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# Study Group - *Madhyamakavataram*

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga  
Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

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8 October 2002

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Please generate a virtuous motivation for listening to the teachings thinking that I have to attain the state of complete enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings, and in order to be able to do so I'm now going to listen to this profound Mahayana teaching, and then I'm going to put it into practice as much as I can.

## 2.2.1.2. To retaliate is contradictory to not desiring subsequent suffering

The verse from the root text shows that it is contradictory to not wish for future suffering on the one hand, and on the other hand to retaliate after receiving harm. When we read this verse we should meditate on how those two ideas are contradictory, and how, if one wishes to have future happiness, then one should avoid retaliating.

*The results of non-virtuous karma previously created  
Are expressively asserted to be eliminated by that alone,  
Because of the suffering of retaliation and anger  
Leading to the mere seed in whichever way.*

Previously it was said that becoming angry and retaliating is useless because retaliation won't negate or reverse the suffering that one has experienced, or the harm that one has already received. In addition there's also the danger that one will receive further harm within this life. If one has already received a wound to the head and one retaliates, there's a danger that one will receive a further wound to one's head.

Here the root text gives a further reason for not retaliating. It says that it is contradictory to wish for future happiness on the one hand, and on the other hand to think it is OK to retaliate now. It is saying that by retaliating one also creates the cause for suffering in a future life.

Just looking at it from the point of view of one's life, it might not be so bad that one experiences a little bit of suffering in this life because one has retaliated. Here where it says, 'Leading to the mere seed in whichever way' it means if one retaliates then definitely it will create the seed, or the potential for suffering in future lives. That is something that one should consider very carefully.

If somebody hits us with a stick then it will inflict some suffering, and then we might get the idea that we want to retaliate, because the other person has inflicted that suffering on us by beating us with a stick. Actually the suffering that we experience by being beaten is the result of non-virtuous karma that we have previously

created. So this experience of the ripening of the non-virtuous karma that we have previously created is in fact purifying that non-virtuous karma. Therefore those who wish to purify their non-virtuous karma shouldn't retaliate when they experience such suffering, but rather they should see it as the opportunity to purify and eliminate the negative karma that they have previously created.

As it says here, 'Are expressively asserted to be eliminated by that alone.' So this experience of the ripening of the non-virtuous karma is the method for purifying our non-virtuous karma, and one who wishes to purify their non-virtuous karma should be grateful for that experience.

If one has purified all one's non-virtuous karma, then even though one might be hit over the head with a stick one will not experience any suffering. For example even if he is hit over the head Shakyamuni Buddha will not experience any suffering. If we reflect on how the experience of suffering comes about through the ripening of non-virtuous karma, and view this suffering as purifying that non-virtuous karma, that will help us in our meditation on patience, as well as being able to bear suffering.

The next two lines say,

*Because of the suffering of retaliation and anger  
Leading to the mere seed in whichever way.*

This shows the reason why it is contradictory on the one hand to retaliate, while on the other not wishing for subsequent suffering. The action of retaliation and anger creates the potential for future suffering. No matter which way one looks at it, that's what it will definitely do. It will create the very seed or potential for future suffering. This is a very profound point that proves the outline.

## 2.2.1.3. Anger Is Inappropriate Because It Destroys the Virtue Accumulated Over Long Periods of Time

### 2.2.1.3.1. Meaning of the Text

*By being angry with a conqueror's child,  
Virtue arising from generosity and morality  
Over one hundred eons is destroyed in an instant.  
Therefore there is no negativity like impatience.*

Here the root text gives one further material to reflect on the disadvantages of anger. The previous verses highlighted the disadvantages of anger by focussing on the suffering result of anger in both this life and in future lives. Here it is saying that not only does anger create the cause for future suffering, but it also has another disadvantage in that it destroys the virtue that we have already created.

The disadvantages of anger can also be classified into the disadvantages that one can see directly and the faults that one cannot perceive directly.

The **faults of anger that can be perceived directly** include, for example, the anger that agitates and then disturbs the mind at the very time when it arises within the mind. There are also the disadvantages of robbing one of sleep, robbing one of appetite, closing

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the mind towards reasoning and good advice, and so forth. These are the various faults of anger that one can directly observe within this life.

The **faults of anger that are not directly observable** include the creation of non-virtuous causes for future suffering. Also that anger destroys the virtue that one has already accumulated, and this is also a fault of anger that is not directly observable.

The last line says, 'Therefore there is no negativity like impatience'. What this is saying is that with regard to the harmful effect on one's virtuous karma, there is no negativity like impatience. Of all the negativities it is the one that is the most destructive for one's virtuous karma.

By being angry with a conqueror's child, with a bodhisattva, even just for one instant we will destroy the virtue that has been built up over one hundred eons through the practice of generosity and morality etc.

Although anger destroys the virtue that has arisen from the practice of generosity and morality it cannot destroy the virtue that arises from meditating on the wisdom realising emptiness. When it refers to the root of virtue that anger destroys, it is talking about the virtue contained within the accumulation of merit. Anger does not destroy the roots of virtue that are contained within the accumulation of wisdom.

Here the object of anger is a lower bodhisattva and the person who is getting angry is a higher bodhisattva.

If a higher bodhisattva becomes angry with a lower bodhisattva then one moment of anger in the continuum of that higher bodhisattva will destroy one hundred eons of virtue.

We also have the situation where a bodhisattva becomes angry with an equal bodhisattva, or where a lower bodhisattva becomes angry with a higher bodhisattva. We have to infer how much merit is destroyed by depending upon scriptural quotations.

Chandrakirti says in his *Self Commentary* that if you look at how much merit is destroyed if one bodhisattva gets angry at another one, do we need to question that merits are destroyed if an ordinary being who hasn't even entered the path becomes angry at a bodhisattva. That doesn't even need to be mentioned as it is implicitly understood.

What this is showing here is that one has to be very, very careful with regard to other people, because one cannot know whether or not another person is a bodhisattva. We might view another person as having no qualities and many faults, but actually we cannot know the other person's mind. So this is exhorting us to meditate on pure appearance and to be very careful with regard to other people. Even on the level of a bodhisattva, lower bodhisattvas cannot comprehend the state of mind of a higher bodhisattva, just as we as ordinary beings cannot comprehend the state of mind of the person opposite of us.

In *Entering the Middle Way* it says that one hundred eons are destroyed by one instant of anger. In the

*Entering the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* it mentions that one thousand eons are destroyed by one instance of anger. Both these texts are referring to those situations where the object of one's anger is a bodhisattva.

The object of anger can be both an ordinary bodhisattva as well as an arya bodhisattva. The bodhisattva who gets angry can only be an ordinary bodhisattva, as no arya bodhisattva can become angry.

The merit that is destroyed by anger is the merit that belongs to the category of the accumulation of merit. Here we have the various situations of a higher bodhisattva becoming angry with a lower bodhisattva, an equal bodhisattva becoming angry with an equal bodhisattva, and a lower bodhisattva becoming angry with a higher bodhisattva, and a non-bodhisattva becoming angry with a bodhisattva.

In the first case of a **higher bodhisattva becoming angry with a lower bodhisattva**, one instant of anger destroys one hundred eons of virtue.

Lama Tsong Khapa says that the merits that are destroyed by a **bodhisattva becoming angry with an equal bodhisattva**, and by a **lower bodhisattva becoming angry at a higher bodhisattva** have to be inferred by relying upon quotations from sutras mentioned in *Illumination*.

Then we posit a situation of a **non-bodhisattva becoming angry with a bodhisattva**, where one instant of anger destroys one thousand eons of virtuous karma.

When it is asked, 'What is the meaning of 'anger destroying virtue'?' then there is a point of view which says that it means that the potential of the virtuous karma is completely annihilated. However, that is not the meaning of the 'anger destroying virtue'. Then there's also another point of view saying that the ripening of the virtuous karma is delayed. That is also not the meaning of 'anger destroying virtue'.

**The three levels of strength in which virtuous karma can be harmed by anger**

There are three levels in which anger exhausts the potential of the virtuous karma. If the anger just takes away a little bit of the potential then one talks about the **minimal depletion of virtuous karma**. If anger takes away half of the potential then one talks about the **medium depletion of virtuous karma**, and if anger completely takes away the potential of the virtuous karma to create a happy ripening result, then one talks about the **maximum depletion of virtuous karma**. It depends upon how much of the potential of the virtuous karma to create a happy ripening result is harmed.

Here there is the quote from the sutra where it says that,

the merits that have been dedicated for complete enlightenment will not be destroyed but will endure forever, in the same way as the drop of water that mixes with the ocean will be there for as long as the ocean is there.

This quote doesn't mean that the merits that have been

dedicated with bodhicitta cannot be destroyed, because as we have seen just now, the merits in a continuum of a bodhisattva can be destroyed. So the merits in the continuum of a bodhisattva are not indestructible. The meaning of the quote is that it refers to the ripening state. Once the result of complete enlightenment has ripened, for that long those merits will exist. This quote refers to the ripened state of enlightenment.

#### 2.2.1.3.2. Ancillary Meanings

Then we can talk a little bit about what happens if a non-bodhisattva becomes angry with another non-bodhisattva.

First of all *Illumination* quotes a sutra where the Buddha addresses a bhikku and says,

Bhikku, someone who prostrates to a stupa that contains relics of the buddhas such as fingernails, hair, bones, etc., will create the merits for rebirth as a wheel turning monarch, for as many times there are atoms beneath their body.

What this is saying is that if one makes a prostration to a stupa that contains relics or parts of the body of the Buddha etc., then for each atom that one covers with one's body one creates the merit that can act as the cause equalling the merit that can act as the cause for rebirth as a wheel turning monarch. The number of atoms includes all those from the surface of the earth down to the centre.

After the Buddha had proclaimed the power of the prostrations to such a stupa then one of his disciples, arya Nyewa Korwa replied that the result will only come about if the root of virtue that has been accumulated through the prostration is not harmed by anger. However because sentient beings generate various degrees of anger in various situations then they experience the three types of depletion that we were talking about before, the small elimination of virtue, the medium elimination of virtue, and the great elimination of virtue. Because sentient beings get angry they experience these various levels of depletion of their merits, and then they don't experience that full result that was just explained. That full result will only be experienced by someone who doesn't get angry.

