



BUDDHIST PSYCHOLOGY, WEEK 5 MEDITATION ON THE ROOTS OF THE AFFLICTIONS

FIRST FEW MINUTES

Touch in with your motivation for this meditation. Begin by connecting with your actual motivation. Then, see if you can expand from there to include a longer view, and expand the scope using what you can recall from the first two modules to shape your intentions. Recall your wish to reduce and remove these mistaken ways of seeing. Have the intention to gain a greater understanding of working with your own mind in order to lessen your day to day suffering and lead you further on the path to enlightenment.

NEXT 15-20 MINUTES

With the chart on pages 48 & 49 of the course book in front of you, pick a mental affliction from the third zone that has been causing you trouble.

See if you can trace that affliction back to a general ignorance around the laws of karmic cause and effect.

Can you see how that traces back to states of mind in the second zone, and ignorance around more subtle intentions and their effects?

See if you can trace this affliction back to the first zone, and to its very origins.

Over successive days, try to pick at least one affliction involving attachment and one involving aversion.

For afflictions with their origins in attachment, contemplate the following, from p.53 of the course book:

“Because of the object’s appeal, attachment is an agent for discontent. Before we possess the object, the mind is agitated with desire; once we have the object, the desirable qualities of the object seem to fade (although in reality they were never there in the first place)..

Then we focus on the next object down the line that seems to be the answer to our prayers. Look honestly at the possessions and relationships that define your life and explore whether this is true.

In this way, we establish a pattern in our lives of ever-increasing discontent and ever-increasing craving.”

Examine to see if this is true for you.



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For afflictions with their origins in aversion, contemplate the following from p.54 of the course book:

“Aversion is also an exaggeration of an object that arises from the fundamental ignorance of the way self and things exist. This time, however, because the object harms the self’s notion of permanence, the mind exaggerates its negative qualities.”

Drawing on your own experiences, does it ring true that your conceptual mind exaggerates objects you have an aversion to?

Does it make sense that this is because these objects harm your self-image and the self-narrative that you grasp to?

DEDICATION

In conclusion generate a determination to gain a greater experiential understanding of how your mind works and to experience the longer term benefits. As much as possible try expanding these benefits to others around you, widening the circle of your care and concern.