



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class One

1) Describe what the "view of destruction" is, and then explain the role that realizing emptiness plays in eliminating it. Then explain how eliminating this view allows us to achieve nirvana. (Tibetan track also give the Tibetan for "view of destruction" and "nirvana.")

2) Give three reasons why it is not necessary for the perfections of giving and the other four to come before one has a realization of emptiness. (Tibetan track give brief reasons in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

3) Why then do the opening lines of the ninth chapter of the *Guide* say that "all of these branches were stated by the Able Ones to be for the purpose of wisdom"? (Tibetan track also give these two lines in Tibetan.)

4) Name the two truths. Are they actually two different kinds of truth? If not, then why are they called "truths"? What object is divided into the two truths? (Tibetan track quote the two lines which describe the two truths.)

5) Give a special quality of ultimate truth, as described by the great Gyaltsab Je. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, analytical meditation attempting to understand the difference between the two truths.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



Name:
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Homework, Class Two

1) People who seek to establish the meaning of the two truths, or realities, can broadly be divided into two types. Name them and briefly describe what they believe. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

2) Name and describe the extremely essential division into two kinds of persons who result from these two viewpoints. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

3) Is there any distinction between those who have seen emptiness directly?

4) State the basic misconception behind the wrong idea that, if things do something, then they must be real as we see them. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

5) Explain why good and bad deeds are like an illusion, and yet still function perfectly well.

6) How does Gyalsab Je answer the question of how beings who are like an illusion can still take rebirth?

7) Name the two kinds of nirvana, and describe them briefly. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

8) Why would someone think that, if the Middle-Way teaching is true, then the Buddha must also be wandering around in the circle of suffering life?

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, analytical meditation attempting to understand the difference between the two truths.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



Name:

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Homework, Class Three

1) Summarize the argument of the Mind-Only School in objection to the position of the Middle-Way School about the deceptive and ultimate truths or realities.

2) How does the Middle-Way School answer this objection?

3) State the meaning of "illusion." What, according to the Mind-Only School, is like an illusion? (Tibetan track answer both in Tibetan.)

4) What state of mind, according to the Mind-Only School, confirms both the existence of the recognition of the illusion, and in fact every other state of mind? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

5) What did the Buddha himself say about this position, in a metaphor? (Tibetan track answer with two relevant lines of the root text.)

6) What analogy does Master Shantideva borrow from the realized being Nagarjuna, in order to show that the mind does not, like a lamp, illuminate itself? (Tibetan track quote two relevant lines from the root text.)

7) Give the classical definition of the self-perception of the mind accepted by the Mind-Only School. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

8) Master Shantideva uses the analogy of a rat bite to explain how we can confirm the existence of a subject mind in an act of perception, even if there is no such thing as the self-perception of the mind. Name and explain the five elements of this analogy.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, analytical meditation attempting to understand the difference between the two truths.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



Name:

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Homework, Class Four

1) Is it true that a person can remove their mental afflictions, and thereby reach nirvana, solely through a good understanding of the sixteen aspects of the four truths of a realized being?

2) Name the two forms in which a person can possess a mental affliction. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) Relate the six-step process described by Maitreya which links the failure to perceive emptiness to the suffering we must go through. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

4) Why in our text does the question arise of whether the sutras of the greater way are true or not?

5) State the "parallel argument" that Master Shantideva uses to prove to those of the lower way that the scriptures of the greater way are authoritative.

6) What comparison does Master Shantideva use to show that, unless one realizes emptiness directly, the mental afflictions will always come back—even in a case where one has been able to stop them from appearing in a manifest way for a while. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

7) How does Master Shantideva answer the concern that meditating upon emptiness might feel a little scary? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day; choose something or someone who upsets you, and try to understand where they fit into the six steps of suffering life that Maitreya spoke about.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



Name:
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Homework, Class Five

1) Name and define the two forms of the tendency to grasp things as existing in truth.
(Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

2) At what point does a person on the Mahayana track eliminate each of these two?
(Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) What are three wrong ideas that we might have about ourselves that are classified as "learned" tendencies to see things as truly existing. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

4) No Buddhist school agrees that there is a person which is distinct from the physical and mental parts of a person, but the Middle Way says that we are further neither any single one of our parts, nor the whole of the parts. It's easy to see that we are not any one of our parts, such as an arm or a leg, but why is it the case that we are not the sum of all of our various parts?

5) Why does the non-Buddhist opponent in the ninth chapter say that the person must be unchanging?

6) Give three parts of the answer that Master Shantideva says in reply to this position. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

7) What then is the real nature of the "me"? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

8) What is the example used by Master Shantideva to show that, if we try to find any other real nature of the "me," we come up with nothing? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, analytical meditation in which you try to distinguish between the collection of all your parts together, and the "me" which does really exist.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



Name:

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Homework, Class Six

1) At this point in the text, Master Shantideva moves from a major discussion of one kind of emptiness to another. The distinction between the two is the answer to a natural question raised in our minds when we begin to examine the emptiness of any object, especially our own selves. State the question, and briefly describe the two kinds of emptiness. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

2) When you focus upon the whole, such as the body, why do the parts or "raw data," such as the colors and shapes of the body, seem to exist out there, really, independently, on their own. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) What do we call the process of going down in levels through the parts, and the parts of the parts, and so on, as a method to establish that things are actually empty? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

4) What do we tend to think of as the ultimate "raw data" for each of the two great divisions of a person? (These are the same as the two things which lower schools of Buddhism believe have some existence from their own side). (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

5) Why don't either of these two kinds of raw data exist?