In this quote the arya Nyewa Korwa explains the three levels of depletion of virtuous karma. Implicitly what it is saying here is that it refutes the notion that anger completely destroys the root of virtue. As we said before, the meaning of 'anger destroying the root of virtue' doesn't mean that it completely annihilates the root of virtue. Rather it refers to the three levels of depletion of the virtuous karma. What one can understand here is that anger doesn't have the potential to completely annihilate one's virtuous karma in the same way as a worldly path cannot completely overcome the seeds of the afflictions. In order to completely annihilate the seeds of the afflictions one needs to meditate on a superior path, as meditating on a worldly path cannot completely annihilate the seeds or the potential of the afflictions. In the same way anger also cannot completely annihilate one's virtuous

potentials.

So anger cannot completely eliminate the roots of virtue created through bodhicitta, as bodhicitta has the potential to completely overcome one's mental afflictions.

#### 2.2.1.4. Stopping Anger After Having Contemplated the Many Faults of Impatience

Here we have the three lines:

*Causes an ugly form and leads to inferiority  
Robs discernment knowing right from wrong  
Impatience quickly throws one into the lower realms*

First of all anger causes one to have an unpleasant appearance, so it creates the cause to have an unpleasant or ugly appearance.

Furthermore, it leads one to inferiority. Here there are two meanings attached to inferiority.

One is the **inferiority of non-virtue and the superiority of virtue**. So anger leads one from the superiority of virtue to the inferiority of non-virtue. That is one meaning attached here to inferiority.

The other meaning is the **inferiority of not realising emptiness directly**. This refers to leading one from the superiority of realising emptiness directly, to the inferiority of the opposite.

Anger interferes with our discernment of knowing right from wrong. It robs one of the wisdom understanding karma, of an understanding of the cause and effect relationship. As we said before, anger robs one of an understanding of who is actually one's enemy and who is one's friend. Because of anger one quite often regards the person who is actually helping oneself, and who wants to help benefit oneself, as the enemy.

So anger robs one of the discernment of knowing right from wrong, of knowing who is actually the enemy and who is a friend. Quite often it causes one to get angry at someone who is actually not the cause of one's problems. It is often easier to get angry at something external than something internal.

Impatience quickly throws one into the lower realms. So anger will cause one to have an ugly appearance even if one is reborn as a human being. It leads one to inferiority, robs one of discernment within this life, and of knowing right from wrong. On top of all of that it will also throw one very speedily into the lower realms. So that is something very one should consider very well.

After considering all of those faults of anger then one should abandon anger. Indeed, if you experience anger, then by reflecting on its various disadvantages that anger will dissipate by itself.

Next is considering the many benefits of patience, but we can continue with this next time. Maybe it's good not to go too far in one session.

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15 October 2002

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Please generate a virtuous motivation for the teaching, thinking that I have to become enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings, and in order to be able to do so I'm now going to listen to this profound Mahayana teaching. Then I'm going to put it into practice as much as possible.

## 2.2.2. *Contemplating the Many Benefits of Patience.*

There are two sub-outlines, outlining the individual benefits of patience; and advice to rely on patience as a summary .

### 2.2.2.1. *Outlining the Individual Benefits of Patience*

*Patience creates qualities opposite to what was explained.*

*From patience comes beauty, endearment to aryas,*

*Expertise in knowing right from wrong, subsequently*

*Divine and human birth, cessation of negativities.*

One arrives here because a question is asked:

*If anger has all those faults that were outlined previously then what are the actual benefits of patience?*

Patience creates qualities that are opposite to the faults of anger that have been previously explained. What are those qualities of patience that are opposite to the faults of anger?

First of all from patience becomes a beautiful form, and also endearment to the arya beings. Arya beings rejoice when they see that someone is practising patience. One becomes proficient in knowing right from wrong, and after that one will attain rebirth as a human or god, and the cessation of negativities.

By reflecting on these benefits of patience, as outlined above, then one should generate the courage and strength to practice of patience.

### 2.2.2.2. *Advice to Rely on Patience as a Short Summary*

This is explained in these four lines:

*Ordinary beings and conquerors' children  
Comprehending anger's faults and patience's  
benefits*

*Should abandon impatience and always  
quickly rely*

*On the patience praised by arya beings.*

Why do we need to be able to discern the faults of anger and the benefits of patience?

From Mirror:

*Ordinary beings comprehending anger's faults and conquerors' children comprehending patience's benefits, should abandon impatience and always quickly rely on the patience praised by the arya beings.*

By understanding the faults of impatience and understanding the benefits of patience, then one should abandon one and practise the other. Why?

*Because anger is the source of many faults, and patience is the source of many qualities.*

So Mirror states it quite clearly.

## 2.3. *Divisions of the Perfection of Patience*

*Even dedicated towards complete enlightenment*

*It is worldly if it has threefold focus.*

*Lacking focus it is described by the Buddha  
As perfection beyond transitory existence.*

Here the division is the same as with the previous perfections. The bodhisattva on the third ground has excelled in the perfection of patience, but in general there's a twofold division of the perfection of patience into the worldly perfection of patience, and the perfection of patience gone beyond.

As was defined earlier, if true grasping at the three circles inhibits the patience then it is a worldly practice of patience. The three circles are the person practising patience; that with regard to which one practises patience, like the suffering or the problem that one bears; and the person with regard to whom one is practising patience.

If the patience is inhabited by true grasping at those three circles then it is a **worldly patience**, and if the patience is free from true grasping at those three circles then it is a **perfection of patience gone beyond transitory existence**. The Buddha explained in the sutras that there is a perfection gone beyond transitory existence, and a worldly perfection that is still contained within transitory existence.

## 2.4. *Showing the Other Pure Qualities Arising on This Ground*

Here we have two-fold division of the qualities for the purpose of self, and the qualities for the purpose of others.

### 2.4.1. *Qualities of Realisation*

*Conquerors' children on that ground have mental stabilisation*

*And clairvoyance; attachment and anger completely cease.*

If one asks, apart from the practice of patience, what qualities has the third ground bodhisattva attained, then the answer is here in these lines, which refer to the qualities of realisation and cessation. The qualities of cessation are the absorptions of the form and formless realm, clairvoyances and the immeasurable thoughts.

The first line says, 'conquerors' children on that ground', so the ground is the third ground.

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From *Mirror*:

*Take the subject 'conquerors' children abiding on the third ground': - they also generate other special qualities, - because they have pure mental stabilisations of the form and formless realms as well as clairvoyance, and because here attachment, anger and ignorance completely cease.*

So bodhisattvas of the third ground have attained certain qualities of realisation such as the four absorptions of the form realm, the four absorptions of the formless realm and the five types of clairvoyance .

#### **The Four Levels of Absorption in the Form Realm**

There are four form realms and the associated four mental absorptions of the form realm - the absorption of the first mental stabilisation, and then the second, and so forth. So in the form realm there are the four levels of absorption: the first absorption of the form realm, the second absorption and so on.

#### **The Four Levels of Absorption in the Formless Realm**

Even though there are four levels of the formless realm as well, they aren't actual places. There are the four formless absorptions of the formless realm, which relate to the four types of formless realms. Here we have:

- ∞ the formless realm of limitless space and the absorption of limitless space
- ∞ the formless realm of limitless consciousness and the absorption of limitless consciousness
- ∞ the formless realm of nothingness and the absorption of nothingness,
- ∞ the peak of existence and the peak absorption.

Cyclic existence can be divided into the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm.

We are living in the desire realm, and then there are the four form realms, which are also actual places. Then one has the four formless realms where one can't really speak anymore about a place. The highest formless realm, the peak of existence, is highest one can go in cyclic existence, and the lowest one can go is the hell realm of uninterrupted agony.

#### **The Four Immeasurables**

The bodhisattvas attain the four immeasurable thoughts, which are

- ∞ Immeasurable love,
- ∞ Immeasurable compassion,
- ∞ Immeasurable joy,
- ∞ Immeasurable equanimity.

#### **The Clairvoyances**

The five clairvoyances are:

- ∞ The clairvoyance of magical emanation,
- ∞ The clairvoyance of the divine ear,
- ∞ The clairvoyance of knowing the mind of others,
- ∞ The clairvoyance remembering previous places, and
- ∞ The clairvoyance of the divine eye

If there are six types of clairvoyance posited, then one adds the clairvoyance knowing the cessation of

contamination, but this clairvoyance exists only in the continuum of a buddha.

In general the individual absorptions of the form realm are the establishing link, or the establishing karma for rebirth in the respective form realm, and the preparatory stage of the individual absorptions is the projecting karma for rebirth in the respective form realms.

Here, however, even though the bodhisattva has attained those various absorptions they don't take rebirth in the form realm through being under the control of those absorptions. They're actually adept in meditating on those absorptions, and as such they don't have to take rebirth in the form or formless realm, but they take rebirth through the force of prayer.

So the question arises, why are those qualities such as the absorptions of the form realm, the absorptions of the formless realm, the four immeasurable thoughts, and the five types of clairvoyance etc. expressively mentioned here, since the lower bodhisattva on the second ground, on the first ground, or even on the path of preparation has already attained those qualities? The reason is because the third ground bodhisattva becomes extremely proficient in the meditation on those various absorptions and qualities. Therefore the doubt arises, 'Well if this bodhisattva is so proficient in those various types of concentrations and absorptions does he have to take rebirth in the form or formless realm through the force of those concentrations?' In order to clarify this possible doubt then those various qualities are expressively mentioned here.

Apart from patience we have the qualities of realisation and the qualities of abandonment. We have now completed the qualities of realisation, and now we can go onto the qualities of abandonment.

#### **2.4.2. Qualities of Abandonment**

The root text contains this few words, 'attachment and anger completely cease'. On this ground one attains the complete cessation of attachment and anger. Even though it doesn't expressively mention ignorance, ignorance is implied in the 'and'.

