

# Meditation:-A Tool to Tame Consciousness

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## Abstract

Basing on the ancient Tibetan Buddhist masters, the article describes, the theory on consciousness as cognition, its various divisions, meditation as a means of self disciplining, how to avoid drowsiness and distractions during meditation, meditation posture, eliminating defilements and achieving a calm abiding luminous personality by concentrating on anti dotes for the defilements.

Key words: cognition, consciousness, mind, mindfulness, drowsiness, selflessness, compassion, karmic action. Many Tibetan masters' names as well as their books are also mentioned here.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, "We, human beings, have a judgmental skill beyond the imagination and, relying on it, have achieved a wonderful development in terms of external materials." If we are able to use both external and internal progressions equally, then the physical substances can properly be utilized and at the same time, it can be ensured that we don't lose the human value while consuming the material possessions.

## Cognition as Consciousness

While external possessions are easy to recognize, in terms of internal resources Buddhism identifies the mind, or cognition. Buddhism identifies numerous minds, positive, neutral and negative. For instance, there are experiential minds such as feelings

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of happiness and suffering, mental joy and sadness, fear of dangers, anger hating those who harm, attachment clinging to relatives and friends, compassion focusing on those being afflicted by sufferings, desire wanting this and that thing in the world, the intense craving to get such things for oneself, and, in contrast to that, the contentment regarding that only is enough. In addition, sensory perceptions are recognized as minds, such as the eye consciousness seeing the shining world environments in front or seeing a pot full of various, beautiful flowers or the ear consciousness hearing melodious sounds of song and music. Another category of minds are conceptual consciousnesses, such as the mind remembering the previous experiences and the mind reflecting on reasoning such as thinking, “if it is to be such as this then it is necessarily like that.”

In a general sense, it is not a point that the existence of cognition needs to be proved by reasoning. Anyhow, many kinds of subtle minds are to be established through logical points. Thus, there are many kinds of cognition and you need to know that those consciousness have arisen on the account of many causes and conditions and exist in relation with many thoughts. Buddhists accept that mind and cognition are synonyms. And as above mentioned, the kind of very various minds belonging to the category of experiential emotions, the sensory consciousness and such as the mental conceptual thoughts are included in one kind and it is held that they belong to the subject of the division of two, subject and object. So, if it is asked what is the factor that differentiates between cognition and an entity having a form, generally, for achieving the purpose of people’s interest, the mind becomes as a main thing, as it is more difficult to recognize minds, formless as they are, as distinct entities, as opposed to those entities that have form, which are easy to distinguish. However, through training the mind by observing mindfulness, guarding alertness and attentiveness, you can distinctly recognize the various minds that constitute your ever flowing mindsream, seeing the benefits of positive minds and disadvantages of negative or unwholesome minds, and through such differentiating can expel all negative minds and achieve temporal and ultimate happiness. However, such close observation of the mind is difficult. Therefore, in Buddhist culture, there was developed a tradition of very deeply examining the facts about the mind from very long past, and the very elaborate explorations and discussions of psychology are found in Buddhist treatises for this

reason, to help the scholar and yogi develop the tools needed to truly identify and understand the various minds.

### **Suffering-Happiness:- Mental Functions**

Meanwhile, the Buddha himself said in the dharma verses: "Commit no misdeeds whatsoever, / Practice virtue perfectly, / Tame your mind completely-- / This is the teaching of the buddhas." So, the two, happiness and suffering both, depend on mental functions. If they are ultimately traced, temporal and ultimate pleasure as well as pain arise according to whether our minds are tamed or not. For this reason it is said that the essence of Buddhism is the state in which, our minds are completely trained. Even from *Udana Varga*: "The state in which a mind is tamed is well / A mind being trained brings joyfulness." Furthermore, it says that a mind being tamed is the best among any qualities and happiness comes on reliance of mental tameness. Even from *A Guide to the Bodhisattoa's Way of Life*, "The Perfect Teacher himself has shown / That, in this way, all fears / As well as boundless miseries / Originate from the mind." Such things are mentioned in various texts, exemplify in the necessity of taming the mind to achieve happiness.

