
Mind and Awareness

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Please try to generate a virtuous motivation, if possible the motivation of Bodhicitta. If that is not possible at least generate the motivation thinking that, 'I am going to listen to these teachings in order to clarify my ignorance'. In order to clarify our ignorance, we need to develop wisdom and understanding. In particular, to clarify the ignorance of true grasping, we need to identify exactly what true grasping is.

When listening to the teachings please develop either one of these two motivations.

2.2.1.1 Direct Valid Cogniser

Last week we talked about direct valid cognisers. The definition of *a direct valid cogniser is a newly incontrovertible knower, free from conception.*

The difference between direct valid cogniser and a direct perception, was that a direct valid cogniser has to be both new and incontrovertible, while a direct perception does not have to be new or incontrovertible, but it does have to be unmistakable.

We have already mentioned the four-fold division of direct valid cognisers, which are sense direct valid cognisers, mental direct valid cognisers, self-knowing direct cognisers, and yogic direct cognisers.

2.2.1.1c Self Knowing Valid Cogniser¹

The definition of *a self-knowing valid cogniser is a newly incontrovertible knower, which is single and focuses only inwards.* Focussing only inwards refers to the fact that self-knowers have only awareness as their object. They don't take other phenomena as their object. It is single, because it is not concomitant with a main-mind, and there is no main-mind concomitant with it. It is also, of course, free from conception and newly incontrovertible.

Of the various Buddhist tenets, the Vaibashikas and the Prasangikas don't assert self-knowers, whereas the Sautrantikas, the Cittamatrins and the Yogic Svatantrika-Madhyamikas do assert self-knowers.

2.2.1.1a Sense Direct Valid Cogniser

The definition of *a sense direct valid cogniser is a newly incontrovertible knower, free from conception, which is generated in dependence upon its uncommon condition of a physical sense power.* We talked last week about the physical sense power, and why it is uncommon. It is uncommon because out of the five sense consciousnesses it acts only as the empowering condition for the individual consciousness it is causing, and is not shared with the other sense consciousnesses. There is also the common empowering condition, which is a mental sense power. The mental sense power is shared as an empowering condition by all the sense direct valid cognisers.

A sense direct valid cogniser has a five-fold division into direct sense cogniser apprehending form, sound, smell, taste and tangibles.

The five objects of the five sense direct cognisers are also referred to as the five qualities of the desire realm. This is

because these five objects are the main objects of desire of the beings living within the desire realm.

Sense direct valid cognisers are incontrovertible knowers, which means that they realise their object. This means that they understand the object exactly in the way it exists. This is a very important point to understand. It is also important to know the difference between a sense direct valid cogniser apprehending form, sound, smell and so forth, (the qualities of the desire realm), and the desire which craves these objects of the desire realm. This is because the various delusions exaggerate the object. Instead of understanding the object as it is, they exaggerate the object, putting something there that is not actually there. Knowing this difference is very important.

2.2.1.1b Mental Direct Valid Cogniser

The definition of *a mental direct valid cogniser is a newly incontrovertible knower, free from conception, which is generated in dependence upon its uncommon empowering condition of a mental sense power.* A direct mental valid cogniser has a six-fold division, which we can understand in relation to the six sources.

The first five sources refer to the five objects (also belonging to the sense direct cogniser), of form, sound, smell, taste and tangibles, which are here referred to as the form source, sound source, smell source, taste source and tangible source.

- The definition of *form source is that which is to be held by the eye consciousness.*
- The definition of *sound source is that which is to be heard by the ear consciousness.*
- The definition of *smell source is that which is experienced by the nose consciousness.*
- The definition of *taste source is that which is experienced by the taste consciousness.*
- The definition of *tactile source is that which is experienced by the body consciousness.*

In addition to these five sources, we have what is called the dharma source, or phenomena source. So there is a six-fold division of direct mental cognisers, with regard to these six objects.