Even though it is saying, 'Attachment, ignorance and anger completely cease', does it really talk about an absolute cessation of those three delusions or not? What do you think?

Student: No they don't completely cease.

When will they be completely ceased?

Student: The eighth ground

According to Prasangika the complete cessation of afflictions is attained simultaneously with the attainment of the eighth ground. According to the lower tenets that happens when one becomes enlightened.

Here cessation is not an absolute cessation. Here the cessation of attachment also refers to the cessation of manifest attachment.. We have already said that that the bodhisattva has attained the various absorptions of

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the form and formless realms. For example when one attains the absorption of the first formless realm then the manifest attachment that is contained within the desire realm is abandoned, and this abandonment has been attained through a worldly path.

### Obscurations

Here we have to have a short discussion about afflictive obscurations and obscurations to knowledge. Actually it already started to talk about this topic in the first lines of this chapter where it referred to the fire wholly consuming the firewood of objects of knowledge.

The abandonments through meditation have the threefold division into small, middling, and great, and each again has a threefold division into small, middling, and great. So we end up with the nine circles of abandonments through meditation. The first six levels of the abandonment through meditation are abandoned from the second ground through to the seventh ground.

The definition of **an obscuration is that which obstructs either the attainment of liberation or the attainment of omniscience**. So obscuration has the two-fold division into afflictive obscurations, and the obscurations to omniscience.

### Afflictive Obscurations

The definition of **an afflictive obscuration is an obscuration that primarily obstructs the attainment of liberation**.

This definition is common to the Mind Only, Svatantrika-Madhyamika, as well as the Prasangika. Of course each will posit different examples, but the definition will be the same. For example the grasping at the self of phenomena is posited by the Mind Only and Svatantrika-Madhyamika as an obscuration to omniscience, whereas the self-grasping at phenomena is posited by the Prasangika as an afflictive obscuration.

The Prasangika posit all afflictions as being afflictive obscurations. The reason is that if one doesn't realise selflessness of phenomena as well as selflessness of person, then one will not be able to abandon self-grasping at phenomena as well as self-grasping at person. Then the person will continue to accumulate karma and be reborn within cyclic existence. More quotations are given here but maybe we can leave those.

Afflictive obscuration has a twofold division into intellectually acquired afflictive obscuration, and the innate afflictive obscuration.

1. Within the afflicted obscurations we have the **intellectually acquired afflicted obscurations**.

**An affliction generated through the continuum being tainted by a tenet or a seed being generated by such a delusion** is the definition of intellectually acquired afflictive obscuration.

Here one posits the delusion that has been generated in dependence upon acceptance of a tenet. So studying

and accepting a particular tenet, and then generating true-grasping in dependence upon that belief would be an example of intellectually acquired afflicted obscuration. Also included here is the seed of that delusion. So that intellectually acquired delusion itself, as well as the seed will both be intellectually acquired afflictive obscuration.

So we have afflictive obscuration, the definition of which is an obscuration that primarily obstructs the attainment of liberation. Then this obscuration has a two-fold division into intellectually acquired and innate obscurations. The meaning of the intellectually acquired obscuration is an affliction generated through the continuum being tainted by a tenet, or the seed being generated by such a delusion. The intellectually acquired afflictive obscurations also have a twofold division into manifest and seed.

a. The **manifest obscuration** will be a mind that actually apprehends an object. The manifest obscuration will be **an actual consciousness that perceives something that is generated in dependence upon the contamination of a tenet**.

b. The **seed** has been generated in dependence upon the manifest obscuration that acts as its substantial cause, and has the potential to generate further manifest obscurations.

Of the twofold division of abandonments, the abandonment through seeing and the abandonments through meditation, the intellectually acquired obscurations fall within to the category of abandonments through seeing. There are no abandonments through meditation that are intellectually acquired. The intellectually acquired obscurations will always be abandonments through seeing.

2. Next are the **innate afflicted obscurations**.

**An affliction that didn't come about through the continuum being tainted by a tenet but arose through imprints coming from beginningless time or the seed being generated through such an affliction**, is the definition. Here also we have either the manifest one which will be a consciousness, or the part of the seed.

Being innate and a consciousness that perceives would be a manifest obscuration. Being innate but seed would be the seed part.

### Obscurations to Omniscience

Next are the obscurations to omniscience. The definition of obscuration to omniscience is **an obscuration that primarily obstructs the attainment of omniscient consciousness**. Here there is also a two-fold division into manifest and seed.

There are no obscurations to omniscience that are consciousnesses. Also there are no intellectually acquired obscurations to omniscience. If it is an obscuration to omniscience it will always be an abandonment through meditation. There is no obscuration to omniscience that is an abandonment through seeing. So therefore obscurations to

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omniscience will always be innate obscurations that aren't consciousness.

We have this twofold division into manifest and seed.

a. The **manifest** would be, for example, the appearance of true existence to the consciousness. So the appearance itself, the mistaken appearance of true existence, would be an example for a manifest obscuration to omniscience.

b. The part of the **seed** would be the potential within the mind that acts as a cause for that appearance to arise within the consciousness.

We have the afflictions such as, for example, true grasping, then we have the seed of true grasping, and we have the imprint of true grasping. So true grasping and the seed of true grasping will be afflictive obscuration, while the mere karmic imprint is the obscuration to omniscience. We can see that as long as one hasn't purified the imprints, one will not get rid of the manifest obscurations.

### Hearer's Path

First the practitioner generates innate or spontaneous renunciation. At that time they enter the **hearer's path of accumulation**.

When the practitioner attains the union of calm abiding and special insight, they will progress from the hearer's path of accumulation to the hearer's path of preparation.

On the **hearer's path of preparation** they meditate on the conceptual union of calm abiding and special insight focussing on emptiness and deepening their understanding of emptiness. Then, when through the force of their meditation they realise emptiness directly, the practitioner progresses from the hearer's path of preparation to the **hearers' path of seeing**.

First the hearer reaches the uninterrupted path of seeing, which acts as the direct antidote to the intellectually acquired afflictions. Then when the practitioner progresses from the uninterrupted path of seeing to the liberated path of seeing that has been induced by the uninterrupted path of seeing, they have attained the cessation of the abandonments through seeing.

However, the practitioner has still to abandon the innate afflictions, and this is done on the **path of meditation**. First one progresses through the first uninterrupted path of meditation, which acts as the direct antidote to the great great innate true grasping, to the first liberated path of meditation, which has attained the cessation of the great great innate true grasping. In such a way they progress along the nine levels of a path of meditation until they reach the final path of meditation which is the vajra-like concentration of the hearers path of meditation. The final uninterrupted path of meditation is the hearer's vajra-like concentration that acts as the direct antidote to the small small innate true grasping. Then one attains **the liberated path** that is induced by this vajra-like concentration that is an uninterrupted path. That is

simultaneous with the **attainment of a foe destroyer or an arhat**.

The various levels of the innate true grasping are divided into what is called the nine circles of true grasping. Here there are the three great circles, the three medium circles, and the three small circles. Similarly we have the nine circles of the path of meditation - the three great, three mediums, and three small.

The first of the nine circles of the path of meditation, the small small path of meditation, acts as the antidote to the great great innate true grasping. So the smallest acts as the antidote against the greatest. If you contemplate how the small to smaller path acts as the antidote to the greater delusion then you can see how they fit together.

### Mahayana Practitioner's Path

Next we look at it from the point of view of a Mahayana practitioner who abides within the Mahayana family from the very start of their practice. At the point when such a practitioner generates the spontaneous non-artificial bodhicitta within their mind-stream then they enter the **Mahayana path of accumulation**.

When the practitioner first attains the union of calm abiding and special insight focussing on emptiness, then they progress from that Mahayana path of accumulation to the **Mahayana path of preparation**.

Then the practitioner will progress through the **four levels of the path of preparation**, heat, and so forth, and then through the force of the meditation they realise emptiness directly. That is the time when they will progress from the path of preparation to the **path of seeing**. The first path of seeing that is attained is the uninterrupted path of seeing.

The **uninterrupted path of seeing** is called an uninterrupted path of seeing of the first ground because it's attained simultaneously with the attainment of the first ground.

At that time the practitioner has attained the first ground, so it is an uninterrupted path of the first ground, and acts as the direct antidote to the intellectually acquired obscurations.

When then the intellectually acquired afflicted obscurations are actually abandoned, the practitioner attains the **liberated path of seeing**. This liberated path can also be called the liberated path of the first ground. Here it is good to note that on the first ground one first attains an uninterrupted path, and then one attains a liberated path. Later on the sequence is different.

The uninterrupted path of seeing acts as the direct antidote to the intellectually acquired obscuration. When the practitioner has actually abandoned the intellectually acquired obscuration they attain the cessation of the intellectually acquired obscuration, which is simultaneous with the attainment of the **liberated path of seeing of the first ground**.

After the practitioner has attained the liberated path of

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seeing and has such attained the abandonment of the intellectually acquired afflicted obscurations then they will arise from their meditative equipoise, and start to accumulate merits in order to be able to abandon the first level of the innate afflicted obscurations, the coarse great great true grasping. They will accumulate merits until they reach a point where they will feel, 'Now it is possible that I will be able to abandon the coarse great great innate true grasping'. Then they will go into meditative equipoise, which at first will be neither an uninterrupted path nor a liberated path, but just a general meditative equipoise.

When that meditative equipoise transforms into the direct antidote to the coarse innate true grasping, then it becomes the **first uninterrupted path of meditation of the first ground**. We have the nine circles of the innate true grasping, the first one being the great great, and actually the great great has a two-fold division into coarse and subtle. When the general meditative equipoise that a bodhisattva has entered, (after having accumulated merits until they felt they were able to abandon the coarse great great innate true grasping), transforms into the direct antidote against the coarse great great innate true grasping, it becomes the uninterrupted path of meditation of the first ground.

When the bodhisattva actually attains the cessation of the coarse great great innate true grasping, they will attain the **liberated path of meditation of the second ground** that has been induced by the uninterrupted path of meditation of the first ground.