Thus, if taming the mind is important, it is critical to clearly identify, what is the identity of mind or consciousness? Every consciousness, contradictory to the obstructive phenomena of form, is: 1. Formed as a phenomenon without its beginning; 2. Possessing the clear characteristic to which both internal and external objects can appear; 3. Possessing a characteristic of seeing objects; and, 4. Formed as the nature of a mere experience. This understanding of mind has remained much the same from the Buddhist scholars of the past up until present time. Similarly, while recognizing the mind, from Sutra, it said that the mind is different from the phenomena with forms and more difficult to be recognized and it is light since it is not a tangible, obstructive thing, and without remaining steadily since it turns as a whirling firebrand. It is impermanent because of moving like the ocean wave and it does, as if burning all the bodily and verbal conducts just as the fire in a forest does and as a big river does, it drives so many movements of thought by force and so on. In a general sense, it is posited that awareness is the identity of mind and clearness and knowing is the identity of cognition, here, "clearness" meaning the identity

of cognition, and “knowing” being the function of cognition. Well then, so called clearness here is naturally clear because it is free from tangibility and any obstructive nature.

Just like an image reflects in the mirror, good and evil objects, pleasure and misery and any both internal and external things can appear to the mind as well so that it's function is clearing. And then, when its nature is not contemplated with stains such as destructive emotions, the nature of it is clear or luminous. There are many points defined in this regard. In many sutras of great and lesser vehicles, it said that the afflictive thoughts such as attachment abiding in mind are instantaneous and the nature of mind is luminous, for instance, in the sutra of Sthavira School called *Anutaranikaya*, “Bikshus, the mind is luminous and emotionally afflicted by the sudden afflictive emotions. The ordinary beings who have not heard this, don't perfectly know it such as it is and therefore, the ordinary beings who have no hearing of knowledge, possess no mental contemplations. So I like to say this,” and so forth. Also from the *Eight Thousands Verses on Prajnaparamita*, it says, “So the mind doesn't possess mind by nature, for the nature of mind is clear and luminous.” And as a shastra, *Uttaratantra* by Maitreya in which, it says, “As the jewel, the sky and the water are pure from their nature, the nature of mind always possesses no afflictions.” Thus, it means that as no rusts permeate the nature of gold, no clouds infiltrate the nature of the sky and no dirt absorbs into the nature of water, thus, in the same way, no contemplations access to the nature of mind as well. Similarly, in the auto-commentary of *Pramana-Vartika* by his eminence, Dharmakirti, it says, “The nature of mind is clear and luminous, these defilements are transient.” And more than these alive shows, if you apply an antidote to the defilements such as attachments that are the bases of arising sufferings, you may separate from them and as above explanations, the nature of mind is luminous for those defilements don't have access to the nature of mind.

### **Disciplining Consciousness**

So, as the identity of mind to be clear, it is taught the mind possesses two differential qualities; the characteristic to which itself appears in a way and the characteristic to which the appearance of objects manifests in a way and sometimes, in some works there appears that the recognition of the mental identity with possession

of the three characteristics, empty, clear and knowing, by adding the emptiness which here means as devoid of touchable nature to the two, clear and knowing, mentioned above. How the cognition is free from the tangibility clearly taught in Sutra is, for instance, from *Ratnakuta Sutra*, where it says, "What? Is the mind something called blue or thing called yellow," and so forth. From the *Chapter of Heaven of 33 Indra Deva Realm*, it says, "The mind is also formless, invisible, untouchable and unconceivable." Thus, it is like as described that the mind is devoid of color and shape and so on. It can not be displayed to the eyes. Generally, in many Buddhist works, the term "mind" (in Sanskrit, "budhi,") "cognition," (in Sanskrit, "Jagra,") and "consciousness" (in Sanskrit, "Bigta") are defined as synonyms, with equal pervasions. In the same way, in the *Abhidharmasamucchaya*, it says, "If it is asked that what the presentation of consciousness is, then whatever is mind and cognition that is the very consciousness as well." So as explained like that, in general, the mind—chitta, the thought—manas, the consciousness—vijñana are explained as the same meanings with an equivalent pervasion. Nevertheless, when these three factors are defined, the six kinds of engaged cognitions are called cognition since they accumulate the imprint in the mental continuum of beings through experiences and habituations and so on. Something is called as the mind because it does a function of realizing the objects. As knowing the appearances of object separately it means the consciousness. So, their semantic explanations are there, separately. Otherwise, it has been told that something is cognition for it collects impressions and it is mind for it becomes as the support and it is called as the consciousness for it become as the supporter. Once more, in the treaties of Mind-only School, who accepts Alayavijñana, the basic consciousness of all, there are seldom the meanings of cognition, mind and consciousness told individually, for instance, something is called as the mind as it does as a base of all seeds, and klesha, a defiled consciousness, is called as consciousness and the six kinds of engaged cognitions are called as the cognitions because they realize the objects separately. From *Lankavatara Sutra*, it says, "consciousness is manas, the basic consciousness of all Something thinking as self is Mind, Cognition is something that apprehends objects." Also from *The Compendium of the Great Vehicle* by Asanga, it says, "It is acceptable that someone had thought that mind, cognition and consciousness are only

