

---

# *Mind and Awareness*

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

31 August 2001

---

Please generate a virtuous motivation thinking, 'I have to eliminate my ignorance for the benefit of all sentient beings, and for this purpose I have to generate the antidote, which is wisdom.'

### **2.2.3. Inferential Valid Cognisers (cont)**

#### **2.2.3.3. Inferential Valid Cognisers Through Faith**

Last week we started [discussing] inferential valid cognisers, which have a three-fold division into inferential valid cognisers through the force of fact, renown and belief.

We said that the sign of an inferential valid cogniser through belief is a quotation free from the three contradictions. The quote stating, 'From generosity comes wealth, and from morality a higher rebirth', is incontrovertible with regard to its meaning, because it is a quote which is free from the three contradictions.

'From generosity comes wealth, and from morality a higher rebirth', is a quote free from the three contradictions. Because it is a quote free from the three contradictions, it is incontrovertible with regard to its meaning, which means that what it expresses is true. There is no discrepancy between what is expressed in that quote, and reality. The object being established by this reason, is a very hidden phenomena, and because it is a very hidden phenomena, it has to be established in dependence upon a quotation [from the teachings].

The inferential cogniser understanding that sound is impermanent realises impermanent sound, which is a hidden phenomena. A hidden phenomena can be understood in dependence upon various kinds of reasons. These include saying that, 'Sound is impermanent because it is a product', or other kinds of reasons which are accessible. Of course, sometimes people can hear a sound and sometimes not, but generally the facts are easily accessible and can be proven through various reasons. However, when we try to prove, 'From generosity comes wealth', one doesn't have many avenues of reason. The only thing one can say is, 'It is so because it is stated like that in the teachings of the Buddha'.

There are various reasons we can employ to understand that sound is impermanent. For example, if we go to a football game, it is very obvious that at certain times everybody cheers, and at other times it is quieter. So it is very obvious that sound is impermanent. Also when the people who cheered a lot at the football game come home, they have lost their voice. So we can see [for ourselves] that sound is impermanent.

When we try to understand very hidden phenomena such as the cause and effect relationship between generosity and wealth, then we have to depend upon a quotation of the teachings. The way one understands this quotation to be free from the three contradictions, and [therefore] incontrovertible, is by first understanding the hidden phenomena that are expressed in the teachings of the Buddha, such as impermanence, selflessness, liberation and so forth. Having understood those profound subjects, one will understand that the very hidden phenomena expressed in the teachings of the Buddha are also incontrovertible. This is stated in a quote by Dharmakirti, 'At first one realises the main teaching, (where 'main' refers to impermanence, selflessness and so forth), and from that one generates faith in the very hidden aspects of the Buddha's teachings.'

Impermanence and selflessness can be realised through

reasoning. By depending upon valid reasoning we can establish those phenomena such as impermanence and selflessness, and in this way realise them with valid cognition.

For a practitioner of sharp faculty it will be necessary, even when going for refuge, to establish the objects of refuge through establishing such phenomena as impermanence and selflessness. By depending upon such reasons as, 'Compounded phenomena are impermanent because they are generated through causes and conditions', or 'A person is empty of a self because it is empty of a single self, or many selves', the practitioner can understand that compounded phenomena are impermanent, and that a person is empty of a self.

Having established these two phenomena, the practitioner then understands that the grasping at compounded phenomena as permanent, and the grasping at the self of a person, are wrong minds, and mistaken with regard to their apprehended object. Once one has generated this understanding of selflessness, one understands that grasping the self of a person is a wrong mind, and can be purified from the mental continuum. Then one understands that liberation and enlightenment are possible.

After establishing that liberation is possible, by understanding that grasping at the self of a person is a wrong mind, one understands that if one purifies ones mind of the karmic imprints of self-grasping and completes the accumulation of merit, it is possible to also attain enlightenment.

First one establishes the delusions, particularly self-grasping, as suitable to be removed from the mind, and through this establishes that liberation is possible. Then one takes it a step further, and establishes that one can purify the mind from the karmic imprints of self-grasping, and by completing the accumulation of merit one can attain complete enlightenment.