The liberated path on the first ground has attained the cessation of the intellectually acquired afflictions, and the liberated path on the second ground has attained the cessation of the coarse great great innate true grasping.

If you keep that in mind so then you can see how it works on the different grounds. However if we talk about it much more tonight you will get a headache. So we can continue with it next time.

### **Summary of the Mahayana Path**

In summary, we have the ten grounds and on the ten grounds the intellectually acquired obscurations and the innate obscurations are gradually abandoned.

- ∞ On the path of seeing the intellectually acquired obscurations are abandoned, and
- ∞ on the path of meditation the innate obscurations are abandoned.

It is good to do an analytical meditation within one's mind going through the various stages at an imaginary level. Even though one hasn't actually attained spontaneous bodhicitta yet, just imagine attaining spontaneous bodhicitta and then simultaneously entering the Mahayana path of accumulation. Then think how one would attain the union of calm abiding and special insight, and simultaneously with that progress to the path of preparation. Then think how one would progress from the path of preparation to the path of seeing when, through the force of one's meditation on emptiness, one attains direct realisation of emptiness.

Then think how this first direct realisation of emptiness, the uninterrupted path of seeing, is the direct antidote against the intellectually acquired afflictions, and then how one attains the cessation of the intellectually acquired afflictions, and simultaneously with that the liberated path of meditation. Now one has completely purified the intellectually acquired afflictions, but one still has to abandon the innate or spontaneously arising afflictions, the spontaneously arising true grasping.

To do this then one has to progress through the various paths of meditation. So after having accumulated merits, then one again goes into meditative equipoise and when that meditative equipoise transforms into the direct antidote against the coarse great great innate true grasping, then one has attained the first uninterrupted path of meditation. When one attains the actual cessation of the coarse great great innate true grasping one attains the first liberated path of meditation and simultaneously with that attainment one has progressed from the first ground to the second. Then think of how one progresses in such a manner through the various grounds up until the tenth ground, and then to buddhahood.

*Transcribed from tape by Mark Emerson  
Edit 1 by Adair Bunnett  
Edit 2 by Venerable Tenzin Dongak*

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# Study Group - *Madhyamakavataram*

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga  
Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

དབུ་མ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་པ་ལ།

22 October 2002

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Please generate a virtuous motivation for listening to the teaching thinking, 'I have to become enlightened for the purpose of all sentient beings, and in order to be able to do so I'm now going to listen to this profound Mahayana teaching. Then I'm going to put it into practice as much as possible.'

## Review

Last time we discussed the division of obscurations into afflictive obscurations and obscurations to knowledge. There was a further division of afflictive obscurations into the intellectually acquired afflictive obscurations, and innate afflictive obscurations. In relation to the two types of abandonments, the abandonments through seeing, and the abandonments through meditation, intellectually acquired afflictive obscurations fall into the category of abandonments through seeing, and innate afflictive obscurations fall into the category of abandonments through meditation.

Within the innate afflictive obscurations we have the nine circles of different levels of true grasping - the three great circles, the three medium circles, and the three small circles. Within the great true grasping, there was a further division into coarse and subtle great true grasping.

## First Ground

So the very first innate affliction that is abandoned is the **coarse great true grasping** that is opposed by the uninterrupted path of meditation on the first ground. That uninterrupted path of meditation on the first ground acts as the direct antidote to the coarse great true grasping, and when the coarse great true grasping has been abandoned, then the practitioner has attained the cessation of that true grasping, and has attained the liberated path of meditation that was induced by the preceding uninterrupted path of meditation. Simultaneously with that attainment the practitioner moves toward the second ground. That's where we left off last time.

## Second Ground

The attainment of the second ground is simultaneous with this liberated path of meditation that has attained the cessation of the coarse great true grasping. When the meditator arises from their meditative equipoise into the post-meditational period they accumulate merits until they feel able to abandon the next level of innate true grasping, which is the **subtle great true grasping**.

Here again, it is the same as before. When the

meditator feels that they are able to abandon that level of true grasping then they go into a meditative equipoise that at first will be neither a liberated path nor an uninterrupted path. It will be common meditative equipoise. When that common meditative equipoise becomes the direct antidote to the subtle great true grasping, then it has become the uninterrupted path of the second ground that is the direct antidote to the subtle great true grasping.

The meaning of being an uninterrupted path is to be a direct antidote, and this uninterrupted path of the second ground is the direct antidote to the subtle great true grasping.

Through that uninterrupted path of meditation of the second ground, then the subtle great true grasping is abandoned and its cessation has been attained, and simultaneously with that one attains the liberated path of meditation of the first of the third ground.

## Third Ground

On the third ground the system is the same as before. The uninterrupted path of meditation at the end of the third ground acts again as an antidote to the next level of innate true grasping. It is the same is the uninterrupted path that is the end of the fourth ground, that is the end of the fifth ground, and that is the end of the sixth ground.

If we count up then, on the third ground the meditator has abandoned the great true grasping

The uninterrupted path of meditation, that is the end of the third ground acts as the antidote to the **medium great true grasping**.

## Fourth Ground

The uninterrupted path that is the end of the fourth ground acts as the antidote to the **small great true grasping**.

## Fifth Ground

The uninterrupted path that is the end of the fifth ground acts as the antidote to the **great medium true grasping**.

## Sixth Ground

The uninterrupted path that is the end of the sixth ground acts as the antidote to **medium medium true grasping**.

When the meditator attains the liberated path of meditation that has been induced through the preceding uninterrupted path of meditation on the sixth ground, then the meditator has attained the seventh ground.

## Seventh Ground

The liberated path of meditation at the beginning of the seventh ground has abandoned the medium medium true grasping. Out of the afflictive obscurations for the meditator to abandon what is left are the small medium true grasping, and the three circles of the small true grasping.

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Again this is the same as before. On the seventh ground one has two uninterrupted paths, so again the meditator goes through the same sequence again as before. They generate the uninterrupted path that is the direct antidote to small medium innate true grasping, attain the liberated path of meditation that has been induced by that uninterrupted path, and then abandoned the small medium innate true grasping. Again the sequence is as before, the meditator, after having gone through the sequence generates again an uninterrupted path of meditation of the seventh ground that is the antidote to all three small innate true graspings.

### **Eighth Ground**

When through that uninterrupted path of meditation at the end of the seventh ground that abandons the three small innate true graspings, then one attains the cessation of the three small innate true graspings, and then one moves on towards the eighth ground and attains the liberated path of meditation of eighth ground. At the beginning of the eighth ground the bodhisattva has abandoned all afflictions and afflictive obscurations.

As I told you before, this practitioner will not be called an arhat because in order to be called an arhat the practitioner needs to have attained a path of no-more-learning.

After the practitioner has abandoned the afflictive obscurations they next move onto abandon the obscurations to knowledge. We defined these last time, and there was the two-fold division of the obscurations to knowledge into manifest and the seed.

The uncommon Prasangika system is that the bodhisattva starts to abandon the obscurations to knowledge only after having abandoned the afflictive obscurations. According to the lower tenets the bodhisattva starts to abandon the obscurations to knowledge at the same time as when they start to abandon the innate obscurations to liberation.

Here in the Prasangika system the bodhisattvas start to abandon the obscurations to knowledge only after having abandoned the afflictive obscurations, which again have a small, medium, and great part.

The bodhisattva starts to abandon the three levels of the obscurations to knowledge on the eighth ground. One can see the significance here that in order to become fully omniscient, to be able to see all objects of knowledge in one's hand like the medicinal nut that is called a *gyurura*, then one needs to abandon and purify from one's mind even the subtlest of faults and mistaken appearances. The eighth ground bodhisattva has completely abandoned all afflictions and all the seeds.

Here, when we talk about abandonments we talk about abandonments including the seeds of various afflictions. However even though this bodhisattva has abandoned all the afflictions and their seeds, they still have mistaken appearances within their mind, and those are obscurations to knowledge. Without

abandoning or purifying the mind from those mistaken appearances the bodhisattva cannot become an omniscient person, and the bodhisattva's consciousness won't become an omniscient or an all-knowing mind.

Here we have the three circles of obscurations to knowledge, and the great obscuration to knowledge again has a subdivision into coarse and subtle. At first the bodhisattva attains the liberated path of meditation of the eighth ground, then arises out of that meditative equipoise, and again accumulates merits. When they feel that they are able to abandon the coarse great obscurations to knowledge, they again go into meditative equipoise. This meditative equipoise is first a common meditative equipoise, but it then transforms into the uninterrupted path of the eighth ground that is the direct antidote to the **coarse great obscurations to knowledge**. When the great obscurations to knowledge are then abandoned by that uninterrupted path, the bodhisattva attains the liberated path of meditation that is free from the coarse great obscurations to knowledge. Simultaneously with the attainment of that liberated path the bodhisattva attains the ninth ground.

### **Ninth Ground**

It is similar with the uninterrupted path of meditation of the ninth ground. At the end of the ninth ground is the direct antidote to the **subtle great obscurations to knowledge**. When one attains the liberated path of meditation that is free from the subtle great obscurations to knowledge, a bodhisattva then simultaneously attains the tenth ground.

### **Tenth Ground**

When bodhisattvas attain the tenth ground they then go through the same sequence as before, and then generate the first uninterrupted path of meditation on the tenth ground that is the direct antidote to the **medium obscurations to knowledge**, attaining the liberated path of meditation that is free from the medium obscurations to knowledge. They arise again from meditative equipoise, go through the same sequence as before, again go into meditation and then generate the second uninterrupted path of meditation of the tenth ground that is also called the vajra-like concentration, which is the antidote to the **small obscurations to knowledge**. After that the mind of the bodhisattva becomes the actual all-knowing consciousness.

So the bodhisattva is in meditative equipoise within the second uninterrupted path of meditation on the tenth ground that is the direct antidote to small obscurations to knowledge. When they attain the liberated path of meditation that is induced by that uninterrupted path of meditation then the bodhisattva has attained omniscient consciousness. Progress from that last uninterrupted path of meditation to the liberated path occurs within meditative equipoise. The bodhisattva has progressed in meditative equipoise to the level of buddhahood. Following that a buddha doesn't arise from the meditative equipoise anymore.