synonyms and thought that here they are only different in terms of syllables because mind and cognition and consciousness are known as different and thereby, the thought is different aspect," it is like as followed such that. There are many of them including that.

Well, although it is that something called cognition is clear and seeing aspects, if it is asked that what the base and ground of the cognition is, then let say that generally, a cognition mainly depends on the wind element and remains spreading through all parts of body, counting from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. As an individual, the eye consciousness from five sensory consciousness abides in the nerve of eye sense faculty and in the same way, even though it is same that from fact that ear consciousness abides in the nerve of auditory sense faculty and to the fact that the body consciousness abides in the nerve of sense of touch, the first four sensory consciousnesses abide in any distinct parts of body and the fifth one abides spreading through all parts of body. From the *Treaty of the Highest Tantric Tradition* it explains that the mental awareness is divided into two, gross and subtle ones and among them, the gross mind depends on the crude wind sustaining the life-force and the subtle one relies on the precise wind sustaining the life-force and abides in an area where there is the location of heart where it is said that life -controlling wind, which is the base of very subtle mental consciousness remains. That is for instance, as a human being, it is said to be something, which abides in the indestructible drops in the central of upper and lower knots of left and right channels (Lalana and Rasana) and existing in the central channel (Avadhuti) close to the backbone straight near to two breasts. The gross wind saving life-force does the emergence and engagement from the Time of ground to the nostrils and even though it abides at the chakra-wheel of heart region, it doesn't remain in the central energy channel. The regional differences of the five subsidiary winds are more partly elements of life-supporting winds so that their arising and fading away occur from the heart region of the main region of veins and make sure to know those, which were already explained in the first volume of *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and how five sensory consciousness act towards the five objects including sound through the Nadi-petals in the heart region that are explained in *Tara-Summary of Conducts*, and so forth.



## **Types of Cognition**

For such as the cognition, although there are many different ways of dividing, they are not contradict in terms of their contexts. There are three; a division of seven minds or cognitions, three kinds of mind or two types of cognition. First, the division of seven cognitions: 1. direct perception; 2. inferential cognition; 3. recognition; 4. correct assumption; 5. inattentive cognition; 6. doubt; and 7. wrong consciousness.

Second, the division of three cognition: 1. conceptual mind, which views conceptually the genetic aspect as the object of apprehension; 2. non-mistaken, non-conceptual cognition, which views the characters by itself as the object of its apprehension; and 3. confused cognition, which views something non-existent as the object of its apprehension. First one is for example, as the conception apprehending the (idea of) vase. Second one is like the direct perception apprehending the form of vase. Third one is for instance, the mistaken, non-conceptual mind to which the snow mountain appears to be blue in color. This is also mainly the assortment by Sutrantikas. The subdivisions divided as sets of two cognitions are: 1. Sensory consciousness and mental consciousness; 2. Conceptual and non-conceptual consciousness; 3. Valid and invalid cognitions; 4. Minds of partial engagement and minds of collective engagement; and, 5. Primary minds and mental factors. In this way there are six subdivisions of cognitions. So, the six entrances of classifying the cognitions that are taught in the treatises are: there are two, sensory consciousness and mental consciousness in terms of whether need to rely on the corporeal sense faculty or not, conceptual and non-conceptual in terms of whether possessing an appearance of term object or not, two, valid and invalid ones in accordance with whether they are fallible with regard to their object or not and whether they newly know them or not, two types of cognitions, confused and unconfused minds according to the fact that whether something appearing really exists or not as similar as it appears, two kinds of minds, mind of collective engagement and mind of partial engagement in terms of either they engage in the objects collectively or partially and primary minds and mental factor in terms of engaging in the entity of object or its characteristics or the principal and retinue.

