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# *Mind and Awareness*

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Please establish a virtuous motivation for listening to the teaching.

Last week we finished objects, mentioning the definition of objects, and then went on to object possessors. We gave the definition of object possessors, and said there were three divisions of object possessors: person, conscious awareness and expressive sound. We have finished the division of person. Then we said that clear and knowing is the definition of awareness, and that awareness has a two-fold division into awarenesses that are valid cognisers, and awarenesses that are not valid cognisers. Under the heading of valid cognisers, we reached the definition of direct perceptions. I am going to explain direct valid cognisers and inferential valid cognisers later.

## **2.2.1.1. Direct Perceptions (contd)**

The definition of *direct perception is a non-mistaken knower free from conception*. Direct perception has a four-fold division into sense direct perception, mental direct perception, self-knower and yogic direct perception.

### **2.2.1.1a. Sense Direct Perception**

Last time we said that the definition of *a sense direct perception is the unmistakable knower free from conception, which is generated in dependence upon the uncommon empowering condition of a physical sense power*. Sense direct perception again has a three-fold division into valid sense direct perception, subsequent sense direct perception and inattentive sense direct perception.

The first one, **valid sense direct cogniser**, has a five-fold division, into sense direct perception apprehending form, sound, smell, taste and tactile objects.

In this five-fold division into sense direct perception apprehending form, sound, smell and so forth, those five objects are referred to as the five objects of the desire realm. Beings of the desire realm are normally most attached to the five objects of the five sense direct perceptions.

The five sense direct perceptions are first of all generated upon the individual empowering condition of the five physical sense powers. In dependence upon the five physical sense powers, the individual consciousnesses engage each of those various objects of the desire realm. Through engaging those objects of the desire realm, various karmas and so forth are accumulated. Then one grasps at, and becomes attached to, those five objects of the desire realm.

Of those five sense direct perceptions, the first one is the sense direct perception apprehending form. The forms that we see with our eye consciousness are mainly

colours and shapes. Ear consciousness apprehends sounds and so forth. Those objects of the five sense consciousnesses are also referred to as sources. The objects of the eye consciousness, colour and shape, are referred to as the form source. Sound is referred to as the sound source, and there is also smell source, taste source and tactile source.

Why are those objects of the desire realm referred to as a source? It is because they are the doors through from which those various sense consciousnesses are generated or increased. In addition to the five physical sources there is also a source called the dharma source, which refers to the objects of mental consciousness. So altogether there are six sources, which act as the door through which the various consciousnesses are generated and increased.

Taking the sense direct perception apprehending form as an example, we will explain its **four conditions**: the causal condition, the empowering condition, the focal condition, and the immediately preceding condition. They are the same for all the other sense consciousnesses. So once we have understood these conditions in relation to the form consciousness, we can also apply them to the other consciousnesses.

In general all compounded phenomena have what we call **causal conditions**. In the case of sense direct perception apprehending form, the **uncommon empowering condition** refers to the eye sense power. This is because the definition of the sense direct perception apprehending form is the unmistakable knower, which is free from conception, and is generated in dependence upon the uncommon empowering condition of the eye sense power. Then we have the **focal condition**, which is form. The **immediately preceding condition** is a mental sense power, which acts as a cause for the eye consciousness to arise.

Here there are two empowering conditions, the mental sense power, which acts as one empowering condition, and the eye sense power, which is also an empowering condition. However the eye sense power is referred to as the uncommon empowering condition, while the mental sense power is a common empowering condition. For an empowering condition, all consciousnesses need to have a preceding moment of clear and knowing that can cause their own clear and knowing. This is the immediately preceding condition. Of the five sense consciousnesses, the eye sense power acts as the empowering condition only for the eye consciousness. Therefore it is referred to as the uncommon empowering condition.

Now we have covered all the conditions. There is the immediately preceding condition, which refers to a mental consciousness; just before the eye sense consciousness is generated. At that moment there is a moment of mental consciousness already paying attention towards the future object of form. This immediately preceding condition causes the clear and knowing of the eye consciousness. Then we have the focal condition, which is form itself. The focal condition is the main cause for the aspect in which the eye consciousness arises. The empowering condition

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independently causes the eye consciousness. This concludes the conditions.

The five sense consciousnesses are based on the five physical sense powers. There is also the mental sense power. What is the function of the five physical sense powers? Their power is to cause a beautiful human body. Without a nose a person would be ugly. We might also ask, why do we have two eyes? It is because although it is enough that we can see with one eye, it would not look nice if you had only one eye! They are called sense powers, as their power is to cause a beautiful body.

