

# The Wisdom of Emptiness

## 2023 - Class 1



*Ceci n'est pas une pipe.*

A 9 week **DISCOVERING BUDDHISM** course with registered FPMT teacher, Eddie Peet


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# Refuge & Bodhichitta

I go for refuge until I am enlightened

To the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly

By the merits I create through listening to the Dharma, May I become a buddha to benefit all sentient beings.



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# Four Immeasurables

May all sentient beings have happiness and the causes of happiness.

May all sentient beings be free from suffering and the causes of suffering.

May all sentient beings never be separated from the happiness that is free from suffering.

May all sentient beings abide in equanimity, free from attachment for friends and hatred for enemies.



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# Seven Limb Prayer

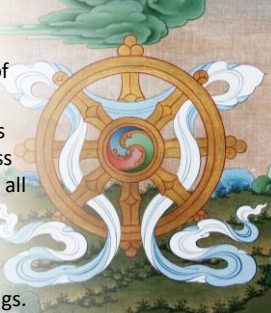
Reverently I prostrate with my body, speech, and mind;

I present clouds of every type of offering, actual and imagined;

I declare all my negative actions accumulated since beginningless time and rejoice in the merit of all holy and ordinary beings.

Please, remain until the end of cyclic existence, and turn the wheel of Dharma for living beings.

I dedicate my own and other's merits to the great enlightenment.



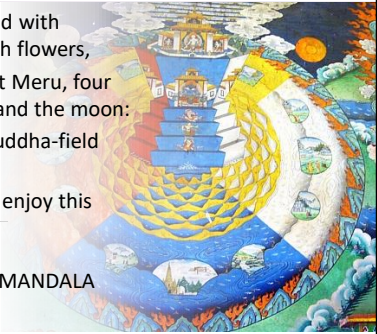
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# Mandala Offering

This ground, anointed with perfume, strewn with flowers, Adorned with Mount Meru, four continents, the sun and the moon: I imagine this as a buddha-field and offer it.

May all living beings enjoy this pure land!

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALA  
KAM NIRYATA YAMI



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# The Course Outline

9 weeks in total

- 8 teachings
- Afflictions to Perfections
- Review class

Topics include

- Realizing emptiness
- Belief systems
- How ignorance manifests
- Meditations on emptiness



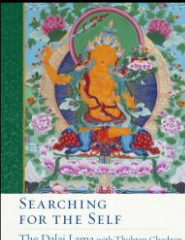
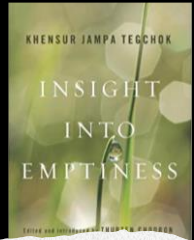
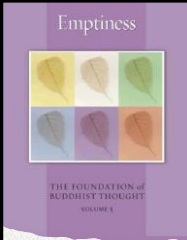
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Today's Outcomes

- What is *not* emptiness? What is it?
- Benefits of realisation
- Relating emptiness to Nirvana and Buddhahood
- Famous teachers in our lineage

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Suggested Reading

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Emptiness is Not

- Nothing
- Nihilistic
- Depressing



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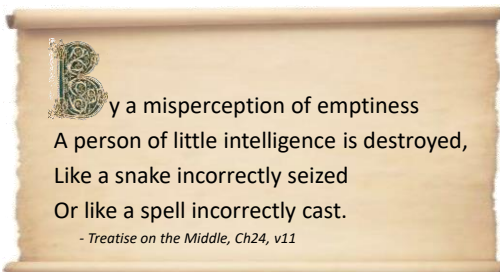
Emptiness is Not a

- Separate realm
- Holy
- Empty of other
- Doctrinal belief



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Nagarjuna said ...



By a misperception of emptiness  
A person of little intelligence is destroyed,  
Like a snake incorrectly seized  
Or like a spell incorrectly cast.  
*- Treatise on the Middle, Ch24, v11*

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What is Emptiness?

The Ultimate Truth

A non-affirming negation

The final mode of existence

A quality of all existents


Reality

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### The Two Truths


**CONVENTIONAL TRUTH**

A fact about a phenomenon that conceals a deeper fact about the same phenomenon.



