

The Nature of Reality

Class 3 – 2022



formation consciousness suffering Thus Avalokiteshvara mahasattva profound great Shariputra bodhisattva since prajnaparamita emptiness noble One Form dhatu way son


1

Refuge & Bodhichitta

I go for refuge until I am enlightened

To the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly

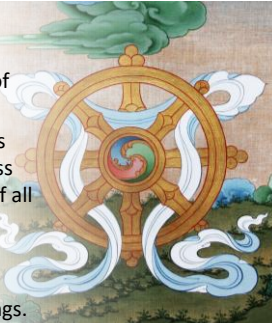
By the merits I create through listening to the Dharma, May I become a buddha to benefit all sentient beings.



2

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.



3

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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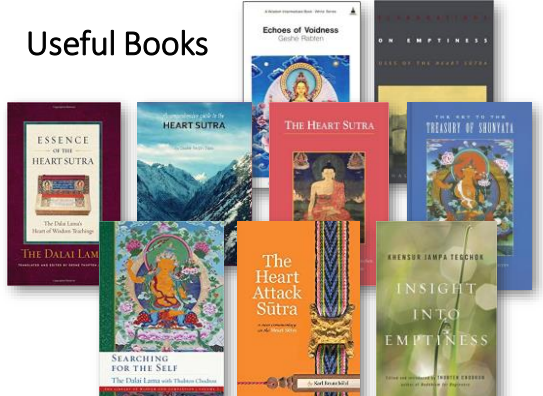


Today's Topics

- Introduction
- Engaging with wisdom
- Form is empty
- The object of negation

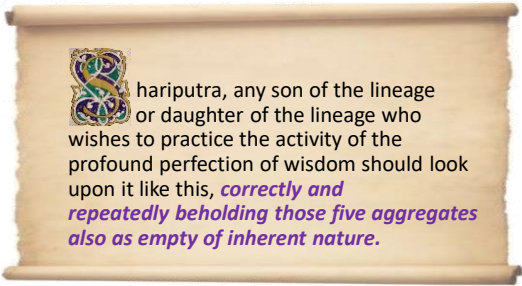
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Useful Books



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The Brief Explanation



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Synonyms of False Existence

- 1. Truly Existent
- 2. Existing from its own side
- 3. By way of its own character
- 4. Inherently existent



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Meditations Revealing Emptiness

- 1. Dependent Arising – the King
- 2. Diamond Slivers
- 3. Reasoning establishing the lack of being one or many
- 4. Five-fold reasoning
- 5. Seven-fold Reasoning



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Nagarjuna’s Four Keys

- 1. Identifying the target
- 2. Limiting possibilities
- 3. Analyzing Oneness
- 4. Analyzing Difference



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The Four Keys

- 1. Identify the target – object to be eliminated
- 2. Only two possibilities – logical pervasion
- 3. Absence of true sameness – of I and the five aggregates
- 4. Absence of true difference – of I and the five aggregates



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1. Identify the Target

- To gain certainty about the way in which the object of negation would exist, if it did exist.
- This entity cognized by the imposition of inherent existence on the mere phenomenon.



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2. Only Two Possibilities

If the I exists inherently, it must be inherently one with the aggregates or inherently different from the aggregates.



If a thief is on the property, he must be indoors or outdoors.

There is no other possibility.

If the thief is in neither place, we know he isn't here at all.

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If Inherent Existence Were Real...

One

- Same
- Single

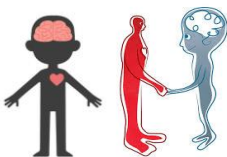
Many

- Different
- Multiple

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3. (Absence of) True Sameness

- The I and the aggregates cannot be differentiated at all
- The I and the aggregates are inherently one and the same
- The aggregates and the I are the same thing



ME, MYSELF
AND I

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4. (Absence of) True Difference



- The I and the aggregates are totally separate and unrelated
- The I and aggregates are inherently different
- The I and the aggregates are totally unrelated and distinct from each other

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Nagarjuna said



f the self were the aggregates, it would have to arise and disintegrate. If the self were different from the aggregates, it would not have the characteristics of the aggregates.

– Root Wisdom, Ch 18, verse 1

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The Heart of the Heart

Form is empty.
Emptiness is form.
Emptiness is not other than form; form is also not other than emptiness.



In the same way, feeling, discrimination, compositional factors, and consciousness are empty.



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Similes For The Aggregates

Form is like a ball of foam,
Feeling is like a water bubble,
Discrimination is like a mirage,
Compositional factors are like a Banana tree,
Consciousness is like an illusion.