If we elaborate a little in relation to these six sources, we have twelve sources, six sources relating to the object, and six sources relating to the sense powers, (the five physical sense powers and the mental sense power). This can be elaborated further into what is called the eighteen spheres. These eighteen spheres can be divided into three families: the family of sense power, the family of the object, and the family of consciousness. So we have six sense powers, six kinds of objects and six types of consciousness, which constitute the eighteen spheres.

2.2.1.1d Yogic Direct Valid Cogniser

The definition of *a yogic direct valid cogniser is a newly incontrovertible other knower in the continuum of an Arya being, which is generated in dependence upon the empowering condition of the union of calm abiding and special insight, and realises subtle impermanence, coarse or subtle selflessness.*

The empowering condition of a yogic direct valid cogniser, the union of calm abiding and special insight, was explained last week.

Subtle impermanence refers to the momentary nature of compounded phenomena. Subtle impermanence is not a glass breaking or person dying. Rather, it refers to the non-abiding and momentary changing nature of phenomena.

¹ This section is a review of last week's teaching but in a different order. The numbering of last week has been retained for cross referencing.

This we can gradually understand by meditating on it, and then slowly, slowly, we can gain a more and more subtle understanding of subtle impermanence.

We have the idea that we are permanent - that we are the same person today that we were yesterday. Actually we are changing second by second, and moment by moment. A clock is very useful for the meditating on impermanence, because one hour has sixty minutes, and one minute has sixty seconds. Once the first second has passed, the hour has already finished. From that point of view a clock is very useful when meditating on impermanence. The clock is also very useful because we see how the second arm is going round and round, not standing still even for one moment. That is also how we are changing moment by moment.

Coarse impermanence is, for example, the breaking of a vase, or the breaking of the glass, whereas the momentary nature of the glass or the vase is subtle impermanence. The absence of a permanent, single independent self is coarse selflessness and the absence of a self-sufficient substantially existent person is the subtle selflessness of a person.

The text says that a yogic direct valid cogniser has to be a newly incontrovertible knower. Here 'newly' is used to eliminate subsequent cognisers from being considered as yogic direct valid cognisers. A yogic direct valid cogniser is not an awareness that has already been realised, but it is a new and fresh knower, and it exists in the continuum of an Arya being.

An Arya being is a person who has realised selflessness directly. Once one realises selflessness directly, one becomes an Arya being, and so one becomes the actual Sangha refuge. Out of the three refuge objects, the Sangha refuge refers to people who have realised selflessness directly.

Realising selflessness directly means realising selflessness without the medium of a meaning generality. If we realise an object directly without the medium of a meaning generality, that doesn't necessarily mean that we have realised it clearly. As we mentioned before, we can realise an object directly in two modes. An object can be realised directly implicitly, and an object can be realised directly explicitly, or directly clearly.

We can observe from our own experience that when we first meditate on a subject such as impermanence or selflessness, it will not appear very clearly to our mind. Then as our meditation progresses, we get a clearer mental image of the object of our meditation. If we continue to meditate, then through the force of familiarisation with the object of meditation, at some point we will realise the object 'in the raw', or directly.

This is the way one attains the omniscient mind of a buddha. Our consciousness has a quality of 'being suitable to be made familiar with the object of meditation'. If we engage with the object of meditation with effort, trying to make our mind familiar with it, there is no question that the mind will become familiar with the object of meditation, that we will generate realisations and an omniscient mind.

There is a three-fold division of yogic direct *valid* cogniser into yogic direct *valid* cogniser realising subtle impermanence, yogic direct *valid* cogniser realising course selflessness and a yogic direct *valid* cogniser realising subtle selflessness. In the definition of yogic direct *valid* cogniser it mentions 'other knower' rather than 'knower'. This is to show that there is no common base between a yogic direct *valid* cogniser and a self-knower. For example in the definition of valid cogniser, an other knower is not mentioned. This is because there is a common base between

a valid cogniser and a self-knower, and there is a common base between a direct perception and a self-knower. However in order to show that there is no common base between a yogic direct *valid* cogniser and a self-knower, 'other knower' is included in the definition. Yogic cognisers are always paths.

