

6. All About Karma

Assessment questions

1. Why is understanding Karma so important?
2. What is a complete karmic action, and which aspect do you think is the most important?
3. What is the difference between throwing and completing karma? Give one example each.
4. Generally, what are the four results of non-virtuous karma? Give one example each of non-virtuous actions of the body, speech and mind, and their specific results.
5. What is the most important aspect in the nature of virtuous actions?
6. Purification: what are the Four Remedies, and which one do you think is the most important?

ALL ABOUT KARMA

Suggested Public Exam Questions

1. What is “karma”? [Answer: The word karma means “action” and refers to the law of cause and effect – that every action of body, speech, and mind produces a result]
2. What are the four basic principles of karma? [Answer: Karma is definite – like produces like; karma is expanding – a small action produces a great result; you can’t experience the result without having created the cause; karma is never lost]
3. Explain the analogy of a seed and its fruit and how it relates to the four principles of karma mentioned before.
4. What kinds of results can come about through a single karmic action?
[Answer: Fully ripened result - rebirth; result experienced that is similar to the cause - experiencing that kind of action done to oneself over and over again; result similar to the cause – habit to engage in this action again; environmental result]
5. Name three of the ten non-virtuous actions that relate to the body.
6. Name four of the ten non-virtuous actions that relate to speech.
7. Name three of the ten non-virtuous actions that relate to mind.
8. Name one of the ten non-virtuous actions and describe some of the results one might experience as a result of having engaged in such an action. [Answer: e.g. stealing – rebirth in one of the lower realms, when human resources are scarce, one has the habit to steal, the environment suffers from lack of material and environmental resources such as food and water]
9. Name one of the ten virtuous actions and describe some of the results one might experience as a result of having engaged in such an action. [Answer: e.g. protecting life – rebirth in one of the upper realms, when human one has a long and healthy life, one has the habit of protecting life, the environment is supportive of sustaining a healthy life like having good water, food, air, etc., medicines are effective, etc.]
10. What are some factors that make a particular karmic action heavier in terms of its result? [Answer: heavy by nature (e.g. killing is heavier than gossip), motivation, basis (object in relation to which the action is done such as gurus,

parents, etc.), the action itself (how it was done), repetition, completion (rejoicing, regret, neutral state of mind about the action)]

11. What is the predominant factor that determines the weight and type of action, i.e. positive or negative, done? [Answer: Motivation]
12. Give an example of an extremely negative karma based on the factors mentioned earlier that make a karmic action particularly heavy. [Answer: e.g. killing a number of Sangha members sadistically with an extremely angry mind and then being happy about it]
13. Give an example of an extremely positive karma based on the factors mentioned earlier that make a karmic action particularly heavy. [Answer: e.g. Saving the life of one's guru with a strong bodhichitta motivation and then being extremely happy about it.]
14. Can karma be purified? How? [Answer: Yes. Through the Four Opponent Powers: basis (refuge/bodhichitta), regret, remedy, resolve]
15. Give some examples of things a person can do to purify negative karma. [Answer: Vajrasattva, recite holy texts, study emptiness, make holy objects, print scriptures, prostrations, etc.]
16. What is the easiest way to create positive karma? [Answer: Rejoice in the virtue of oneself and others.]
17. What is the biggest destroyer of positive karma? [Answer: Anger]
18. If someone does not believe in karma, are they still under its power? [Answer: yes!]
19. What is the best way to assure quick realizations on the path to enlightenment? [Answer: purify negative karma and accumulate merit]

Homestudy Exam

Name: _____

HOW KARMA WORKS

1. What does 'karma' mean in English? Properly speaking, does it refer to the cause or effect?
2. What is the difference between the action of intention and the intended action?
3. What is a substantial cause? Give an example.
4. What is a co-active or cooperative cause? Give an example.
5. What are the three types of effect? Give examples.
6. What are the four characteristics of karma?
7. Explain the first characteristic of karma.
8. Explain the second characteristic of karma.
9. How should an understanding of karma's increasing nature impact on our behavior?
10. If performed actions do not go to waste, how are negative karmic seeds destroyed?
11. If performed actions do not go to waste, how are positive karmic seeds destroyed?
12. How can we prevent positive seeds being exhausted?
13. How can we prevent positive seeds from being destroyed by anger?
14. What is a karmic seed and how is it stored in mind?