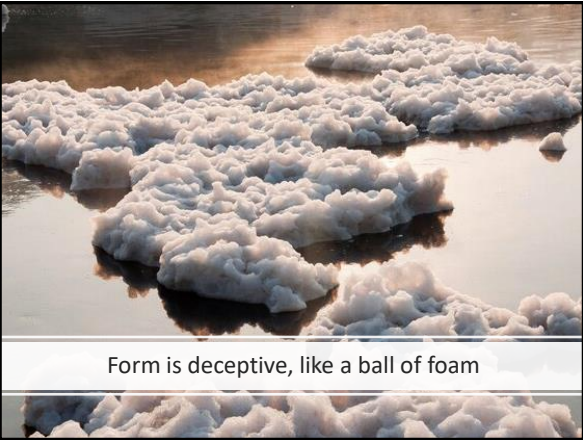
– Pali Canon, Samyutta Nikaya III 22.95

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The Profundity of Form

- The Profundity of the ultimate
- Form is empty

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heart sutra

The Profundity of the Ultimate

The emptiness of form is nothing other than the form’s ultimate nature.



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The Profundity of the Conventional



The emptiness of the inherent existence of form is the basis that allows the dependent origination of form.

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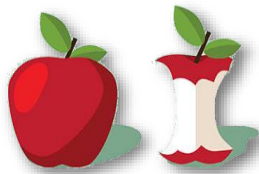
The Profundity of Being the Same Entity

The ultimate nature of form, its emptiness, does not exist separate from the form.



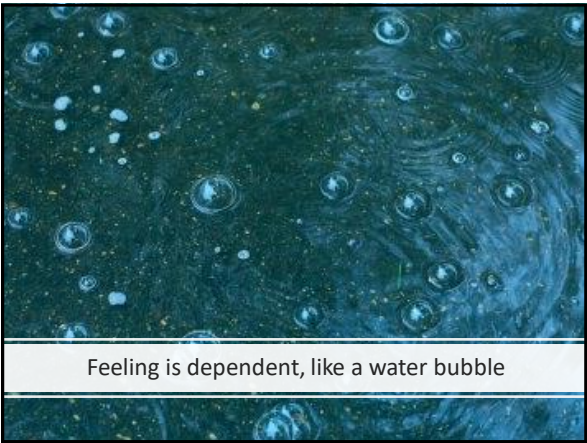
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The Profundity of Being
Nominally Distinct



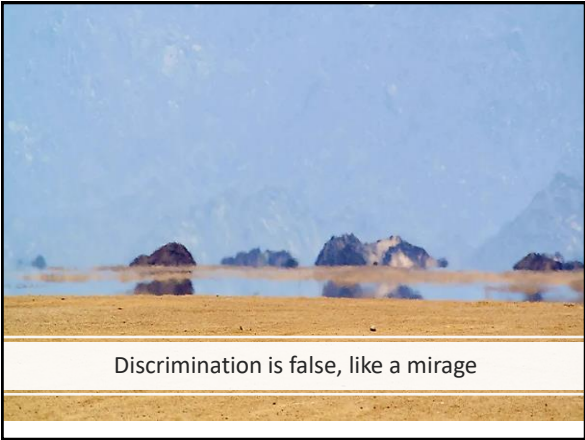
Form and the emptiness of form are the same entity and these two can be distinguished one from another

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Feeling is dependent, like a water bubble

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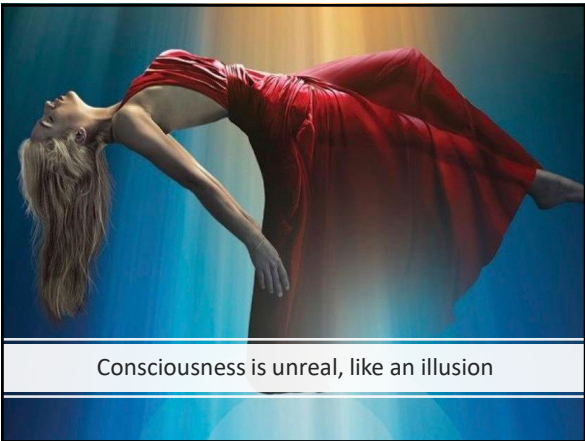
Discrimination is false, like a mirage

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Compositional factors are empty, like a banana tree

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Consciousness is unreal, like an illusion


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What's The
Take-Away?

- You know Nagarjuna's four keys.
- You know that the five aggregates are empty of inherent existence.
- You have five similes to remember

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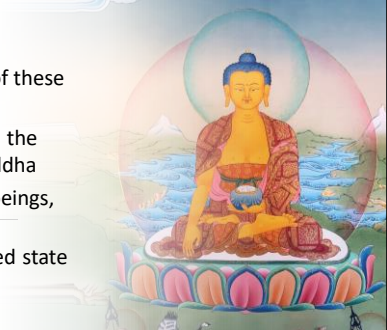


- Discerning wisdom on the path of seeing
- The objects of the path of meditation

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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 endures,
As long as sentient beings abide,
May I too remain
To dispel the sorrows of the world



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