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Even though according to ordinary and conventional appearance it looks as if a buddha is sometimes in meditative equipoise and sometimes not, in actuality a buddha is always in meditative equipoise.

What this means is that a bodhisattva needs to arise from the meditative equipoise in order to benefit sentient beings, while a buddha benefits sentient beings from within meditative equipoise. Even though it might appear to all conventional appearance as if the practitioner is out of meditative equipoise, a buddha is actually always in meditative equipoise.

This system of how bodhisattva progresses along the path up to buddhahood that I have explained is according to the *Commentary on Madhyamika* by Jetsun Chokyi Gyaltsen, who is the author of the textbooks used at Sera Je Monastery. That's how it is taught in Sera Je Monastery.

There's also a slightly different explanation that has been handed down from one of the main disciples of Jetsun Chokyi Gyaltsen, where there are no divisions into coarse and subtle. Then it becomes more straightforward. The uninterrupted path of meditation on the first ground is the direct antidote to the great great innate true grasping. On the second ground it is the medium great, on third ground the small great, until the sixth ground abandons the small medium innate true grasping. Then, on the seventh ground there's only one uninterrupted path of meditation, where the three small circles of innate true grasping are abandoned simultaneously. The uninterrupted path of meditation on the eighth, ninth, and tenth ground, respectively abandon the great obscurations to knowledge on the eighth ground, the medium obscurations to knowledge on the ninth ground, and the small obscurations to knowledge on the tenth ground. At the end of the tenth ground there is only one uninterrupted path of meditation, which is the vajra-like concentration. It's good if you make a note of that system because it is taught sometimes. However Jetsun Chokyi Gyaltsen's system clarifies the *Illumination* by Lama Tsong Khapa.

Last time we mentioned this verse from the root text,

*Conquerors' children on that ground have  
mental stabilisation  
And clairvoyance attachment and anger  
completely cease  
They also become able to always destroy  
Transitory realm's beings attachment to desire*

The line from 'conquerors' children' up to 'and clairvoyance', shows the qualities of realisation on this ground apart from the realisation of superiority in the practice of patience. When it goes on to say 'anger and attachment completely cease and they also become able to always destroy', this shows the qualities of cessation, or the qualities of abandonment on this ground.

When it says 'they also become able to always destroy transitory realm's beings attachment to desire', this refers to all those bodhisattvas who for the better part completely destroyed their manifest attachment contained within the desire realm. For the benefit of

sentient beings they take rebirth as Indra in order to be able to liberate transitory realm's beings from their attachment that is contained within the desire realm.

### 3. The Characteristics of the First Three Perfections

*The first dharmas of generosity etc, are mostly  
Praised by Sugatas for householders.  
These accumulation described as merit is the  
cause  
Of the buddha body in the nature of form.*

We have now gone through the first three perfections, (generosity, morality, patience), that the Buddha prescribed primarily for the practice by householders, because they're easier for householders to practise.

This verse shows the nature of the accumulation described, and also the result of that accumulation.

There are both lay bodhisattvas as well as ordained bodhisattvas. As the basis for bodhisattva practices, one can find both lay bodhisattvas as well as ordained bodhisattvas.

What the root text says is that some of the perfections are more easily practiced by householder bodhisattvas, and some of the perfections are more easily practised by ordained bodhisattvas.

Here the Sugatas praise the first three perfections of generosity and so forth as a practice for the householders, because householders can practice them more easily.

The accumulation that constitutes the practice of those perfections is the accumulation described as merit. So the practice of those perfections constitutes the practice of building up the accumulation of merit.

The accumulation of merit is the cause of the form body of the buddha. Here when it says the cause of the form body of the buddha it means the main cause. The three dharmas that the root text is talking about, the three dharmas of generosity, morality, and patience, are the three perfections that are already completed at this point in the text.

The Buddha praised the first three perfections as a practice for lay bodhisattvas because they are more convenient for lay bodhisattvas, particularly material **generosity**, and the generosity of protection, and providing of fearlessness. Generally householders, lay bodhisattvas, and lay people have more money than monks, so they can practise material generosity better. Also someone who is very powerful, for example a king and so forth, has a great opportunity to practise the generosity of protection and the giving of fearlessness.

Within the practice of **morality** there are the individual types of vows and pledges that lay people make, such as the upasaka vows, the 24 hour vows, and so forth.

Within the practice of **patience** is the patience of ascertaining the Dharma, through the practices of listening, contemplation, and meditation, and so ascertaining the various aspects of the Dharma such as

the Three Jewels and so forth. One can't do that without the patience of ascertaining the Dharma.

The other three perfections of **enthusiasm**, **mental stabilisation**, and **wisdom**, are more easily practised by ordained bodhisattvas. However that doesn't mean that ordained bodhisattvas don't practise the first three types of perfection, and that lay bodhisattvas don't practise the last three perfections. The reason for that differentiation is from the point of view what perfections are sometimes more conveniently practised by particular types of practitioners. In general, of course, every bodhisattva practises all of the perfections.

The first three perfections fall into the category of accumulation of merit, and the accumulation of merit is the main cause for the form body of a buddha. So it is the main imprint for the form body of a buddha.

The fifth and the sixth perfection of mental stabilisation and wisdom, fall into the category of the accumulation of wisdom, which is then main cause for the wisdom truth body of a buddha.

The fourth perfection of enthusiasm can be both the accumulation of merit as well as accumulation of wisdom.

As it says in the text, the Buddha praised the first three perfections for lay bodhisattvas. Then the Buddha praised the last two perfections for ordained practitioners. The practice of the last two perfections constitutes the accumulation of wisdom, the practice of the first three perfections constitutes the accumulation of merit, and the perfection of enthusiasm is both. Did you understand that?

#### 4. Summarising Briefly by Expressing the Qualities of the Ground

The root text reads,

*The luminosity within the sun of conquerors' children  
Having first completely dispelled their darkness  
Intensely wishes to completely dispel migrator's darkness.  
On this ground though very sharp they don't become angry.*

From *Mirror*:

*Take the subject, the luminous third ground abiding within the sun of conquerors' children: it dispels the darkness of self of other, because after having first completely dispelled the darkness of its own continuum, it intensely wishes to completely dispel the darkness of the ignorance of migrators.*

The 'luminosity with the sun of conquerors' children', refers to the third ground that abides within the sun of the conquerors' children, first completely dispelling the darkness of self. First it dispels the ignorance within its own continuum, and then after that strongly wishes to completely dispel the darkness of ignorance of migrators.

With respect to the fourth line, 'On this third ground, though very sharp they don't become angry', *Mirror*

says:

*Take the subject the 'bodhisattvas abiding on this third ground': even though they are very sharp regarding the elimination of the afflictions of others, they don't become angry at those who have faults.*

Why?

*Because they excel in the meditation on patience and because their continuum is saturated with compassion.*

This completes the third mind generation of the *Madhyamakaavatara* from *Illumination of Madyamaka's Thought*.

#### THE FOURTH GROUND 'RADIANT'

This has three headings: showing enthusiasm to be superior on this ground; description of the ground; and showing the attribute of abandonment.

##### 1. Showing enthusiasm to be superior on this ground

The first verse of the root text,

*All qualities follow enthusiasm, the cause of  
Both accumulations of merit and wisdom,  
The ground where enthusiasm starts to blaze  
Is the fourth, the one radiating light*

shows enthusiasm to be superior on this ground.

After excelling in the perfection of patience on the third ground, then what qualities does a fourth ground bodhisattva possess that came about through the practices on the third ground? It shows the superiority in enthusiasm, which is then shown in these words, 'all qualities follow enthusiasm'.

The definition of **enthusiasm** is a **mind joyful with regard to virtue**. Exerting lots of effort without the joy would be called effort.

##### Why We Need Enthusiasm

- ∞ It is useful to mention that enthusiasm is the antidote to laziness, and that we need enthusiasm in order to overcome laziness. The function of laziness is to not accomplish or to lose one's purpose. It is said that those with laziness don't possess any Dharmic success.
- ∞ All qualities of generosity and so forth will be developed in dependence upon enthusiasm, and without enthusiasm the qualities of generosity and so forth will not arise.
- ∞ In dependence upon enthusiasm one attains the qualities of generosity and so forth not yet attained, and the already attained qualities of generosity and so forth increase more and more.
- ∞ Enthusiasm is also the cause for both the accumulation of merit as well as the accumulation of wisdom. Enthusiasm can contain both accumulations.

*Take the subject 'the fourth ground, "the one radiating light": it excels in enthusiasm, because it is the ground where enthusiasm, the cause of the two*

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*accumulations blazes intensely.*

### **How To Practice Enthusiasm on the Fourth Ground**

If the qualities of enthusiasm are such, then what is the way of practising enthusiasm on this ground?

The fourth ground bodhisattva excels in the practice of enthusiasm, because in dependence upon superiority in the higher training of concentration they attain the pliancy that cannot be overcome by laziness.

The fourth ground bodhisattva excels in the higher training of concentration, and through that attains the pliancy that cannot be overcome by laziness, the pliancy that is completely unharmed by laziness.

*Transcribed from tape by Mark Emerson*

*Edit 1 by Adair Bunnett*

*Edit 2 by Venerable Tenzin Dongak*

*Edited Version*

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# Study Group - *Madhyamakavataram*

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga  
Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

དབུ་མ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་པ་ལ།

29 October 2002

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Generate a virtuous motivation for listening to the teachings thinking, 'I have to become enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings, and in order to be able to achieve that aim I'm going to listen to this profound Mahayana teaching, and then I'm going to put it into practise as much as possible'. It would be really good if you try to generate that motivation.