The power of the eye consciousness and the ear consciousness is also to distinguish between beautiful and ugly forms, between pleasant and unpleasant forms or pleasant and unpleasant sounds. Those two sense powers distinguish between outer forms in this way. The other three sense powers, (physical, nose and tongue sense power), mainly deal with the objects that we need to sustain our physical body. That is their area of power.

The sixth power is the mental sense power. The mental sense power is very important because it is the sense power with the greatest power. This is because our actions of body and speech will follow our mental state. If we have a positive mental state, then the actions of body and speech will also be positive, and if we have a negative mental state, then the actions of body and speech will be negative. So the function of the mental sense power is to cause positive or negative actions of body and speech.

This completes sense direct perception, and we can now turn to mental direct perception.

### 2.2.1.1b. Mental Direct Perception

The definition of a *mental direct perception is a non-mistaken other knower, free from conception, which is generated upon its uncommon empowering condition of the mental sense power.*

That finishes mental direct perception!

Mental direct perception has a three-fold division into valid direct mental cogniser, subsequent mental cogniser and inattentive mental direct perception. An example for a **valid mental direct cogniser** is the first moment of the clairvoyance knowing the mind of others. The example for the **subsequent direct mental cogniser** is the second moment of the clairvoyance knowing the mind of others. An example for **inattentive mental direct perception** is the mental direct perception apprehending sound when some beautiful form distracts the mind. This concludes mental direct perception.

### 2.2.1.1c Self-Knowing Direct Perception

The third of the direct perceptions is *self-knowing direct perception*, the definition of which is *being in the unmistakable aspect of the apprehender, free from conception.*

Of the various Buddhist tenets the Vaibashikas don't accept self-knowers, the Sautrantikas accept self-knowers, the Mind-Only posit self-knowers, the Yogic Svatantrika-Madhyamika posit self-knowers. The

Svatantrika-Madhyamika don't posit self-knowers and also the Prasangika Madhyamika don't posit self-knowers.

The self-knower is a clear and knowing which knows only the subject and doesn't know the object. So the self-knower is an awareness that is directed only inwards. Directed only inwards means that it is directed only towards awareness, and not towards any other kind of object.

Every consciousness has two parts. One part of the clear and knowing knows the object, and there is another part of the clear and knowing which knows the subject, or the knower itself.

Some of the tenets, like the Vaibashika for example, assert that this is not possible. In the same way as a sharp knife cannot cut itself, they say, a mind cannot possibly know itself.

Those tenets positing a self-knower assert that, for example, there are two parts to the clear and knowing that is the eye consciousness. One part of the clear and knowing knows the object, the outer form. Then also, they say, there is another part of the clear and knowing which knows the eye consciousness itself. That is how the tenets positing a self-knower look at it.

The tenets that don't posit a self-knower say that perception comes about when the eye consciousness meets with the outer object of form. There is no part in the clear and knowing that knows the clear and knowing itself.

Those tenets that posit a self-knower give as their reason for positing a self-knower, that we have two types of memory. For example, in the case of the eye consciousness apprehending blue, we have the memory of the object blue. We also have a memory of the subject; we have a memory of the apprehension of blue itself. For the memory of the apprehension of blue itself to come about, one needs a self-knower, something that knows the apprehender.

Self-knowers also have a three-fold division into self-knowing valid cognisers, self-knowing subsequent cognisers and inattentive self-knowers. The example for a **self-knowing valid cogniser** is the self-knower which experiences the first moment of the eye consciousness apprehending form. The example for a **self-knowing subsequent cogniser** is the self-knower which experiences the second moment of the eye consciousness apprehending form.

There are various examples for **inattentive self-knowers**. The first two examples relate to self-knowers in the continuum of various mistaken tenet holders. Here the text refers to two Indian tenets, the Particularists (Veisesika) and the Hedonists (Kyangpenpas).

The Particularists don't accept that happiness is awareness. Since they don't accept that happiness is awareness, the self-knower who experiences the mental feeling of happiness becomes an inattentive self-knower.

The Kyangpempas don't accept the existence of inferential cognisers. Although they don't accept the existence of inferential cognisers in the continuum of

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those tenet holders, they still have self-knowers who experience inferential cognisers. These become inattentive self-knowers. This is because the inferential cogniser appears to them, but it cannot be ascertained.

As a third example, one can give self-knowers who experience various kinds of mistaken awarenesses. The mistaken awarenesses will appear to that self-knower, but are not ascertained.

