

Tara Institute 'Shantideva's Bodhicharyavatara' Block 2, Study Group 2014

Exam

Name:

5 August 2014

1. Shantideva writes:

*35. If this guardian of the prison of cyclic existence,
Who becomes the executioner and torturer in hell,
Abides within the net of attachment in my mind,
Then how can I have happiness?*

With reference to this verse, give a general account of how the afflictions do not grant freedom from cyclic existence. Then, in particular, identify the main cause for all sufferings.

2. What is the definition of patience? Of the three kinds of patience, which is specifically discussed in verse 40 in relation to the example of fishers, butchers, farmers and the like? Illustrate its application with an example drawn from your experience.

3. When it is said that one must make an effort to abandon the deluded afflictions from the root, what is the root? And what is its exact remedy? Answer with some explanation of the metaphor of the eye.

4. What is the definition and meaning of conscientiousness?

5. Identify the two purposes and explain how the six perfections are definite in number in relation to them.

6. What is the difference between restraining the mind and protecting the mind? How does this relate to meditation and the practice of Dharma?

7. The practices of the six perfections are all depended on the mind. How does the giving and taking meditation practice combine all the essential points of the six perfections?

8. What three conditions need to be intact for any of the practice to become a perfection?

9. Compared with bodhicitta, virtues that are stained by worldly concerns or self-interest and other basic needs in relation to our immediate needs are quite insignificant. But the bodhicitta mind must be protected under all circumstances, and one should never allow it to degenerate.

While we may not yet have developed bodhicitta, how can we develop a substitute?

10. Shantideva gives us advice that we should take as personal instruction....The most crucial point on the path to Enlightenment is to maintain mindfulness and introspection. How does mindfulness and introspection work together?

11. What are the three types of Morality?

12. Focusing Single pointedly on the Virtuous object will help us develop concentration. What is the additional practice that is advised to perform at the same time as developing concentration?

13. What are the various situations where we should cultivate this behaviour of being unmoved - like a big tree?

14. Verse 57 reads

*Objects free from the unutterable
Are for self and sentient beings.
Without ego, always protect this mind,
Like an emanation.*

Explain this verse.

What is the 'unutterable' that is abandoned?

What is the purpose of Morality?

What is the basic method of using emptiness to protect the mind?