## THE FOURTH GROUND 'RADIANT' (CONT)

### 1. Showing Enthusiasm to be Superior on this Ground

Last time we started on the fourth ground, 'Radiant', where there are three main outlines: showing enthusiasm to be superior on this ground; a description of the ground; and showing the attributes of abandonment. Last time we completed the first outline, 'showing enthusiasm to be superior on this ground', which is shown in this verse,

*All qualities follow enthusiasm, the cause of  
Both accumulations of merit and wisdom  
The ground where enthusiasm starts to blaze  
Is the fourth, the one radiating light*

We said that all qualities of the other five perfections of generosity and so forth follow enthusiasm, which is the cause for the achievement of both accumulations. Those qualities that have not been attained yet will be generated, and those qualities that have already been generated will be increased through the force of one's enthusiasm.

We gave the definition of enthusiasm as 'being joyful regarding the practice of virtue'. So if one is joyful regarding the practice of virtue then one will not be overcome by the enemy of laziness, and will be able to build up the accumulation of merits, and as well the accumulation of wisdom.

Of the ten perfections, the practice of the perfection of enthusiasm becomes superior on the fourth ground, which is called 'Radiant' - the one radiating light.

Why does the bodhisattva on the fourth ground excel in the practice of enthusiasm? This comes about because the higher training of concentration on the third ground produces superior pliancy on the fourth ground. The pliancy on the fourth ground can no longer be harmed by laziness.

Of course on the first and second ground the bodhisattva already has great pliancy through the force of concentration, which will not be overtaken by laziness. On the fourth ground, however, one can

definitely say that even the possibility of the bodhisattva's pliancy being overcome by laziness is completely eradicated. If you relate this to your meditation, as the mind becomes more still and calmer you experience the physical and mental wellbeing that arises through that meditation, and this encourages you to continue with the meditation; it generates enthusiasm for the meditation.

Even though on the previous grounds bodhisattvas have attained the antidote to laziness, on the fourth ground they have attained the superior special antidote to laziness. So the pliancy to overcome laziness on the fourth ground has this superior potency to the lower grounds. That is the reason why the bodhisattva on the fourth ground excels in the perfection of enthusiasm.

### 2. Description of the Ground

The previous verse in the root text referred to the fourth 'ground where enthusiasm starts to blaze...is the one radiating light'. So we have to ask, why is the fourth ground called 'the one radiating light'? This is shown in the next lines,

*There, generated by superior meditation on  
the features  
Of complete enlightenment the Sugata's  
children receive a  
Radiance superior to the copper-red light*

The fourth ground is called radiant because there, generated by superior meditation on the thirty-seven features of complete enlightenment the Sugata's children receive a radiant transcendental wisdom light superior to the copper-red light attained on the third ground. They receive the radiance of transcendental wisdom light that is superior to the copper red light attained on the third ground.

*Illumination* quotes from the *Precious Garland of Madhyamika* where it says,

*The fourth is called radiating light  
because it receives  
the light of perfect  
transcendental wisdom.*

As explained at the beginning, Chandrakirti composed this text by drawing in part on other texts by Nagarjuna, and one of those texts is the *Precious Garland of Madhyamika*. All the descriptions of the ten grounds, their names etc. are taken from Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland*.

These thirty seven features are grouped into seven parts.

#### I. Four close placements of mindfulness

1. Close placement of mindfulness of body
2. Close placement of mindfulness of feelings
3. Close placement of mindfulness of mind
4. Close placement of mindfulness of dharmas

#### II. Four perfect abandonments

5. Generation of virtue that hasn't yet been generated
  6. Increasing the virtue that has already been
-

- generated
- 7. Non-generation of non-virtue that hasn't yet been generated
- 8. Abandoning non-virtue that has already been generated

### III. Four legs of magical emanation

- 9. Leg of magical emanation of aspiration
- 10. Leg of magical emanation of enthusiasm
- 11. Leg of magical emanation of intent
- 12. Leg of magical emanation of analysis

### IV. Five powers

- 13. Power of faith
- 14. Power of enthusiasm
- 15. Power of mindfulness
- 16. Power of concentration
- 17. Power of wisdom

### V. Five strengths

- 18. Strength of faith
- 19. Strength of enthusiasm
- 20. Strength of mindfulness
- 21. Strength of concentration
- 22. Strength of wisdom

### VI. Seven limbs of enlightenment

- 23. Limb of perfect mindfulness
- 24. Limb of enlightenment that is perfect discrimination of Dharma
- 25. Limb of enlightenment that is perfect enthusiasm
- 26. Limb of enlightenment that is perfect joy
- 27. Limb of enlightenment that is perfect pliancy
- 28. Limb of enlightenment that is perfect concentration
- 29. Limb of enlightenment that is perfect equanimity

### VII. Eight limbs of the arya path

- 30. Limb of the arya path of perfect view
- 31. Limb of the arya path of perfect thought
- 32. Limb of the arya path of perfect speech
- 33. Limb of the arya path of perfect style of action
- 34. Limb of the arya path of perfect livelihood
- 35. Limb of the arya path of perfect effort
- 36. Limb of the arya path of perfect mindfulness
- 37. Limb of the arya path of perfect concentration

If we relate those seven sets to the four learner paths, then

- ∞ on the **small path of accumulation** we have the **four close placements of mindfulness**
- ∞ on the **middling path of accumulation** we have the four perfect abandonments on the **greater path of accumulation** we have the **four legs of magical emanation**
- ∞ on the **first two paths of preparation**, the heat and peak level, we have the **five powers**
- ∞ on the **second two paths of preparation**, the level of forbearance and supreme dharma, we have the **five strengths**
- ∞ on the **path of seeing** we have the **seven limbs of enlightenment**

∞ on the path of meditation we have the **eight limbs of the arya path**

The reason why one makes this distinction between five powers and five strengths on the path of preparation is because starting from the forbearance level of the path of preparation the practice cannot be harmed by obstacles. Since there is this shift, they are named differently even though they are the same five qualities of faith, enthusiasm, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom.

The bodhisattva on the fourth ground becomes proficient in the wisdom understanding the coarse and subtle levels of the thirty-seven features. For example, with the first close placement of mindfulness on the body we are meditating on the impermanence, suffering, and selfless nature of the body. We can relate this first placement of mindfulness to the coarse level of the Four Noble Truths as well as to the subtle level of the Four Noble Truths. For example meditating on the lack of the inherent nature of the body is subtler than just meditating on the absence of a self supporting substantially existing self of the body.

One can relate it like that all the way through. They are called 'close placements of mindfulness' because after having generated the wisdom understanding that particular aspect of the body, then it is held in place by mindfulness. They are called 'close placements of mindfulness', because the mindfulness acts as the antidote to forgetting. The mindfulness protects that wisdom from becoming forgotten. It places the wisdom close to the object. So the bodhisattva on the fourth ground has become proficient in the wisdom meditating on both the coarse and subtle aspects of those thirty-seven features.

### Relationship to Three Higher Trainings

The subject of the *Madhyamakavatara* is divided into three parts, the basis of training, the nature of training, and the result, the fruit of training.

The first part, the **basis of training**, was explained at the time of the first ground, when the perfection of generosity was explained.

From the second ground up to then tenth ground the **nature of the training** is explained.

The eleventh ground is the **resultant ground**, the resultant buddha body, and that is the fruit of the training.

### Nature of the Training

Within the nature of the training we have the three higher trainings: the higher training of morality; the higher training of concentration; and the higher training of wisdom.

As said before the first ground becomes the basis for the training.

- ∞ Within the nature of the training, the three higher trainings, the bodhisattva on the second ground has the higher training of morality.
- ∞ On the third ground the bodhisattva has the higher

training of concentration.

From the fourth ground onwards, the bodhisattva has the higher training of wisdom. Within the higher training of wisdom we have the wisdom being proficient in the thirty-seven features of enlightenment; the wisdom being proficient in the Four Noble Truths; and the higher training of wisdom being proficient in both the sequential as well as reverse order in the twelve dependent links, and as such being proficient in the both nominal as well as ultimate nature.

∞ So the bodhisattva on the fourth ground becomes proficient in the wisdom understanding the coarse and subtle aspects of the thirty-seven features of enlightenment.

∞ Then the bodhisattva on the fifth ground completes the wisdom proficient in the Four Noble Truths.

Then we have the wisdom that is proficient in the sequential and reverse order of the twelve interdependent links. Regarding this, we have a wisdom that trains in the nominal aspect, and the wisdom that trains in the suchness aspect.

∞ The wisdom that trains in the suchness aspect of the sequential and reverse order of the twelve interdependent links becomes completed on the sixth ground.

The wisdom that trains in the nominal aspect of the sequential and reverse order of the twelve interdependent links becomes completed sequentially on the seventh, eight, ninth, and tenth ground.

∞ On the seventh ground the bodhisattva excels in the perfection of method

∞ On the eighth ground the bodhisattva excels in the perfection of prayer,

∞ On then on the ninth ground the bodhisattva excels in the perfection of power,

∞ On the tenth ground the bodhisattva excels in the perfection of transcendental wisdom.

So the bodhisattva on the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth ground becomes proficient in the nominal aspect of the sequential and reverse order of the twelve interdependent links, and excels on those grounds respectively in the perfections of method, prayer, power, and transcendental wisdom.

It would be good to be aware of this aspect of the bodhisattvas' development.

### 3. Showing the Attributes of Abandonment

This section is shown by the line,

*And completely ceases that related to self-view*

which refers to the level of true grasping that is the abandonment of the fourth ground

I don't know about different translations of this line in English, but there are some Tibetan versions where instead of 'self' it talks about 'extreme view'. In Tibetan

the two words are quite similar, as there is just a difference of one letter. Anyway the correct version is 'self-view'.

The self-view it is talking about is the view of the transitory collections apprehending 'I' and 'mine' contained within one's own continuum. Here we talk about the innate view of the transitory collection apprehending both 'I' and 'mine' contained within one's own continuum, arising from that the grasping at the self as being a self supporting substantially existent, as well as the other various types of true grasping at the aggregates, spheres, and sources, etc.

