
Study Group - "Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand"

A Commentary by The Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by Samdup Tsering

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If you have an understanding of bodhichitta, which is the altruistic mind of enlightenment, you should try to cultivate that mind as your motivation. Think, "We are studying Lam Rim in order to put it into practice, and the reason we practise Lam Rim is to attain the state of buddhahood in order to benefit all beings." Try to generate this motivation.

It is also important that those who preach dharma use bodhichitta mind as their motivation. If both the teacher and the listener of dharma have the same motivation then our practice will be very fruitful.

422.221.111.6: The Five View Delusions

As to the topic of the teachings, we have finished the first five of the delusions, which are called the five nonview delusions. The sixth delusion is called deluded view and it has five divisions ~ the five view delusions

422.221.111.61: View of the Transitory Collection

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Let us first find out why this first view is called the "view of the transitory collection". The usage of the term transitory collection identifies the basis or objects on which this view arises, which are the five aggregates (the aggregates of form, feeling, discrimination, compositional factors *and consciousness). Because these five are subject to the law of momentary change they are "transitory", and because they are a group of five in number they are called a -collection". Therefore the transitory collection refers to the five aggregates. On the basis of this transitory collection the views of "F" and "mine" develop.

This is a general explanation as to why this first deluded view is called the view of the transitory collection. It does not necessarily imply that such a view must be based on all five aggregates. To be more inclusive it is more correct to say that this view of the transitory collection arises in relation to the aggregates, which are subject to the law of momentary change.

How the View of the Transitory Collection Arises

We need to identify this view of the transitory collection in terms of its object, its way of apprehending its object, and so forth.

This view refers to a sense of "I" and "mine" which is based on the wrong notion of the actual existence of reality - of the way "I" and "mine" actually exist. The time when this sense of "I" and "mine" becomes most apparent to us is when a friend highly admires you, or when they are happy with you, or when in an unhappy mood they belittle you, or

accuse you of something you

have not done. Under such circumstances turn your attention to how this "I" has been very delighted by being admired, or how the "I" is very cross about being belittled or accused, and feels a great hurt thinking "Why do I have to tolerate this? Why on earth did someone say this to me?"

If, while in this state of mind, you investigate how this "F" exists, what is very clear is that this "F" seems very concrete. It is so obvious and it arises right deep down inside. This "I" seems to have such an independent existence. It is as if the "I" is not dependent upon any other factors like the aggregates. The way the "I" appears to our mind at this stage is as if it exists inherently, existing by itself in its own right.

If we then grasp onto this "F" as existing inherently, then this grasping is what is known as the view of the transitory collection. It is a view which arises in relation to one's own aggregates. From this point of view, viewing the self or others as inherently existent is selfgrasping but is not the view of the transitory collection.¹

It is said that due to this deluded view of self-grasping, we become very vulnerable. With praise or admiration it is easy to get excited, but if someone belittles you, then anger arises. Therefore the point of investigating this wrong, deluded view is to realise that it is the root cause of all the harm which we receive in our life.

As more explanation of this will come in later sections, we shall not do more now. What we have covered is just to give a vague understanding of it.

422.221.111.62: Extreme View

The second wrong view is extreme view. This is the view that the "I" or the self is either permanent in the sense of not changing, or that at the time of death just as the body will cease to exist so will the "F" cease to exist. Believing in either or both of these views is falling into the extreme view of either eternalism or nihilism.

422.221.111.63: View of Holding the Wrong View as the Supreme View

¹ Editor: The grasping onto the view of the inherent existence of a self which is based upon one's own aggregates is the view of the transitory collection, but the grasping onto the view of the inherent existence of a self which is based upon the aggregates of another person is not the view of the transitory collection. This latter view (grasping onto the view of the inherent existence of a self based upon the aggregates of another person) is a grasping at the self of person but not the grasping of the view of the transitory collection.

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Holding the wrong view as supreme holds either of the above two views (the view of the transitory collection and extreme view) as supreme, or holding a person who adheres to those views as being supreme.

422.221.111.64: Holding Wrong Moral Ethics or Ascetic Practice as Supreme

The original text explains very clearly that this view refers to beliefs relating to self-inflicting, very ascetic practices; examples of which can be found in the text. These are not only inferior, but are also very misleading practices. This view also includes holding sonic evil or inferior moral practice as supreme. Examples of these are also found in the text.