We can establish impermanence, selflessness, liberation and enlightenment through reasoning. As just explained, through reasoning we can prove impermanence and selflessness, and through this we can prove liberation, and through this we can prove enlightenment. All these phenomena can be proved through reasoning.

Without relying on scripture, one can purify the karmic imprints from the mind, one can complete the accumulation of merits and so forth. Having done this, one has established what is referred to as the root meaning in the quotation of Dharmakirti, where it says, 'Having established the root meaning, then one will generate faith'. Then one has established the teachings of the Buddha as incontrovertible.

After establishing impermanence, selflessness, liberation and then enlightenment we have established that the teachings of the Buddha, which teach these phenomena, are incontrovertible. Once we have established these teachings as incontrovertible, then automatically the teachings of the Buddha that express what is called highest status (meaning higher rebirth within cyclic existence and such phenomena as 'from generosity comes wealth' and so forth), will also be established in the mind as incontrovertible. Once one has established the teachings expressing higher status as incontrovertible, one establishes the Buddha as a 'valid being'. This is the sequence.

Because the Buddha taught after having realised those teachings [for himself], he expresses them incontrovertibly. So we realise that what the Buddha taught is incontrovertible, and from that one understands that the Buddha is a valid being.

The Buddha is a valid being. There is also valid speech and valid consciousness. Valid speech is the teaching on the Four Noble Truths, and a valid consciousness we know already. A valid cogniser has a two-fold division into direct valid cognisers and inferential valid cognisers. This comes about through the two-fold division of objects of comprehension into manifest objects of comprehension, and hidden objects of comprehension.

---

---

Because objects of comprehension have a two-fold division, we only need two valid cognisers. Direct valid cognisers understand manifest objects of comprehension. The meaning of manifest objects of comprehension is an object that can be realised without first depending upon inference or reasoning. If we initially need to depend upon reason in order to understand an object, the object is a hidden object. Since objects of comprehension have a two-fold division, the minds that understand objects of comprehension also need just a two-fold division into direct valid cognisers and inferential valid cognisers. Having only one valid cogniser would not be sufficient, and having three or four would be too many.

For example, blue is a manifest object. We don't need to depend upon reasoning to realise blue. We can understand blue by merely looking at blue. However we need to depend upon reasoning when we first try to understand impermanence of blue. We will not be able to understand impermanence of blue merely by looking at blue. We need to infer that blue is impermanent, by depending upon perfect reason. That completes valid cognisers and then we go on to awarenesses that aren't valid cognisers.

### 3. Awarenesses which are Non-Prime Cognisers

The definition of *an awareness that is not a valid cogniser is a knower that is not newly incontrovertible.*

Awarenesses that are not valid cognisers have a five-fold division into subsequent cognisers, correct assumptions, a mind to which the object appears but is not ascertained, doubt and wrong consciousness. To these we add the two-fold division of valid cognisers and then we have the seven-fold division of awareness.

#### 3.1. Subsequent Cognisers

The definition of *a subsequent cogniser is a knower which realises the realised.* 'Realising the realised' means that a subsequent cogniser realises that which has already been realised by the preceding valid cogniser. The meaning is not that the subsequent cogniser merely understands what a preceding mind has understood. Rather the meaning one has to understand is that a subsequent cogniser is induced through the realisation of the preceding valid cogniser.

There are other minds, like the various subsequent moments of omniscient mind, that of course understand what has been understood by the preceding moment of omniscient mind. However they are not induced through the force of that preceding moment of omniscient mind. With omniscient mind we have to understand that each moment of omniscient mind is a valid cogniser. Each valid cogniser is followed by another valid cogniser, and so forth. The realisation of each following omniscient mind is not induced through the realisation of the preceding moment of omniscient mind.

Subsequent cognisers have a three-fold division into non-conceptual subsequent cogniser, conceptual subsequent cogniser and subsequent cognisers that are neither.

##### 3.1.1. Non-Conceptual Subsequent Cogniser

Examples for non-conceptual valid cognisers are the second moments of the various direct perceptions such as sense direct perception, mental direct perception, self-knower and yogic direct perception.