So, now as the mental factor, there comes the presentation of mental factor in the Buddhist text – Seven Sections of *Abhidharma* including the *Entrance to wisdom, Well-versed Chapter, the Collection of Dharmas, the Great Detailed Explanation, and so on*. And *Abhidharma Samucchaya* by Asanga and *Abhidharmakosha* by Vasubhandu are more known in this regard. Here are given 51 mental factors in the *Abhidharma Samucchaya* and they are: the five ever-present mental states, five object-determining mental factors, the eleven virtuous mental states, the six root afflictive emotions, the four ambivalent mental factors and twenty secondary afflictive emotions. Likewise, 56 mental factors explained in the *Abhidharmakosha* are: ten bases of cognitive acts, the ten bases of virtue, the six bases of great afflictive emotions, ten bases of lesser afflictive emotion and eight determining-mental factors.

### **Meditation Posture**

So, then along with them, I have just explained as an introduction, even though there are many technical points in them. As the above quotation that goes, “the mind being tamed is positive / The mind being trained brings happiness.” So, if it is asked how the method for training mind comes and how to make effort in the approaches for subduing the mind through meditation, when it comes to that manner of sitting, first, there is a special posture at the time of meditation and it is also said as cross-legged posture. And there is a way of explaining it as a posture which is called as Vajra-posture. Anyhow, if you are not familiar with that way, it can not be comfortable for you so that how to place the feet is that you should place them in a way that is the most comfortable for you. You need to stretch the backbone as straight as an arrow. There is a way of regarding the place as important. Moreover, if it is carefully analyzed, there is a point in the statement claiming that there is a significance for wind to move straightly, if the backbone is kept standstill. By placing two hands equally, you need to place the left hand below the right hand, with palms upturned and thumbs just barely touching in the shape of a triangle, at a point just four inches down from the navel. This gesture of hands is relevant with the points from where the inner fire-like heat arises. Bend the neck little and hold both mouth and teeth in a natural state and then you need to make the tip of tongue touch with the palate, where the root of upper teeth is present. This practice possesses a characteristic with



which, you will not be thirsty. Bring downward your two eyes just a little. Although, it is said that you should descend your eyes on the tip of the noses, you don't have to certainly do it, if your eyes fall on the floor in front of you, then let them descend in that way. Don't open two eyes very largely and don't close them with a strong force. But leave them open slightly. Sometimes, two eyes automatically come close and there is no error, if such a thing happens. But, if you are likely to fall asleep, then you have to open the eyes. If it happens that the mind can firmly maintain on the focus, the appearance of external objects can not disturb your mind, even if you don't close the eyes. But, even though it is less risky for arising an agitation, it is more risky for the emergence of drowsiness, if those whose eyes with defects, don't use glasses. Whether to emerge the dullness and agitation or not, there is a difference in between if one stays against the wall or not. Similarly, the difference comes in between one meditates in the darkness and one meditate under light on and since these mainly come through ones experiences and aspirations, it is necessary to adopt an antidote accordingly.

### **Object of Meditation**

The meditation with a certain focal objects falls in to two categories belonging to the meditations with both external and internal objects. At the present, it is little easier for us to observe a meditation on the external focal object rather than on the mind itself. Those who want to look at the form, should have at the body of a Buddha or those willing to have a look at the cross, should reflect on the cross. Furthermore, it is alright, if you take anything suitable to you as the focal object. You have to imagine that the meditative focus is in front of you in a distance of about four feet and as high as the spot between your eyes. You have to think that the meditative object as big as two fingers, shining and heavy. Thinking of it as heavy stops the agitation from arising and thinking as shining prevents dullness. When you concentrate on the object with your mind, you have to pay attention on two points. First, it is to make the focal object appear clear and second is to harden the focus. The only gross things appear to the mind are the objects in front of you that make you uncomfortable. If a red appearance in color arises, while closing the eyes and you are distracted by the external appearance, while opening eyes, your mind is overly allowed to be under the influence of eye consciousness. Therefore,

you have to control the mind under its own power. The obstacles for the object of meditation to be stable is something which flutters, so such an object of observation is an agitation and, generally speaking, it is a distraction. You need to strengthen inviting the mind inward in order to prevent that occurrence. So, it decreases the vigor of grasping the external objects. To lead the mind inward, it is required to observe the antidote for lowering the level of spirit by developing some sadness. With these thought, the excessive mental engagement in the object and something like a very low level of mental engagement, the mind becomes more relaxed by letting them come down. By relying on them, you can maintain on the meditative support well.