Here we complete the chapter on direct perception.

2.2.2 False Direct Perception

The definition of a *false direct perception* is a **knower mistaken with regards to its appearing object**. False direct perception and a mistaken awareness are synonymous. False direct perception has a two-fold division into conceptual and non-conceptual. There are six conceptual false direct perceptions, and one non-conceptual false direct perception.

2.2.2.1 Conceptual False Direct Conception

1. The first conceptual false direct perception is a **mistaken conception**. An example would be grasping at permanent sound.

2. The second is **conventional conception**. An example is an inferential cogniser realising impermanent sound.

3. The **conception apprehending the reason**. This refers to the substantial cause of an inferential cogniser. It is a conception remembering simultaneously the three modes of the perfect reason, which is the base for the generation of the inferential cogniser. A conception remembering simultaneously the three modes, is the definition of the conception apprehending the reason. This conception exists just before the inferential cogniser is generated, and is the substantial cause for the inferential cogniser.

4. The **conception induced through the inferential cogniser**. An example is the second moment of the inferential cogniser understanding impermanent sound. The subsequent cogniser comes after the inferential cogniser.

5. The fifth is **memory**, which are conceptions remembering that which has been previously realised.

6. The sixth one is the **conceptual mind looking towards the future**, thinking that, 'In the future I am going to do this or that'. For example thinking that in the future I want to get one hundred million dollars. Whether we will get it or not, from time to time everybody thinks how nice it would be to have that much money.

We have two kinds of thoughts, one remembering what happened in the past, and the other thinking about and making different kinds of plans for the future. It is very important to understand the psychological impact of those concepts on our mind and our life. For example, maybe something bad happened in the past. Even though it is completely finished and just a mere reflection appearing in our mind, when we remember it, the past gives us suffering, worry and so forth.

It is the same with regard to the future. We worry very much about the future and, for example, how much longer are we going to live. Then, if we can expect to live for so many years, will our money going to last for all of those years? Actually we don't know how many more years we are going to live.

In this way, we create needless mental suffering for ourselves by remembering useless things from the past, or thinking in that way about the future.

It is very important to understand the impact of our conceptual thinking on our life. There is a certain kind of

person who is very direct. If they want to achieve something they will just go straight ahead and do it. Another person won't engage in any actions to achieve what they want, but they will spend lots of time worrying about it. Through spending most of their time worrying, they create lots of unhappiness for themselves.

If we have enough merit then there is no need to worry about our livelihood. Somebody who has enough merit will always have enough on which to live. Then there is no need to worry. Without enough merit then in the morning you might have lots of money and be very happy, and in the evening you might end up as a beggar with many, many debts. If people have enough merit they don't worry too much about the future, and they can live comfortably from day to day with enough to sustain them.

If on the other hand we constantly worry and think about the things that make our mind unhappy, then it causes mental unhappiness, and that is not what we need. Everybody needs a happy mind. It is better, therefore, to remain in a healthy and happy mental state. If we worry too much, thinking about things that make our mind unhappy, then we may not see the good things that are right in front of us.

Some people are worriers, and regardless of their situation they will always worry. They will worry whether or not they have money; if they have lots of money they will worry; if they have a nice family they will worry; if they have a good car they will worry. So they worry all the time. That comes about through having established a mental pattern, and it causes them a lot of additional suffering.

Habitual worriers start to think of their mental suffering as *my* suffering. They even argue, 'It's not *your* suffering, it's *my* suffering', with their friends. They say 'It is such a strong habit in my mind. I am completely overwhelmed by it, and I cannot free myself from these strong mental patterns'. In this way they put themselves in the losing role. They have already decided that they cannot free themselves from their mental patterns, and that those mental patterns are stronger than they are. Then they start to think of them as 'my problems' and then it becomes very difficult to change their mind.

