

Discussion

Block: 5 Week: 5 (7 September 2010)

1. Why is it important to become familiar with the meditation on death and impermanence? What are the main points to incorporate in that meditation?
2. Is a thing like a cup truly one and/or truly many? Give reasons.
3. It is said that emptiness is an ultimate truth. Does it mean that emptiness exists ultimately or inherently? Explain.
4. When the non-Buddhists asked the Buddha if the world has an end, the Buddha remained silent.
 - a) Why did the Buddha not answer them? Did Buddha not know, or if he knew, why did he not teach the non-Buddhists so that they could know?
 - b) On a personal level, what implications can we take from this when we try to explain Buddhism to others, and how does it relate to love and compassion?
5. The Heart Sutra says, 'Form is empty and emptiness is form.' What is the essential meaning?
6. Explain what is meant by the selflessness of person and the selflessness of other phenomena for the following two Buddhist Schools. Comment on their views of subtleness or grossness of the selflessnesses mentioned.
 - a) The Svatantrika School
 - b) The Prasangika School
7. Buddhists say that the self of person does not exist. Why do you think do the teachings advise that we should imagine how such a self of person would exist if it did?
8. Explain what the term 'selflessness' means and what it does not mean.
9. Explain what contaminated aggregates are and what they have to do with samsara.
10. From a Buddhist perspective, is it wrong to want or need something? Give reasons for your answer