### **Avoiding Distractions and Dullness**

The mere availability of meditation stability is not enough, but the clarity is definitely required as well. The hindrance to arising the clearance is dullness. The causes of dullness are that you have excessively fastened the mind inside and you are very much discouraged. First, the mind becomes dull and then it brings drowsiness. Having lost the object of observation, it will come as if you have fallen into the darkness. So, it possibly brings a sleep too. You have to promote or heighten the feature of apprehensions, if such an event takes place. As an approach for it, you need to contemplate on something which makes you pleased or something you like. Besides, you have to go to either a high plateau or a place where is a vast scene. This remedy increases the grip of grasping of a mind whose enthusiasm remains light. When the grip of mental grasping becomes very scattered or when it turns as drowsy, you should attempt to lower or heighten the pace of mind according to its projections as fine as possible through experiences. In the same way, whatever the meditative object you are visualizing on, you need to hold it alone in your mind and the meantime, while observing from one angle, you are to examine whether the very object is clear and steady or not. The mental factor that does such an investigation is called attentiveness and it emerges when a firm and powerful mindfulness is achieved. But, its uncommon function is to repeatedly check whether the mind gets dominated by dullness and agitation or not. If both of mindfulness and attentiveness are good there, then before dullness and agitation arise, someone can

recognize and prevent them from arising. This is just called the taking guide with awareness.

### **Inward Meditation**

Another way of meditating is to do by introspecting the thoughts inward. Putting your mind as clear in its own flow and thinking nothing about like the events occurred in the past and any plans for future doings and so forth, don't allow any conceptual thought to arise. Where does your mind exist? You may think that it is along with eyes since the most awareness of the issues in our world belongs to eye consciousness. This is because there is a heavy reliance on the sensory consciousness. But, we can realize something called mental cognition which exists separately. For instance, when the mind limitlessly turns towards the sound, we don't know what appears to the eye consciousness. This proves that the mental cognition pay more attention to the sound heard by the ear consciousness then to the object grasped by the eye consciousness. If we prolong a familiarity, we are able to notice and feel the consciousness, which is a clear and knowing characteristic of such as the cognition can arise with an appearance of anything, when its cause and conditions are well organized. As long as the mind doesn't meet the condition of conceptions, nothing appears to it so that it remains empty as a clear water. Its very nature is an experience. Therefore, in order to realize such a nature of mind, the meditation object for this kind of medication, which focuses on the inner mind is primarily identified. This kind of meditation is to be done in a quiet place and the period of the meditation should be taken in the morning when mind is clear and active.

### **Achieving Selflessness**

Other than them, there is another meditation method, which helps us realize the ultimate truth of all phenomena, as similar as it is explained in the Buddhist tenets. In general, all the phenomena fall in two categories, the entities become as the object being consumed by beings and the self (I)who consumes. Let take an example, to know such like that self, there is a person named after John as his name, if you ask, is that name given after his body? If it is termed for his mind, we can not say, "the mind of John." Both mind and body are objects of enjoyments by the being. To us, it appears as if there is a self that is separated from our body and mind. For

instance, when we think that this ugly body of mine and this evil thought of mine, to our intrinsic seeming, it appears that the only mind is not 'I'. Well then, what is John, who is neither his mind nor his body? You have to apply that logical point in yourself. If you take the same example for your mind and body, where is such that I? When the body of mine is sick, even though the body is not Self, because our body is ill, we can define as I am sick. Besides, the parts of body sometimes, come to be cut for the sake of well-being and healthy survival of Self.

