the Dalai and Dis. Bud. Required Readings, pp. 21-44

Meditations/Contemplations:

Start each session off with the 9-Rounds Breathing meditation.

Familiarize yourself with the Wheel, particularly the outer rim which has to do with the Twelve Links. Review each link in succession and how one leads to the next, etc. As you do this, notice how we create our personal samsara and also how we can be liberated from it (from 1 to 12 and 12 to 1).

1-Ignorance 2-Karmic Formations/Compositional Actioin 3-Consciousness 4-Name and Form 5-Six Sense Bases/Sense Spheres 6-Contact 7-Feeling 8-Craving/Attachment 9-Grasping 10-Becoming/Existence 11- Rebirth 12-Old age and death.

In his explanation of this process, Nagarjuna states that from **Ignorance (1)** arises **Karmic Formations (2)**. Out of ignorance you create many unskillful actions with attachment and aversion. This lays the karmic imprint, the potential for other rebirths in one of the six realms on your **(causal) Consciousness (3)**.

At the time of your death, **Becoming (10)** which is the ripening of the karmic imprint to bring the next rebirth is nourished by **Craving (8)** and **Grasping (9)**.

This brings the next life **(effect) Consciousness (3)** at the moment of conception of the next life, **Name and Form (4)**, **Six Sense Bases (5)**, **Contact (6)**, and **Feeling (7)**, refer to stages of development in the womb. **Rebirth (11)** refers to conception. **Old Age and Death (12)** are from the second moment after conception until death is completed.

In the 12 Links we are experiencing now, all that is left to complete or experience is **Old Age and Death**. The way to cut the Twelve Links entirely is by severing the **Ignorance** link. If there is no **Ignorance** there is no **Karmic Formations**, etc. At that point one becomes an Arya - no longer creates **Karmic Formations**. This is done by the direct realization of Emptiness – the antidote to **Ignorance**.

We can see that simultaneously, other rounds of the 12 Links are operating since other instances of ignorance are inducing additional sets. In how many lifetimes does one pass through this cycle? The fastest is two (consecutive) lifetimes; the longest is one cycle of twelve takes three (not necessarily consecutive) lifetimes.

This is like committing a crime, being put in jail, and committing more crimes while in jail. Thus, until ignorance is removed, it is as if endless – there does not seem to be any way to end it. **Generate the determination to be free of this craziness – renunciation!**

Post meditation session: Become aware of your samsara – uncontrolled cycles of causation. Allow the awareness that every moment you are not only experiencing samsaric results but also creating your future samsara. **Determine to stop ignorance by practicing the path leading to realizing the wisdom of emptiness.**