#### **2.2.1.1d. Yogic Direct Perception**

The fourth division of direct perceptions is yogic direct perception. The definition of *yogic direct perception* is ***a non-mistaken other knower, free from conceptions, which is generated in dependence upon the uncommon empowering condition of the union of calm abiding and special insight.*** The significance of saying 'other knower', in relation to yogic direct perception, (as we also did with the definition on mental direct perception), is to distinguish the self-knowing awarenesses from other knowers. Self-knowers focus only inwards, and the other ones are focussed outwards.

In the definition of the yogic direct perception the uncommon empowering condition is the union of calm abiding and special insight. So what does calm abiding mean? What does special insight mean?

***Calm abiding is the concentration that can remain on the object of meditation for however long the meditator wishes, and which is held by the bliss of pliancy.***

The definition of ***special insight is the wisdom that is held by the bliss of pliancy, which is induced through analysis on the object while remaining in calm abiding.***

Calm abiding consists of two words 'calm' and 'abiding'. 'Calm' refers to the calming down of disturbing conceptual thoughts. Having calmed down the disturbing thoughts one can then 'abide' single pointedly, focussed inwards. When one reaches this state, the meditator can meditate for however long he or she wishes, and their mind will not be disturbed in any kind of way by mental excitement, or mental sinking.

In fact, of the nine stages of calm abiding, mental excitement is abandoned at the fifth stage, and mental sinking is abandoned at the sixth stage. The attainment of superior insight depends upon the attainment of calm abiding. Some people will not accept this but that is how it is!

For example a bodhisattva on the great Path of Accumulation will have attained calm abiding while focussing on emptiness. Then, through continuously meditating on this realisation of calm abiding focussing on emptiness and, as was explained, performing analysis on the object of emptiness while remaining in calm abiding, the bliss of pliancy is induced through the force of this analysis. The wisdom is being held by that bliss of pliancy. The meditator then progresses to the Path of Preparation and has attained superior insight into emptiness which is called the union of calm abiding and special insight focussing on emptiness.

Why is it called special insight? Because as mentioned in the definition it is an insight that has come about through the force of analysis. The understanding of

emptiness, which is generated while meditating mainly on calm abiding, is an insight that is generated through the force of abiding calmly. There is also another insight generated through the force of analysis, and that is called superior insight.

The bodhisattva, having reached the union of calm abiding and special insight, has progressed to the Path of Preparation. At this point the union of calm abiding and special insight is a conceptual understanding realizing emptiness with the help of a meaning generality.

Then through familiarising, when that realisation deepens, the meditator progresses along the Path of Preparation, until through the force of meditation, the meditator realises emptiness directly. He or she can see truth directly, and because they can see truth directly they have reached the Path of Seeing. At that time the meditator becomes what is called an Arya or superior being.

Until the last instant of the Path of Preparation the meditator is called an ordinary being. Then from the first moment of the Path of Seeing onwards, the meditator is a superior being. Some people ask, why are they called a superior being? It is because they are superior to beings on the Path of Preparation and below.

However I don't think that is the meaning. I think they are called a superior being, because from that moment onwards the meditator becomes superior to the self-grasping in his or her continuum. Until that moment, self-grasping was stronger and had the upper hand. From the Path of Seeing onwards, the realisation of emptiness completely has the upper hand over self-grasping, and therefore the meditator becomes superior towards self-grasping. As is mentioned in one quote, on the Path of Seeing, there is no throwing karma. From the Path of Seeing onwards the meditator will not generate any kind of throwing karma, because they have gained superiority over self-grasping.

The understanding you should generate here is that the wisdom realising selflessness has become the antidote to self-grasping. From this point the wisdom realising selflessness (the antidote against self-grasping), has been generated in the mind.

Direct yogic perception doesn't have a three-fold division like the other direct perceptions. It has only a two-fold division into direct yogic cognisers, and subsequent yogic cognisers. Yogic direct perceptions are always cognisers or realisers, realising their object. There is no inattentive yogic direct perception to which the object only appears, and is not realised.

An example for a **valid yogic cogniser** is the first moment of a yogic cogniser realising emptiness. An example for a **subsequent yogic cogniser** is the second moment of a yogic cogniser realising emptiness.

In relation to omniscient mind, both the first moment of omniscient mind and the second moment of omniscient mind are valid yogic cognisers. There are no omniscient minds that are subsequent yogic cognisers. All omniscient minds are valid yogic cognisers for the reason that the first moment of omniscient mind realises

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its object through its own power, and therefore it becomes a valid yogic cogniser. The second moment of omniscient mind doesn't become a subsequent yogic cogniser, because its realisation of the various objects is not induced by the understanding of the various objects of the first moment.