Here 'completely ceases' refers to a cessation that includes the seeds - the seeds of those various delusions have been abandoned. Of course here it is talking about the delusions that have ceased on that ground. We know now that all the levels of delusions haven't completely ceased on the fourth ground. Therefore what it talks about here is the particular level of delusion that has been abandoned on this ground.

### FIFTH GROUND 'DIFFICULT TO TRAIN'

The fifth ground has just one verse.

*The great being on the ground 'difficult to train'  
Can't be overcome even by all demons  
Superior mental stabilisation, attaining great  
skill in realising  
The profound nature of the Good Minded Ones'  
truths*

This ground has two outlines: description of the ground; and showing mental stabilisation as superior and having expertise in truth.

#### 1. Description of the Ground

The first two lines,

*The great being on the ground 'difficult to train'  
Can't be overcome even by all demons*

are the description of the grounds, and they explain why the ground is called 'Difficult to Train'.

From *Illumination*:

*That great being abiding on the fifth ground  
'Difficult to Train' cannot be defeated by all the  
demons called 'son of gods' that reside in all the  
transitory realms.*

Of the various types of demons - the demon of aggregate, the demon of affliction, the demon of the lord of death, and the demon of the 'son of gods' - the demon of the son of gods is the most difficult to overcome. The bodhisattva on the fifth ground cannot be defeated even by all the demons that are called 'son of gods', of all the transitory realms together.

Therefore what need is there to mention that that bodhisattva cannot be harmed or overcome by other types of demons such as the servants of the demon son of gods and so forth. One doesn't need to mention that of course he cannot be overcome by those lesser demons as well, and therefore this ground is called 'Difficult to Train'.



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## 2. Showing Mental Stabilisation as Superior and Having Expertise in Truth

*Superior mental stabilisation, attaining great skill in realising  
The profound nature of the Good Minded Ones' truths*

Having already excelled in the first four perfections the fifth ground bodhisattva has become superior in the perfection of mental stabilisation.

It has already been shown that the bodhisattva on the previous grounds excelled in the first four perfections, so now it explains which of the remaining six perfections the bodhisattva on this ground excels in.

*Of the remaining six perfections the bodhisattva on this ground excels in the perfection of mental stabilisation, because here on this ground their mental stabilisation cannot be harmed by obstacles such as the faults of distraction, and so forth.*

On the lower grounds that was still possible, but from this ground onwards it is not possible anymore.

Here the significance lies in saying that 'they definitely will not be harmed by the faults of distraction and so forth'. Whether or not the bodhisattvas on the lower ground can be harmed by distractions might be difficult to say, but what it is saying is that on this ground their concentration will definitely not be harmed by distraction and so forth. There is not even the possibility. However on this ground they haven't yet excelled in the perfection of wisdom.

Not only has the bodhisattva on this ground attained superiority in mental stabilisation, but here they also have the superior wisdom realising the subtle and coarse aspects of the profound nature of the Good Minded Ones' truth - the Four Noble Truths.

An objection or doubt is noted: Apart from the two truths, the Four Noble Truths are taught. Then the doubt could arise that those Four Noble Truths are not contained within the two truths. Of course the Four Noble Truths are contained within the two truths - all phenomena are contained within the two truths.

Since all phenomena are contained within the two truths, the Four Noble Truths are therefore contained within the two truths. The Four Noble Truths are taught from the point of view of the causal and resultant truth belonging to the totally afflicted side, and the causal and resultant truth belonging to the completely purified side. Here, within the truth belonging to the completely afflicted type we have the causal truth of origin, and the resultant truth of suffering, and that is what is to be abandoned. Next comes that which has to be generated, and that is the truth that belongs to the type being completely purified. In the purified truth, we have the causal truth, which is the path, and the resultant truth, which is the truth of cessation.

Of the Four Noble Truths the truth of origin, suffering, and the path are conventional truths, and the truth of cessation is ultimate truth.

That the truth of cessation is ultimate truth is established through much reasoning in the *Sixty Lines of Reasoning* by Nagarjuna and so forth. Since the truth of cessation is ultimate truth, it follows that it is emptiness, which we mentioned before.

So the truth of cessation is emptiness. Generally emptiness is the absence of true existence. So the absence of true existence is emptiness, and the truth of cessation is the cessation that comes about through abandoning the adventitious afflictions and obscurations. However the suchness of the mind becomes purified from the adventitious obscurations through the practice of the path, and in such a way becomes the truth of cessation. So when the afflictions and obscurations are purified from the mind, then the emptiness, the suchness, of the mind becomes the truth of cessation.

As much as the mind becomes purified from the stains of the afflictions, then proportionally the emptiness of the mind also becomes purified from those stains. Therefore once the mind has become completely purified from all obscurations, then also the mind's suchness has become purified from those obscurations, and has become the truth of cessation.

So here, apart from the suchness of mind it is not possible for the mind to become purified from the stains, but for its suchness not to become purified from those stains. Proportionally as much as the mind becomes purified from stains then its emptiness becomes purified from stains. Even though generally one says that to be emptiness it has to be the lack of true existence, that doesn't mean that if it is emptiness it cannot have also another object of negation.

Following that line of thought you can understand how the truth of cessation is posited as ultimate truth because it is emptiness.

So then, next time we can start with the sixth ground, which is called 'Manifest'. So we all become manifest at that time.

Next week you have discussion and then after that you have the examination. Anthony thought it would be good to have an examination of all the material we have been doing this year, because it is the last examination within this year, as after that we will have four teachings but no further examination.

*Transcribed from tape by Mark Emerson  
Edit 1 by Adair Bunnett  
Edit 2 by Venerable Tenzin Dongak*

*Edited Version*

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# DISCUSSION

BLOCK: 6  
WEEK: 5

**END OF YEAR EXAM  
REVIEW**  
5<sup>TH</sup> NOV 2002

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1. Name the title and author of the root text. [2 marks]
  2. Name and describe the two special features of this text. [6 marks]
  3. Why does Chandrakirti choose to pay homage to 'great compassion' at the beginning of his text? [2 marks]
  4. Describe the three-step process for achieving one's aims. Illustrate with a real-life example. Why do the latter two depend on their preceding steps? [5 marks]
  5. Is it possible to attain arhantship without dependence on a teacher? Explain then how 'self-liberated buddhas' get liberated. [4 marks]
  6. Name and give a brief explanation of the three main causes of a bodhisattva. [6 marks]
  7. Give the definition of bodhicitta, and highlight the aim and purpose aspects. [3 marks]
  8. Write down Chandrakirti's homage and opening verses [I prostrate...Compassion.]. [9 marks]
  9. From 'Entering': "*Compassion only, is posited as the seed of a Conqueror's perfect crop, like water for its increase, and like the ripening of state of long-time enjoyment. Therefore, I first praise compassion.*"  
Explain the way in which this verse describes (by way of analogy) the importance of compassion in the beginning, middle, and end. [6 marks]
  10. Name the two types of the 'view of transitory collections'. Describe what trouble follows from grasping at these two views. [5 marks]
  11. Give the six features of the bucket in a well, and explain their similarities to sentient beings. [12 marks]
  12. Why did Lama Tsongkapa express the need to think about our own suffering in order to develop strong compassion for others' suffering? [2 marks]
  13. How does realizing subtle impermanence and emptiness progressively strengthen your compassion for others? [4 marks]
  14. The three Compassions all focus on sentient beings and wish them to be free of pain. How then are they differentiated? [3 marks]
  15. Give the long names for the three types of compassion, and explain their meaning. [6 marks]
  16. List the four features of an author's pledge in Buddhist literature, and demonstrate with 'Entering the Middle Way' [8]
  17. What advice does Nagarjuna give to those who practise the Mahayana path yet achieve no results? As such, summarize the lamrim contemplations from Master Shantideva's '*Compendium of Training.*' [8 marks]
  18. Name and describe the six perfections. Give their individual results. [18 marks]
  19. What is it to be 'contaminated'? Give both the Abhidharma and Consequence schools interpretation. [2 marks]
  20. Why are the ten bodhisattva levels of development called 'grounds'? [2 marks]
  21. Give the following: i) The five Paths, ii) The four levels of Path #2, iii) The learner paths, iv) The ordinary paths, v) The Arya paths. [18\*1/2 marks]
  22. What are the only three mental afflictions an *Arya* (at the Path of Seeing) completely gives up? [3 marks]
  23. What are the two ways in which practitioners on a Mahayana track outshine other practitioners? Explain the meaning and corresponding stages of these two with the use of Maitreya's 'Prince' analogy. [6 marks]
  24. Identify three sources (author and title) from scripture that indicate that Hearers and Self-liberated budhas *can* and *do* realise emptiness directly. [3 marks]
  25. Some schools within Buddhist philosophy assert that the two Hinayana practitioners (Hearers and Self-liberators) can never see emptiness directly. Point out why this is not the case by giving three absurd consequences to this commonly held tenet. [6 marks]
  26. Outline the main difference between the subtle and coarse levels of the four noble truths. [2 marks]
  27. Are hinayana practitioners ever fooled into believing they have reached Nirvana? Explain. [3 marks]
  28. What are the Four Noble Truths? Why are they taught in that order? Quote Maitreya in your answer. [4 marks]
  29. Relate the point Lord Buddha was making from the 'non-existent woman' scenario. (from the '*Questions of Adhyashaya Sutra*') [4 marks]
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## *Tara Institute Study Group 2002 - 'Entering the Middle Way'*