1. An example for **a non-conceptual subsequent cogniser that is a sense direct perception** is the second moment of the eye consciousness apprehending blue. The first moment of the eye consciousness apprehending blue is a sense valid cogniser, and the second moment is a sense valid subsequent cogniser.
2. An example for **a non-conceptual subsequent cogniser that is a mental direct perception** is the second moment of the clairvoyance knowing the consciousness of others.
3. An example for **a non-conceptual subsequent cogniser that is**

**a self-knower** is all the various self-knowers experiencing the various other direct perceptions and consciousnesses, such as the self-knowers which are experiencing sense direct perception, mental direct perception and so forth. The second moments of each of those self-knowers which are experiencing sense direct perception, mental direct perception and so forth are subsequent cognisers.

4. An example for **a non-conceptual subsequent cogniser that is a yogic direct perception** is the second moment of the path of seeing. The first moment of the path of seeing is a yogic direct valid cogniser and the second moment is a yogic direct subsequent cogniser.

5. We also have an example of a non-conceptual subsequent cogniser, which is none of those four divisions, which is the second moment of direct perception. The second moment of direct perception is also a non-conceptual subsequent cogniser but it is not a sense direct subsequent cogniser, nor a mental direct subsequent cogniser, nor a self-knowing subsequent cogniser, nor a yogic subsequent cogniser.

Here we have the first two moments of the path of seeing. The first moment of the path of seeing is referred to as the uninterrupted path of seeing. The second moment is referred to as the liberated path of seeing. The uninterrupted path of seeing is the direct antidote to the abandonments of the path of seeing. From the second moment, when one reaches the liberated path of seeing, one has attained the abandonment of the objects of abandonment of the path of seeing. One has generated the truth of cessation within one's mind. When we reach the liberated path of seeing we attain the truth of cessation, which has abandoned the objects of abandonment of the path of seeing.

The sequence is, first one attains the uninterrupted path of seeing. The uninterrupted path of seeing is the direct antidote, which purifies the mind from the abandonments of the path of seeing. Once that purification has happened, and those obscurations have been purified from the mind, at the second moment one reaches what is called the liberated path of seeing. At that moment one is liberated from the objects of abandonment of the path of seeing. When one is liberated from the objects of abandonment of the path, one has attained the truth of cessation, which has abandoned the objects of abandonment of the path of seeing.

##### 3.1.2. Conceptual Subsequent Cogniser

*A conceptual subsequent cogniser is the second moment of the inferential cogniser.*

What do you posit as a non-conceptual subsequent cogniser?

*The second moment of a sense perception, apprehending blue.*

With regard to conceptual subsequent cognisers we have a two-fold division into conceptual subsequent cognisers which were induced by direct perception, and conceptual subsequent cognisers which were induced by another inferential cogniser.

##### 3.1.2.1. Conceptual Subsequent Cogniser Induced By Direct Perception

So what do you posit as conceptual subsequent cognisers which were induced by direct perception? That was the question.

*The second moment of the direct perception seeing blue. The subsequent cognition is induced by that first moment seeing blue.*

I am asking about a conceptual subsequent cogniser?

*The memory of a direct perception, seeing blue.*

That is OK. If you posit the memory remembering blue induced by the sense direct perception apprehending blue, that is correct.

The sequence is, first we have the sense direct perception apprehending blue, then we have one instant of a mental direct perception apprehending blue, and then we have the memory remembering blue – the conceptual thought remembering blue.

The conceptual understanding ascertaining blue, induced by the sense direct perception apprehending blue, is an example for the first [type of conceptual subsequent cogniser].

### 3.1.2.2. Conceptual Subsequent Cogniser Induced By An Inferential Valid Cogniser

The second moment of the inferential cogniser realising impermanent sound is an example for a conceptual subsequent cogniser induced by an inferential valid cogniser.

### 3.2. Correct Assumption

The second awareness that is not a valid cogniser is correct assumption. The definition of a *correct assumption* is a *determinative knower, controvertible with regards to its object and concordant with reality*. This means that the apprehended object exists, and so it is a determinative knower, concordant with reality. However it doesn't realise that object, and therefore it is controvertible.