For example in the case of the Path of Seeing, which is also a yogic cogniser realising emptiness directly at the level of the Bodhisattva on the Path of Seeing, the first moment that realises its object under its own power is a valid yogic cogniser. The second moment of the Path of Seeing, becomes a subsequent yogic cogniser. This is because the realisation of emptiness of the second moment of the path of seeing is induced by the first moment of the realisation of emptiness of the Path of Seeing. That is the difference between yogic cognisers on a learner's level and on the Buddha's level.

On the Buddha's level, the omniscient mind that is a yogic cogniser will always be a valid yogic cogniser. The second and third moments and so forth will always be valid yogic cognisers because their understanding of the object is not induced through the understanding of the first moment.

While the second moment of yogic cogniser on the learner's levels, such as the Path of Seeing, will be a subsequent yogic cogniser, because its understanding is induced through the understanding of the first moment. It doesn't come about through its own power.

### 2.2.1.1 Valid Direct Perceptions

The definition of a *valid direct perception is a newly incontrovertible knower free from conception*. Recall that the definition of a direct perception was a non-mistaken knower free from conception.

We can finish here; otherwise we will get too tired. Can some people go and get the tea.

Sometimes we have awarenesses that realise the object and awarenesses that don't realise the object. What is the difference?

*One is a subsequent awareness, and the other is an inattentive awareness<sup>1</sup>.*

Please give an example for both a mind that realises its object, and an awareness that doesn't realise its object.

*A mind that realises its object, is the first moment the mind looks at a cup. An example of an inattentive awareness is when I drive along the road and I don't notice the sky.*

Your answer is correct. Inattentive awarenesses are awarenesses that don't realise the object, and the first moment of the eye consciousness understanding cup is an awareness that realises its object. You could also posit self-grasping as an example for a mind that does not realise its object, because it is a wrong mind. Wrong minds never realise their object. One could posit the wisdom realising selflessness as an example of a mind that realises its object.

One has to say that if the awareness is mistaken with regard to a particular object, then that awareness does not realise that object.

Is the conceptual thought apprehending a vase a mistaken awareness?

*No*

Because it is a conceptual thought?

*It is mistaken in relation to its appearing object but not its observed object.*

First we have to decide whether or not it is a mistaken awareness. After you have decided that, then one can move on to the next point. Do you agree that the conception apprehending a vase is a mistaken awareness?

*If the meaning generality is presumed to be the vase, then it is mistaken.*

The object is a vase, because the determined object is a vase isn't it?

*It is a conceptual mind only.*

The conception apprehending blue is of course not mistaken with regard to blue. It is mistaken with regard to the appearing object.

Here one has to make a small clarification because otherwise there will be a certain mistake coming up later. It is not mistaken with regard to the appearing object, but it is mistaken with regard to the part of the appearance of the meaning generality as the meaning. All conceptual thoughts are mistaken awarenesses, because they are mistaken with regard to the part of the meaning generality appearing as the meaning.

The Path of Preparation realising emptiness (which is a conceptual understanding) realises the meaning generality of emptiness, and therefore it is said that one mind can realise the two truths directly at the same time. At the same time, as a conceptual thought, it is a mistaken awareness. Why is it a mistaken awareness? It is because it is mistaken with regard to the part of the appearance of the meaning generality as the meaning.

Just because conceptual thoughts are mistaken awarenesses, doesn't mean that they don't realise their object. For example the inferential cogniser realising impermanent sound is mistaken with regard to the part of the appearance of the meaning generality as the meaning. However it is still non-mistaken with regard to the object of engagement (which is synonymous with the determined object), which is impermanent sound. Then of course there is the special case of the Prasangika, where it is said that all minds are valid cognizers with regards to their own appearance.

Because of the lack of time, we won't go through the various debates mentioned in the text, which are actually very important. This is because the various points brought up in the debates deepen our understanding. Debate will also generate new ideas, and generate and then clear up doubts. You should debate.

When one debates another, the first person asks the other a question and will be given a perfectly reasonable

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<sup>1</sup> Ed: As was the case last week, text in italics is audience response, and normal typeface is that spoken by Geshe-la.

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explanation. Then one asks them a further question and then it becomes more difficult, and if one asks a third or fourth question then it becomes more and more difficult for the other. So the process of debate deepens our understanding, because we ask questions and have to generate new answers.

What is the definition of a person?

*The 'I' which is imputed on the five aggregates.*

How many synonyms do we have for 'I'?