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30. 'Now Subhuti, what do you think? Do those who have entered the stream ever think to themselves, "Now I have attained the goal of entering the stream"?' How did Subhuti answer the Conqueror? Describe what this quote from the Diamond-Cutter actually shows. [4 marks]
31. *Since the Hinayana Sutras teach 'Selflessness of Phenomena', And as all Hearers and Self-Liberators realize this Selflessness directly, There is no need to teach the Mahayana.* Address Bhavaviveka's doubt. [4 Marks]
32. What are the active ingredients for an act of 'perfection'? (Gone beyond) Describe a typical scenario. [3 Marks]
33. Present the following: 16 Aspects of the 4 noble truths, ten perfections, ten grounds
34. At what point does a bodhisattva no longer experience suffering in giving away his/her body? What is the nature of the suffering of those bodhisattvas who experience suffering in regard to giving their body? Does this become a hindrance to their practice of giving? Explain your answer. [4 marks]
35. The Tibetan word for 'perfection' is *Paroltu Chinpa*. Explain the etymology of this term, and demonstrate the two ways in which this term is applied. [6 marks]
36. Why is the second bodhisattva ground called 'stainless'? What sign indicates the extent of this second ground's purity? Give an example. [3 Marks]
37. What are the two types of bad deeds? (A and B) [2 Marks]  
Posit an example from the four possibilities:  
A not B:  
B not A:  
Neither A or B:  
Both A and B:
38. How does the enjoyment of the fruit of giving depend on morality? [3 Marks]
39. Why did Lord Buddha teach the perfection of ethics after the perfection of giving? [3 Marks]
40. Why is the third ground called 'luminous'? [3 Marks]
41. Why is the third ground's patience superior to the first and second ground's practice of patience? Give an example that highlights this difference. [4 Marks]
42. Give the following: ten non-virtues, ten virtues.
43. Joe gets angry at Jane.  
Joe hits Jane with a stick.  
Jane gets angry at Joe.  
Jane hits Joe back **because** she doesn't want subsequent suffering.
- Explain the irony of this typical scenario. In your answer, identify the karmic workings (past and future) of Joe and Jane. [5 marks]
44. Identify three disadvantages of anger that can be directly observed by ordinary people, and three that cannot. [6 marks]
45. The root text indicates that one moment of anger towards a bodhisattva destroys eons or merits collected. Does this mean we should try to direct our anger at non-bodhisattvas? Explain the meaning of 'anger-destroying virtue' with a description of the three levels of virtuous karma exhaustion. [6 marks]
46. Describe the advantages of patience. [5 Marks]
47. Master Chandrakirti says, '*On this ground the conquerors children have mental stabilisation and clairvoyance*'. What are the categories attainments of the third ground indicated by this line? [4 Marks]
48. Master Chandrakirti says, '*attachment and anger completely cease*'. How should this line be understood in relation to the abandonment of attachment and anger? Are these mental afflictions stopped forever at the third ground? Why/Why not? [3]
49. Explain briefly the difference between the following pairs of terms: [8 Marks]
- (1) afflictive obstruction and knowledge obstruction:
  - (2) intellectually acquired afflictive obstruction and innate afflictive obstruction:
  - (3) manifest afflictive obstruction and manifest knowledge obstruction:
  - (4) seed of afflictive obstruction and seed of knowledge obstruction:
50. Throughout the Mahayana Paths, all intellectual and innate forms of self-grasping are overcome. Identify the particular wrong way of thinking that is stopped at each of the ten grounds. [10 marks]
51. Householders are advised to mainly concentrate on the perfections of giving, being ethical, and patience. Why so? What is the ultimate result of these 'merit' activities? In addition, identify at least three of these 'lay bodhisattva' activities. [5]
52. What is not joyful effort? What is joyful effort? [2 Marks]
53. Why is enthusiasm good for both the accumulation of merit and wisdom? Enthusiasm is the main cause for which buddha body? [3 Marks]
54. Why is the fourth bodhisattva ground called 'Radiant', and what is it that they become proficient in? [3 Marks]
55. Why is the fifth bodhisattva ground called 'Difficult to Train', and what is it that they become proficient in? [3 Marks]
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# FINAL EXAM

BLOCKS 1-6

**45 SHORT ANSWER  
QUESTIONS**  
12<sup>TH</sup> NOV 2002

- 
1. Name the title and author of the root text. [2 marks]
  2. Name and describe the two special features of this text. [6 marks]
  3. Why does Chandrakirti choose to pay homage to 'great compassion' at the beginning of his text? [2 marks]
  4. Describe the three-step process for achieving one's aims. Illustrate with a real-life example. Why do the latter two depend on their preceding steps? [5 marks]
  5. Is it possible to attain arhantship without dependence on a teacher? Explain then how 'self-liberated buddhas' get liberated. [4 marks]
  6. Name and give a brief explanation of the three main causes of a bodhisattva. [6 marks]
  7. Give the definition of bodhicitta, and highlight the aim and purpose aspects. [3 marks]
  8. Write down Chandrakirti's homage and opening verses [I prostrate...Compassion.]. [9 marks]
  9. From 'Entering': "*Compassion only, is posited as the seed of a Conqueror's perfect crop, like water for its increase, and like the ripening of state of long-time enjoyment. Therefore, I first praise compassion.*" Explain the way in which this verse describes (by way of analogy) the importance of compassion in the beginning, middle, and end. [6 marks]
  10. Name the two types of the 'view of transitory collections'. Describe what trouble follows from grasping at these two views. [5 marks]
  11. Give the six features of the bucket in a well, and explain their similarities to sentient beings. [12 marks]
  12. How does realizing subtle impermanence and emptiness progressively strengthen your compassion for others? [4 marks]
  13. The three Compassions all focus on sentient beings and wish them to be free of pain. How then are they differentiated? [3 marks]
  14. What advice does Nagarjuna give to those who practise the Mahayana path yet achieve no results? As such, summarize the lamrim contemplations from Master Shantideva's '*Compendium of Training.*' [8 marks]
  15. Name and describe the six perfections. Give their individual results. [18 marks]
  16. Why are the ten bodhisattva levels of development called 'grounds'? [2 marks]
  17. Give the following: i) The five Paths, ii) The four levels of Path #2, iii) The learner paths, iv) The ordinary paths, v) The Arya paths. [18\*1/2 marks]
  18. What are the only three mental afflictions an *Arya* (at the Path of Seeing) completely gives up? [3 marks]
  19. What are the two ways in which practitioners on a Mahayana track outshine other practitioners? Explain the meaning and corresponding stages of these two with the use of Maitreya's 'Prince' analogy. [6 marks]
  20. Some schools within Buddhist philosophy assert that the two Hinayana practitioners (Hearers and Self-liberators) can never see emptiness directly. Point out why this is not the case by giving three absurd consequences to this commonly held tenet. [6 marks]
  21. Are hinayana practitioners ever fooled into believing they have reached Nirvana? Explain. [3 marks]
  22. What are the Four Noble Truths? Why are they taught in that order? Quote Maitreya in your answer. [4 marks]
  23. 'Now Subhuti, what do you think? Do those who have entered the stream ever think to themselves, "Now I have attained the goal of entering the stream"?' How did Subhuti answer the Conqueror? Describe what this quote from the Diamond-Cutter actually shows. [4 marks]
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24. *Since the Hinayana Sutras teach 'Selflessness of Phenomena',  
And as all Hearers and Self-Liberators realize this Selflessness directly,  
There is no need to teach the Mahayana.* Address Bhavaviveka's doubt. [4 Marks]
25. What are the active ingredients for an act of 'perfection'? (Gone beyond) Describe a typical scenario. [3 Marks]
26. Present the following: 16 Aspects of the 4 noble truths, the ten perfections, and the ten grounds [18 marks]
27. At what point does a bodhisattva no longer experience suffering in giving away his/her body? What is the nature of the suffering of those bodhisattvas who experience suffering in regard to giving their body? Does this become a hindrance to their practice of giving? Explain your answer. [4 marks]
28. The Tibetan word for 'perfection' is *Paroltu Chinpa*. Explain the etymology of this term, and demonstrate the two ways in which this term is applied. [6 marks]
29. Why is the second bodhisattva ground called 'stainless'? What sign indicates the extent of this second ground's purity? Give an example. [3 Marks]
30. What are the two types of bad deeds? (A and B) [2 Marks]  
Posit an example from the four possibilities:  
A not B:  
B not A:  
Neither A or B:  
Both A and B:  
[4 marks]
31. How does the enjoyment of the fruit of giving depend on morality? [3 Marks]
32. Why is the third ground called 'luminous'? [3 Marks]
33. Why is the third ground's patience superior to the first and second ground's practice of patience? Give an example that highlights the difference. [4 Marks]
34. Give the ten non-virtues.
35. Joe gets angry at Jane.  
Joe hits Jane with a stick.  
Jane gets angry at Joe.  
Jane hits Joe back **because** she doesn't want subsequent suffering.
- Explain the irony of this typical scenario. In your answer, identify the karmic workings (past and future) of Joe and Jane. [5 marks]
36. Identify three disadvantages of anger that can be directly observed by ordinary people, and three that cannot. [6 marks]
37. The root text indicates that one moment of anger towards a bodhisattva destroys eons or merits collected. Does this mean we should try to direct our anger at non-bodhisattvas? Explain the meaning of 'anger-destroying virtue' with a description of the three levels of virtuous karma depletion. [6 marks]
38. Describe the advantages of patience. [5 Marks]
39. Master Chandrakirti says, '*attachment and anger completely cease*'. How should this line be understood in relation to the abandonment of attachment and anger? Are these mental afflictions stopped forever at the third ground? Why/Why not? [3]
40. Explain briefly the difference between the following pairs of terms: [8 Marks]
- (1) afflictive obstruction and knowledge obstruction:
  - (2) intellectually acquired afflictive obstruction and innate afflictive obstruction:
  - (3) manifest afflictive obstruction and manifest knowledge obstruction:
  - (4) seed of afflictive obstruction and seed of knowledge obstruction:
41. Throughout the Mahayana Paths, all intellectual and innate forms of self-grasping are overcome. Identify the particular wrong way of thinking that is stopped at each of the ten grounds. [10 marks]
42. Householders are advised to mainly concentrate on the perfections of generosity, morality, and patience. Why so? What is the ultimate result of these 'merit' activities? In addition, identify at least three of these 'lay bodhisattva' activities. [5]
43. What is joyful effort? [1 Marks]
44. Why is the fourth bodhisattva ground called 'Radiant', and what is it that they become proficient in? [3]
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45. Why is the fifth bodhisattva ground called 'Difficult to Train', and what is it that they become proficient in?  
[3 Marks]

**Total Marks: 239**