There was a geshe who came from Tibet with some of his students, one of whom was also a geshe. When they were walking the geshe started to worry about how they would find food and so forth. Then one of his students said to him, 'Look you don't have to worry about food and so forth. We are walking towards a certain country, and whatever they eat there, we will have for food. We will definitely get there, and then once we are there, there will be food. So there is no need to worry.' Then this geshe said, 'Today I received a very good teaching from my companion.'

2.2.2.2 Non-Conceptual False Direct Perception

False direct perception has a two-fold division into sense false direct perception and mental false direct perception.

The definition has been mentioned above.

False sense direct perception has various divisions depending upon how the fault comes about.

1. First of all the fault can lie within the **base of the sense power**. If there is a certain fault within the eye, then through that fault a person can have double vision; instead of seeing one moon, they see two moons. Sometimes we can't see the letters very clearly when we read, because of a fault in our sense power.

2. In another instance, the fault comes about through

conditions in the place. For example when we are travelling in a boat, even though the banks of the river, and the people and the trees are stationary, it can appear to us as if they are moving, and we are standing still. This kind of mistaken appearance comes about because of place.

3. In the third instance, the fault comes about through the **object**. For example if we have a firebrand which we are whirling around very fast, then it appears to the eye consciousness as if there is actually a wheel of fire. This comes through the object, and there is no fault within the eye sense power.

4. In another instance the fault lies within the **immediately preceding condition** of the eye consciousness. For example it is said that to somebody who is under the very strong influence of anger, the environment etc. appears as red! We can see that such a person is already very red in the face.

This ends the chapter of false direct perception and we go to the next point, direct inferential cognisers.

2.2.3 Inferential Valid Cognisers

The definition of *a inferential valid cogniser is a newly incontrovertible, other knower, generated directly in dependence upon its base, which is a valid reason*. As we can see in the definition, inferential valid cognisers are generated through inference, by depending upon valid reasons. For example, by depending upon the sign of smoke on a smoky mountain path, one can infer that there has to be fire on the smoky mountain path. In addition, the inferential *valid* cogniser understanding impermanent sound can be generated upon the reason of sound being produced. From being produced we can infer that it has to be impermanent. In the definition it says that the inferential valid cogniser has to be generated directly from the reason. Inferential valid cognisers have no common base with self knowers as indicated by other knower in the definition.

Inferential valid cogniser has a three-fold division into inferential cogniser through fact, renown and faith.

2.2.3.1 Inferential Valid Cogniser Through Fact

An example for the inferential valid cogniser through fact would be the inferential valid cogniser understanding impermanent sound through the reason of product. These phenomena such as impermanence, selflessness and so forth can be understood through the reason of fact.

2.2.3.2 Inferential Valid Cogniser Through Renown

An example for the inferential valid cogniser through renown would be the inferential valid cogniser realising that a moon is suitable to be called a rabbit possessor, or the home of a rabbit, by depending upon the reason that it is an object of conceptual thought. One of the many Tibetan names for moon is the word that is translated as rabbit possessor. In the English language we also have various names for various objects. One of the Tibetan names for moon is translated as rabbit possessor, because one can see the shape of a rabbit in the moon. An inferential valid cogniser through renown, is always an inferential valid cogniser by fact.

2.2.3.3 Inferential Valid Cogniser Through Faith

An example for the third inferential *valid* cogniser, inferential *valid* cogniser through faith, is the inferential cogniser realising that the quotation, 'From generosity comes wealth, and from morality a higher rebirth', is incontrovertible with regard to its meaning. This is obtained in dependence upon the reason of being a quotation free from the three contradictions. By understanding that this quotation, which states that, 'From generosity comes wealth

and from morality a higher rebirth', is free from the three contradictions, then one can realise that the meaning expressed in that quotation is incontrovertible or true. One will realise that indeed from generosity comes wealth, and from morality a higher rebirth.