*Self and being.*

So self exists?

*Not inherently.*

But the self exists doesn't it?

Actually this tenet accepts an inherently existent person. Only the Prasangikas make the distinction between whether or not the person inherently exists, and then make a decision on selflessness based on that distinction. Of course in the lower tenets there can be some debate about whether or not the self is self-characterised.

So we have the self and we have a person. Why can't we have the self of a person?

*If you can find it you can have it, but you can't find it.*

But we can find the self.

*Where?*

You say, 'I'm going' or 'I am'. The view that we cannot find the meaning that has been imputed at the time of analysis is an assertion specific to the Prasangika.

We do say, ordinarily, that self exists, and that it says, 'I go', 'I am', and so forth.

The lower tenets assert that one has to be able to find something at the time of searching for the imputed meaning. As Bhavaviveka asserted, 'On the basis of the mental consciousness one can generate a very good understanding'. What this quote means is on the base of mental consciousness one can understand the self.

There are differences between some of the tenets as to what is used as the of imputation for the self. The lower tenets assert that the basis of imputation can be found at the time of analysis. Therefore they won't accept the special point of view of the Prasangika, which says that we can never find the imputed meaning at the time of analysis. The point of difference is whether one can find the basis of imputation at the time of analysis. The lower tenets say one can find it and the Prasangika say one cannot. For that reason, the Prasangikas assert the unfindability of the imputed meaning at the time of analysis, and the lower tenets assert the find ability of the imputed meaning at the time of analysis.

For example, if the Mind-Only are asked where the person be found, they will say that the Mind-Basis-of-All is the person. This type of awareness, which acts as the basis for all the virtuous and non-virtuous karmic potentials, is the person. That is what we find as the person if we look for it.

The Prasangikas will posit as the person the 'mere I'. The Prasangikas will not assert any type of awareness as

an example for the 'I', but they do posit the 'mere I'. So where is the 'mere I'?

*It arises on the basis of the five aggregates.*

No. You have to posit the 'I'.

*The mere I?*

We have gone down to the lower tenets. I mean the 'I'. We all are 'I', so where is this 'I'.

*The whole body*

*In the mind*

So is it OK to say that consciousness is the 'I'?

*No, the 'I' arises in the mind.*

What I posit as the 'I', is the object in dependence upon which the thought 'I' arises. So when we think 'I am', the basis upon which this thought arises is the 'I'. This thought, 'I am' does not arise in dependence upon consciousness. It does not arise in dependence of having focussed on the consciousness, or on the physical form. This thought, 'I am' arises after having focussed on the 'I'. That is the final view of the Madhyamika Prasangikas!

We generate thoughts of 'my body' and 'my mind', but we do not think of the body or the mind as 'I'. The thought 'I am' arises only in relation to the 'I'.

This object, the basis on which this thought, 'I am' is directed, and the basis upon which it is generated, is the 'I'.

*So where is the 'I'?*

The 'I' is related to the body.

But where is it?

The various ways that the thought 'I am' can arise are in relation to the body, to the mind, to our name. For example if somebody asks us, 'Who are you?' then we say, 'I am such and such'. Or we hear our name and we think, 'That is who I am.'

Then we also have the thought 'I am' which is not related to any of those objects. We have a thought that thinks, 'I am', or grasps at 'I am', and which does not arise in relation to the name, or the body or the mind. This is the thought thinking, 'I am', which arises unrelated to those objects, and which goes from life to life. If the thought thinking, 'I am', always arose in relation to our name, our mind or our body, then when we die there would be no continuity of self. But the self still continues, because there is a thought thinking 'I am', which arises unrelated to those various objects. The object, which is the basis to which this thought 'I am' refers, is the 'I'.

We have these different ways in which the thought 'I am' can arise in relation to the name of this life, or the body and the mind. But unrelated to the name of this life, or the body and so forth, we also have this thought, 'I am', which wants happiness, wants to be free from suffering, is experiencing the various sufferings and so forth. One can use this also as a reasoning to prove past and future lives. If there was the thought 'I am' that arises only in relation to the basis of this life, that would posit certain difficulties when we are born. Where do all

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those other kinds of thoughts thinking, 'I am', which are unrelated to the basis of this life, come from?

That is the way one has to debate.

To conclude, we have a person, and we have a self, but we don't have the self of a person. We do not have a self of a person, because at the time of this tenet, the self of a person is the self that is self-supporting in terms of being substantially existent. The self that is self-supporting and a substantially existent at this time is the object of negation of selflessness. That is what we call the self of a person.

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**Note on authentication**

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