Although the body is not self, there is a relationship in between them. The pain of body denotes as a pain of self. Similarly, when the eye consciousness sees something, to the mental appearance it appears that the self or 'I' sees that very thing. Which is the nature of Self? How does it appear to you? To the self of yours, does it appear as if there is an identity different from both of your body and mind when no conceptual emotions arise in your mind? Can it be found, if you look for this? For example, if someone blames you and says, "you have stolen it," and "You have wasted it," then, you would think, "I did not do it." At that time, how does 'I' appear to be? Does it appear as a rocking chunk? When think or say, I when think or say, 'I' appears as concrete, steady and powerful in your mind? The self or I, existing independently, naturally, regardless, waving solid and hard, which appears at that point of time actually never exists. Such as this way of non-existence is called selflessness. At the moment, when it is not examined and analyzed for instance, the mere self, which thinks I want this and that, or I do this and that is asserted to be established by valid cognitions and the non-existence of self as independent and regardless is the selflessness of persons. This is what is to be found, when we research the "I" through investigation and examinations.

### **Tasting Emptiness**

This thing non-existent by nature is ultimate truth called absolute reality. The self without being observed and which appears to the conventional mind is the self, formed dependently and existent dependently, becomes as agent for conventional actions and actors and so forth, and it becomes basis for conventional actions. It is a conventional truth, when the reality or the state of Self is observed, even though itself appears as existent by nature just like an illusion, you can clearly know that it does not exist by its inherent nature.

This is an instruction of examining the emptiness that is an ultimate nature. As the nature of Self is like this, all the phenomena, which are objects of that self are devoid of independently existence. They can be found when they are examined and they exist when they are not examined and investigated. Thus, as it comes very important to cultivate the altruistic and compassionate thoughts since the self, and similarly, happiness and suffering conventionally exist, it is also important to promote wisdom because the ultimate reality of all phenomena is the very emptiness of truly existence. When both means and wisdom are simultaneously developed the insight will deepen so that the elaboration of wrong dualistic views go dissolved. From the fact that mind maintains on the meaning of emptiness, the dualistic appearance diminishes, meanwhile, the mind itself becomes finer. The mind becoming subtler than that, when it reaches the subtlest level, it will gradually become as the essence of the mind, which is a clarity born innately and a genuine one that is the basic ultimate mind from all cognitions. It easily realize the emptiness without being defiled by the dualistic appearance in the course of meditative equipoise and it becomes inseparable in appearance, one taste with emptiness. To something to which all appear as one taste can appear any phenomena. It is called one taste is a lot and a lot is one taste. Although these practices are to be done by Buddhists, as the whole, they don't want to do these things.

### **Obstacles of Meditation**

Some aspects mentioned here are the methods on how to practice the analytical meditation that I have explained little. If you ask, what obstacle s do we encounter while meditating with such that posture and mental attitude and with that do we try to get rid of them? For practicing the meditative stabilizations from the *Madhyant-vibhaga* by Maitreya, it says, "It arises due to the reliance / On 8 approaches and abandonments of the five faults." Well, if it is asked that what the five faults are then, laziness, forgetting the instruction – forgetting the meditative focal objects, if dullness and agitation are individually divided then, they are six, but by counting them as one aspect, they are five faults. The fault of not applying a remedy at the time of arising both drowsiness and distractions and it is a fault, if one observes an approach, when drowsiness and distraction don't come. Then as antidotes, eight applications are

taught for abandoning and the four aspect explained as antidotes for laziness are; faith, aspiration, effort and pliancy. One can not have a pliancy at the early part of time, but you should remember its qualities from this moment. Then as first, the faith seeing the qualities of meditative stabilizations. These four are as antidotes for laziness. Mindfulness is explained an antidote for forgetting meditative objects and as an antidote for both drowsiness and agitation, the principal main is attentiveness. And then as a remedy for not applying the means for the occurrence of dullness and agitation, the mental aspiration is taught. As a practice, for applying when dullness and distraction don't arise is equanimity.

### **Eliminating Defilements**

Now, if you say, what can be as a meditative object? In general sense, from Sutra, the Buddha said that there are four objects of meditations. They are: the object of the wise, the object for purifying the deeds, the objects for completely abandoning the afflictions and the pervasive objects.