6) What really then provides the raw data of all existence, for every level of mental or physical objects?

7) Are things therefore less real? How can this be confirmed?

8) What is the whole point of looking at the world this way? Why is this the only worldview that works?

9) Why will suffering ultimately be eliminated in every living being? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

10) What discussion does Master Shantideva use as a bridge between his two discussions of the two types of emptiness?

11) Name, and describe the meaning of the names, to each of the three kinds of compassion presented by Master Chandrikirti in his classic "meaning commentary" upon Arya Nagarjuna's *Root Wisdom*. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, focus on a suffering person, trying to do so with each of the three different modes of compassion.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



Name:

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Homework, Class Seven

1) Name the four kinds of deep awareness used to understand the meaning of emptiness, and then describe the major points used in the discussion of the first three only. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

2) Our impure capacity to have good and bad feelings, both physical and mental, plays such a large role in creating the suffering world that the ability to feel was taught to be a whole separate "heap" or part of the body by Lord Buddha. Quote the lines from the *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha)* of Master Vasubandhu that describe the role of feeling. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) What makes a feeling "impure"? (Tibetan track also give Tibetan for "impure.")

4) State the proof that Master Shantideva gives to show that feelings of pain are not self-existent. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

5) State the example that Master Shantideva gives to show that feelings of pleasure are not self-existent.

6) In his discussion of why the mind is not self-existent, Gyaltsab Je mentions that we should apply the "seven-step analysis" used in the example of a wagon. Explain the seven parts of this analysis. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, examine the emptiness of your feelings towards a very irritating object.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Eight

1) Give the name of the proof used to examine the true nature of causes; explain the meaning of the name; and then describe the reasoning by giving the relevant four lines from the *Root Wisdom* of Arya Nagarjuna. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

2) Why is it more difficult to understand the emptiness of causation than the general emptiness of ourselves and our parts, which was already presented?

3) Give a general description of the object which the Middle Way denies—that is, describe what it is that emptiness is empty of—and give a metaphor for it. (Tibetan track describe and also name in Tibetan.)

4) State the famous lines from the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* which express the importance of understanding the object which we deny. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

5) Why does Master Shantideva bring up the object which the Middle Way denies at this point in his presentation of emptiness?

6) The object which the Middle Way denies can be described as an impossible something which has occurred outside of the law of dependent origination: something which has occurred in a way which is the opposite of dependent origination. State the formal proof called the "Proof based upon Dependent Origination." (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

7) Describe the three different interpretations of what "dependent origination" means; state the Buddhist school or schools that believe in each; and explain why each interpretation is preferable to the preceding one. (Tibetan track in Tibetan, and also give the Tibetan for "dependent origination.")

a)

b)

c)

8) What would be a good way to describe the object we deny in the case of the proof of the emptiness of causes, which began our presentation for this eighth class?

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, analytical meditation on something responsible, causing another thing to happen *self-existently*, and then on the real way that things happen, through a shift in our projections forced upon us by our past karma.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Nine

1) Give the "proof based on refuting that neither a thing which does nor does not exist could ever grow," which is meant to prove that results cannot grow self-existently. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and describe in English.)

2) Name two parties who are being disputed against when we deny the (ultimate) existence of results, and explain why they are being disputed against. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

3) Explain the basic reasoning that Master Shantideva uses to show that a cause cannot give rise to a result which does not exist at the time.

4) Name another kind of event which the above proof demonstrates cannot exist through any nature of its own.

5) Master Shantideva says that "there is no difference. . .between reaching nirvana and not reaching nirvana." Here he is referring to an idea known as the "equivalence of nirvana and the suffering world." Explain his real intent in making this statement. (Tibetan track in Tibetan, and also give the name of the idea in Tibetan.)

6) State the relationship between natural nirvana and regular nirvana.

7) Name the "three elements" in an act of ignorant desire, and explain the importance of their natural nirvana. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

8) Explain the best method for truly understanding the classical proofs of emptiness.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, analytical meditation on the relationship between natural nirvana and regular nirvana.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



Name:
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Homework, Class Ten

1) Give a short description of the distinction between love and compassion, as found in the *Great Book on the Steps of the Path (Lamrim Chenmo)*, by Je Tsongkapa. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

2) Give the more formal definition of great compassion. We have already discussed how to divide it into three types according to its essential nature; now describe how we can divide it into two types, according to what it hopes to accomplish. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

3) What is the context in which Master Shantideva presents the perfection of giving? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

4) State the distinction between "prayer" and "dedication," as described by Gyalsab Je in his commentary to the *Guide*. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

5) Name the principal benefit of performing an act of dedication, and the principal problem of failing to do so.

6) As he closes his presentation on the stages of the path, Master Shantideva dedicates the virtue of his great accomplishment to the continued flourishing of the Buddhist teachings in the world, using a metaphor to describe them. State the metaphor and explain it. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

7) Describe and explain the final act of Master Shantideva in his spiritual classic, the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, analytical meditation on how you personally will find and serve your Heart Teacher.

Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):