We have various divisions.

#### 3.2.1. Correct Assumption Without Reason

First is correct assumption without reason. An example for correct assumption without reason is the correct assumption grasping or apprehending impermanent sound, in dependence upon hearing the words 'sound is impermanent'. There is no reason involved. Merely by hearing somebody saying sound is impermanent one generates the conviction, 'Oh yes', Sound is impermanent'. This conviction is correct and concordant with reality, but it didn't come about through any kind of reason. This correct assumption is called a correct assumption without reason, because the words in dependence upon which it is generated do not express any kind of reason proving that sound is impermanent. The words express only the thesis of the proof statement, which is 'Sound is impermanent'. In dependence upon those words the belief that sound is impermanent is generated. Those words don't express any kind of reason, so the assumption is called a correct assumption without reason.

#### 3.2.2. Correct Assumption Contrary to Reason

Next is correct assumption contrary to reason. If we generate the belief that sound is impermanent upon hearing the proof statement that 'Sound is impermanent, because it is empty of being able to perform a function', that belief would be called a correct assumption contrary to reason, because the reason posited is a contrary reason. The reason, 'it is empty of being able to perform a function', is mutually exclusive with impermanence, so it is completely contrary to impermanence, and therefore the correct assumption which is generated in dependence upon that reason is called correct assumption contrary to reason.

#### 3.2.3. Correct Assumption with Inconclusive Reason

The third correct assumption is correct assumption depending upon inconclusive reason. An example is generating the correct assumption that sound is impermanent, in dependence upon the reason of sound being an object of comprehension.

Why is an object of comprehension an inconclusive reason for proving that sound is impermanent?

*Because there is no pervasion that all objects of knowledge are necessarily impermanent.*

Show.

*Space.*

Why is space an object of comprehension?

*Because it is known by a valid cogniser.*

So that finishes inconclusive reason. That [debate] went very well.

#### 3.2.4. Correct Assumption With Non-Established Reason

The fourth correct assumption is correct assumption with non-established reason. The example is the correct assumption that

sound is impermanent, generated in dependence upon the reason of sound being that which is held by eye consciousness. This correct assumption that sound is impermanent, generated in dependence upon the reason of sound being that which is held by eye consciousness, is called the correct assumption with non-established reason.

Why is the reason not established?

*Because generally for a normal person, sound is an object of the ear consciousness.*

If by hearing sound we could also see sound, then you could make a case, but since it is not like that...

Doesn't the eye consciousness of a Buddha see sound?

*I said for a normal person.*

Isn't sound that which is held by eye consciousness, because it is held by the Buddha's eye consciousness?

The answer is that there is no pervasion. If you said, 'Take sound, it is that which is held by eye consciousness, because it is held by an eye consciousness of a Buddha', then you would say there is no pervasion. Then again we can ask, isn't sound held by the eye consciousness of a snake? Snakes don't have ears. Some people say snakes have holes where the ear would be, but they don't actually have ears. Again one would have to say that there is no pervasion. Just because sound is held by the eye consciousness of a snake it doesn't become that which is held by eye consciousness.

#### 3.2.5. Correct Assumption With Reason which is Not Understood

The fifth of the correct assumptions is the correct assumption which has a reason, but the reason is not understood. The correct assumption is that sound is impermanent, which is generated in dependence upon the valid reason of sound being a product. However the person doesn't understand that sound is a product, or doesn't understand the pervasion that if it is a product, it has to be impermanent.

There is a reason, but the reason is not understood. This means that in dependence upon hearing that sound is impermanent, one generates the correct assumption that sound is impermanent, without having understood how being produced can prove that something is impermanent. So we accept that proof statement, 'sound is impermanent because it is produced', but we don't really understand the pervasion that if something is produced then it has to be impermanent. If that is the case, then the correct assumption is a correct assumption where there is a reason, but the reason is not understood.

© Tara Institute

#### Note on authentication

Transcribed from the tape by Sharon Holley

Edit 1: Adair Bunnett

Edit 2: Ven Tenzin Dongak

Edit 3: Alan B Molloy

Check & edit: Ven Tenzin Dongak