The pervasive object is pervasive to all the focusing agents and focal points that are as the whole focal objects of calm-abiding. It is taught in terms of focusing agent and the way of focusing also includes into it. As the pervasive objects, there are four, the non-analytical focus and the analytical focus. The final aspect of things as their nature and their all conventional existents in terms of focusing objects. The focal object of fulfilling all needs is considered as a calm-abiding itself. If you ask, how does this comes as a focal object? Someone, who has already attained a calm-abiding, can focus on calm-abiding itself as a focal object.

The focal object for purifying deeds means that the practitioner individually observes a meditation according to the afflictive emotions, which are stronger in them. Here five predominant afflictions; predominant attachment, predominant anger, predominant ignorance, predominant pride and predominant discursive thought. As an antidote for predominant attachment, reflect on the object as unpleasant. As an antidote for anger, loving-kindness is there and for ignorance, dependent connection is explained and for the pride the division of elements is known as an antidote. As an antidote for the discursive thought, the exhalation



and inhalation are to be observed. There is a special of taking the exhalation and inhalation as the focal objects in Burmese Tradition.

There are five Objects of the Wise in this particular practice: 1. Aggregates; 2. Elements; 3. Source; 4. Twelve links of dependent arising; and 5. Proper and improper.

The focal object for completely abandoning the afflictive emotion are two, one imbued with a coarse kind of calmness and one with the distinct manifestation of truth. With it, those with distinct manifestation of four truths and from them then one with a distinct aspect of selflessness comes by the way. So, this is explained as a common focal object.

If it is asked that what kind of focal object we should choose at this time, then it is just up to individuals. For example, as mentioned before, I should develop loving-kindness for anger and do others accordingly. Most of us have predominant discursive emotion so that is good to focus on exhalation and inhalation of wind. So, sometimes, sustaining the mind itself as the focal object without having a special object is good. Therefore, there are four focal objects and the most important one is the object for purifying deeds and it is worthwhile to observe on this meditation object according to our need.

### **Purification of Life**

Transforming our minds through meditations is just to purify the afflictive emotions. Although the six causes of producing the afflictions are explained in *Yoga-caraya-bhumii*, for this time, we go to the explanation of three causes that bring about the destructive thoughts available in *Abbhidharmasamuccaya* and *Abbhidharmakosha*. In the *Abbhidharmakosha* it says, "For having abandoned no proliferative and subtle afflictions / And remaining close to the objects / Projecting improper conceptions in mind / The causes of affliction is complete." As the subtle and proliferative roots of attachment classified by the desire realm not abandoned and they are not completely perceived. The phenomena compatible with the fact deeply ensnared by the attachments belonging to the desire realm also come to appear. To them, improper thoughts arise as well. Therefore, the attachment characterized with desire realm emerges. There is an order according to the power of cause and

object and activities. So, let know that other afflictions arise in that same way. All faults including afflictive thoughts, trace our origins to the ignorance.

Nagajuna said in *Prejnamula* “karmic action and affliction derive from the discursive imagination. They emerge from the proliferative affliction.” It means that the karmic actions, which bring a various sufferings derive from the destructive emotions and the all these including affliction originate from the improper conception that exaggerate the unpleasant and pleasant objects more than what they are. And it is just that comes from the prolonged habituation with the conceptual fabrication of ignorance, which is deluded with the reality of all phenomena.

The improper conception means that it exaggerates its objects more than the reality of their existences. For example, it is just exaggerated by the improper conception so that when an attachment arises, it see the person who is attached as better than the reality from all angles and when an anger arises, it sees the person who receives anger as much worse than the reality. It is required to familiarize with antidotes relevant with a certain function for instance, Loving-kindness as an antidote for anger and the elements and the detailed divisions as an approach for the pride. The mind called ignorance is known as disharmonious with and opposite to the insight wisdom. Nevertheless, it is not asserted as ignorance because it is not aware of something alone. It is explained as the root of all the afflictive emotions and all imperfections and defects will be uprooted when the ignorance is abandoned.

From *Prajnamula*, it says “As how the sense of touch abide with body / The ignorance abides everywhere / So, when the ignorance is destroyed / All the destructive emotions will be destroyed by the way.” So, this is the recognition of ignorance as the root of all afflictions taught in Buddhism. In fact, it exists in that way because all the phenomena are dependent and relatively interconnected.