Phenomena such as impermanence or selflessness can be understood by depending upon factual reasons. For example, we can understand that something is impermanent by applying the reason of it being a product, or by applying the reason of it being momentary. We can understand something as being empty of true existence by applying the reason that it is neither a truly existent 'one', nor a truly existent 'many'.

However if we try to understand that from generosity comes wealth and from morality a higher rebirth there is not really a factual reason we can give. This is because the meaning expressed here, the cause and effect karmic relationship between generosity and wealth, is a very hidden phenomena that we have to understand in dependence upon scripture that is free from the three contradictions. Depending upon this reason of the scripture being free of the three contradictions we can understand that the scripture is incontrovertible with regard to what it expresses. Maybe we will go into this in more detail next time.

Briefly, with regard to the quotation being free from the three contradictions, if something is expressed in the scriptures then it has to fall into one of the three categories of objects of knowledge. It will be a manifest object of knowledge, a slightly hidden object of knowledge, or a very hidden object of knowledge.

Whether or not those three objects of knowledge expressed in the scripture are true is determined by the three kinds of valid cognisers – direct valid cogniser, inferential valid cogniser by fact and inferential valid cogniser through belief. For example, if the manifest phenomena expressed in a certain statement is wrong, as in, 'It is said that a certain flower is blue', but it says somewhere that this flower is actually not blue and has a different colour, then this will be contradicted by our direct valid cogniser. This direct valid cogniser can see very clearly that the flower is not that colour.

In the same way if a scripture states that sound is permanent (and maybe there are some that do), then this can be contradicted by an inferential valid cogniser. If it says somewhere that from generosity no wealth will come then that can be contradicted too.

Whether or not there is a discrepancy between reality and what is stated in the scripture, has to be analysed with these three kinds of valid cognisers. In the same way, when we buy gold we will first test the gold through rubbing, cutting and burning. Only after we have assured ourselves that it is really gold, will we buy it. In the same way we have to analyse a scripture using those three kinds of valid cognisers. Once the scripture has passed the test then it is categorised as being free from the three contradictions. Next time we will go onto that in more detail.

We said that scripture is free from the three contradictions, not being contradicted by the three kinds of valid cognisers. The Buddha said that, 'One should analyse my teachings with the help of direct valid cognisers, inferential valid cognisers through fact, and inferential valid cognisers through belief. The manifest phenomena, expressed in my teachings, can be analysed with a direct valid cogniser.' That is the easiest one, because with our direct perception

we can immediately see whether something expressed in a scripture is contradicted by reality or not. For example if somebody says that this tablecloth is not yellow then immediately we will see that the statement is incorrect. That would correspond to burning gold before buying it, because it is explained that when we burn gold the coarse impurities are very obvious.

Then one has to analyse the slightly hidden phenomena expressed in the scriptures with the help of inferential cognisers through fact. This would correspond to cutting the gold, through which one can find more subtle impurities.

Finally, one has to analyse the very hidden phenomena expressed in the scriptures with inferential cognisers through belief. This corresponds to testing the gold through rubbing, through which one can understand the subtlest impurities within the gold. The Buddha explained that only after one has found his teachings to be free from the three contradictions, with the help of the three inferential cognisers, should one accept the teachings. 'You shouldn't just accept the teachings because I am the Buddha,' he said.

The verse from the Sutras says, 'If you analyse my teachings in the same way you analyse gold before buying it, and accept my teachings only after that analysis, in the same way you would buy gold only after you are convinced of its purity, that is something which will make me very happy'.

Only after we have convinced ourselves through the three tests that the material is really the precious substance called gold, will we buy it. In the same way, only after we have found out that the dharma is really a precious teaching, which it is said to be through the three kinds of analysis, do we accept it.

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Note on authentication

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