422.221.111.65: Perverted View

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This view refers mainly to denying the fact of the four noble truths, the karmic law of cause and effect, or the three objects of refuge.

It is said that of all the six root delusions, the one which is the source of all the others is the view of the transitory collection. The relationship of this delusion to the others is like the relationship of our sense faculty to all other parts of our body. The sense faculty pervades all parts of our body, just as the view of the transitory collection pervades all other delusions.

422.221.12: The Stages in which Delusions are Generated

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After the classification of the six root delusions, the stages in which the delusions are generated is the next heading in the text.

According to those schools of tenets which assert that ignorance and the view of the transitory collection are synonymous², [e.g. middle way school of Prasangika Madhyamika} they state that the root cause of all delusions and karma is ignorance [which is the same as the view of the transitory collection].

Divisions of View of the Transitory Collection

This view of the transitory collection can be divided into two types:

1. The artificial or imputed view of the transitory collection; because this is the view which you adopt through the influence of studying an outsider's philosophical view or text it is called an imputed or artificial view.
2. The innate view of the transitory collection; this is the view of "I" and "mine" which has existed from the time of birth. It is always there. With respect to this innate view of the transitory collection there are two divisions:
 - the innate view of "I"
 - the innate view of "mine".

If we further examine these two in detail, the innate view of "I" serves as the cause of the innate view of mine

Investigating how the "I" exists when we have been

wrongly accused, blamed or highly admired, will yield different thoughts. On receiving praise you think "That was great wonderful and very true. It was what I deserved." Whereas with blame you think "What they said about me was incorrect." If while within this intense state of emotion you look at this "I", you see that it appears to be very independent, and seems to have an inherent existence. This is how the view of the transitory collection arises: it happens very naturally and involuntarily, and is innate. It is said that from this view of "I" all other views follow, and then all the other delusions, and consequent creations of karma arise.

So if we look back then, from this view or sense of "I" the sense of "mine" develops. Along with this there is also some feeling within that there is an "experiencer" or "possessor" or "owner". From that there is a sense of importance of the self, since there is some attachment to this self, and "mine". This attachment to self, to "I" and "mine" naturally stimulates other feelings of attachment to objects or people who are close, or of use to the self. To those objects that are distant to the self, there is hatred or ill-feeling. In this way we create various karmas as a result of our attachment or hatred.

It is good to know about this gradual, casual development of the various delusions beginning with the view of the transitory collection. Then we are more able to counteract these various delusions.

If we put this into practice, then we can directly derive benefit from this teaching. We can prevent unnecessary conflict in our relationships and causing problems to others and to our own life. With a mind which has more understanding, and with a broader view of things then our experience will be more relaxed and our approach to things will be more gentle. If in a relationship your friend says something nasty to you, or as soon as you notice some wrong-doing on the part of a friend, you feel "This is so inconsiderate. It must be stopped right now." Thinking in this very self-defensive way will intensify the view of "I". As this sense of "I" grows you will lose control, and lose your temper. Then, not only will you be emotionally unstable, but your facial expression will look aggressive, and be an unpleasant sight for everyone. So rushing to respond to a situation immediately means that there is a great potential for your relationship to be destroyed, with the loss of personal stability in life, and harm to others.

You may not have completely overcome this sense of "I" and "mine". However, whether you are right or wrong in unfavourable situations, try not to think in these negative, destructive and selfish ways, and instead try to calm yourself by thinking that this will go away and that maybe there will be a better time to discuss this issue, and then you will not lose your temper. And then you will not lose your inner peace and stability, nor will you create a further cause to make the situation worse.

So there is a lot to learn about our own experience even in terms of this view of the self, and how it is a direct cause of the negative attitudes and emotions which we generate and develop in ourselves.

If you look at this self when it is fully grown, such as when you totally lose self-control to the point where you see your close friend as completely wrong, then at this point your resentment is very strong. The self is not an abstract then: it seems so totally concrete and solid that we could grasp it with our hand. Of course there is no such self. When this

² For further clarification of this issue refer to Study Group notes 7 November 1995, discussion of Fourth Root Delusion - Ignorance

sense of "I" becomes so strong, you can see how at this point no-one can stop you doing something very unskilful or destructive; no-one can help us change our view of seeing, even our closest friend as the worst enemy.