**ULTIMATE TRUTH**

A fact about a phenomenon that is concealed by a more superficial fact about the same phenomenon.



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### Emptiness – the Ultimate Truth

**Object**

- Because it is findable by a wisdom in meditative equipoise

**Ultimate**


- Because it is the object’s real mode of existence

**Truth**

- Because there is concordance between its appearance and its mode of existence

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### A Non-affirming Negation



If you were in the middle of the room the whole time, why can we not find a single witness to corroborate your testimony?

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### Three Major Aspects of Emptiness

**Meaning**

- While all phenomena lack inherent existence, they exist dependently

**Nature**

- The mere negation of grasping inherent existence

**Purpose of Learning**

- To eliminate that grasping of inherent existence

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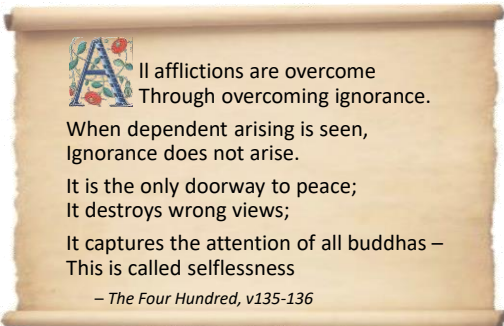
### The Benefits of Realisation

- Refuge
- Personal freedom
- Buddhahood



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### Aryadeva said ...



All afflictions are overcome  
Through overcoming ignorance.  
When dependent arising is seen,  
Ignorance does not arise.  
It is the only doorway to peace;  
It destroys wrong views;  
It captures the attention of all buddhas –  
This is called selflessness


– The Four Hundred, v135-136

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### Emptiness Liberation Enlightenment

The single gateway to freedom




A comic panel featuring Batman. He is talking to a person whose back is to the viewer. Batman says, "There is no T! Keep meditating!" The person replies, "I did it! I'm enlightened!"

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### The Greatest Teachers

**Buddha Shakyamuni (500 BC)**  
Taught the **Three Turnings of the Wheel**






**Nagarjuna (150 – 250 AD)**  
Charioteer of the **Middle Way**

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### The Teachers – Two Brothers

**Vasubandhu (4<sup>th</sup> Century)**  
Founder of the **Sutra School**







**Asanga (310 – 390)**  
Father of the **Mind Only School**

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### The Teachers – MW Consequence

**Buddhapalita (470-540)**  
Co-founder of the **MW Consequence School**






**Chandrakirti (600 – 650)**  
Co-founder of the **Middle-Way Consequence School**

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### The Teachers – MW Autonomy




**Bhavaviveka (500-570)**  
Founder of the **MW Autonomy School**

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### Teachers in Tibet

- **Shantarakshita (725 – 788)**
  - Tried to establish Buddhism in Tibet, calling on Padmasambhava to help him against interferences
- **Atisha (982 – 1054)**
  - Re-established Buddhism in Tibet following a decline



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### Lama Tsong Khapa

- Lama Tsongkhapa (1357 – 1419)
  - He confirms Chandrakirti’s and Buddhapalita’s interpretation of Nagarjuna

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### His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama

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Bhikṣu Tenzin Gyatso (b. 1935)

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### What’s My Take-Away?

- You know what emptiness is, what it’s not, and the benefits of realisation
- You know some of the teachers of emptiness in our lineage.

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### Readings:

- Tenet Systems and Their Sages
- Why Realising Emptiness is Important

### Coming up:

- The four seals
- Purification and merit
- Developing serenity

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### Dedication

Due to the merits of these virtuous actions  
May I quickly attain the state of a Guru-Buddha  
And lead all living beings, without exception,  
Into that enlightened state

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### Bodhicitta Verses

May the supreme jewel bodhicitta  
Not yet born, arise and grow  
May that born have no decline,  
But increase forever more

And as long as space remains,  
As long as sentient beings remain,  
May I too remain  
To dispel the sorrows of the world

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