

The Six Types of Suffering

1. The fault of uncertainty
2. The fault of insatiability
3. The fault of repeatedly losing ones life
4. The fault of having to take rebirth repeatedly
5. The fault of constant fluctuating from high to low states
6. The fault of having no companions

1. The fault of uncertainty

Although you make big plans to insure your current and future pleasure in this world, and you work hard to realize those plans, you can never be certain how things will turn out.

To illustrate this you can look at how the relationships with people change throughout lives... think this over in detail. You have no control over these changes because it is all under the control of your karma.

Since relationships are constantly turning over in this way there is nothing you can count on. You cannot establish any relationship that is not destined to change in ways that you cannot foresee.

Out of ignorance your mind perceives someone as an enemy; that person appears to be a definite, absolute, real, permanent enemy, and this gives rise to hatred, etc. But in reality there is nothing essential that makes that person your enemy. **It is merely a temporary perception or imputation based on transient causes and conditions.** It is the same way with those that you love.

Nothing is permanent, eventually everything turns around.

If you had a truly permanent friend, then no matter what happened or what you did they would be your friend and not change, but unfortunately that is not the case. This is the nature of samsara. That is the suffering of uncertainty.

There is not a single relationship in cyclic existence that you can establish firmly, rely on, or trust.

Even in this short life time it is all over the place.. friends become enemies, enemies become friends. You are under the power of karma and the afflictions.

Knowing this, the wise never become attached. Rejecting the notion that they can find happiness in friends, they rest their minds in the pleasure of virtue.

Meditating on this, you should prevent the arising of attachment and hostility, which develop from making false distinctions between friends and enemies. You should recognize that there is nothing that is stable in cyclic existence. That will enable you to produce disenchantment with samsara and a sincere thought of renunciation. That is the main thing.

Instead of making these distinctions between friends and enemies, which no basis in reality, you should direct your mind in the virtuous direction. This means cultivating a feeling of caring, concern, friendship, and equanimity toward all living beings. Such feelings grow naturally when you realize that all beings are enmeshed in suffering as a result of their sharing this fundamental misunderstanding about how the world is constantly changing, not realizing that all of the relationships and objects they rely upon for their happiness are ultimately going to

dissappoint them. Once you get a glimpse of this reality, you will want to free yourself from that situation. You also want to help others because they are stuck in the same situation. That attitude is the basis of virtuous action, and that is the direction in which you should turn your mind.

2. The fault of insatiability

Cyclic existence is a suffering condition because no matter where you turn you will not find any lasting satisfaction.

Each one of us has drunk more milk
Than would fill the four oceans.
Those in samsara who follow the ways of ordinary beings
Will seek to drink much more than that in the future

Nagarjuna

Think of all the innumerable sources of pleasure and comfort you look to for satisfaction during on lifetime. Of all the so called 'wonders' of samsara -- good food, beautiful clothes, a grand house, a devoted spouse, etc.. there is not one you have not experienced some time in the past

Also think of the immeasurable pain, dissapointment, and sorrow you have experienced from beginningless time up until now; there is not one suffering you have not tasted as well.

Nevertheless, after all of the experience of pleasures and pains that bring no lasting satisfaction, and all the sufferings that arise from that ignorant quest for those pleasures, you still want to enjou yourself. None of these experiences has changed your attitude; you are still thinking about things in the same way you have always done.

It's as if all that pleasure and pain have gone completely wasted. It hasnt gotten you anywhere. It is the same routine, always craving more, and it just goes on and on.

When you think this way you should begin to feel some disenchantment. **You should wonder, "How can I get out of this situation. How can I renounce this endless trap of cyclic existence?" Such questions will begin to arise when you see that all the wonders of cyclic existence have never brought you satisfaction and are only the basis for trouble.**

Know that attachment to your desires
Is just like the leper afflicted with maggots,
Who resorts to fire in hopes of relief,
But finds no respite.

Nagarjuna

This is the kind of transient relief you get from indulging in sensual pleasures. It may diminish the pain of cyclic existence for a short while, but in the end it makes things worse.

When you have obtained your desire,
And indulged in it every day,
Piling it up, but still you are not satisfied --
What pathology is greater than that?

The Compendium of the Perfections

The problem is that no matter how many times you enjoy such pleasures, you can never get enough of them. Often the more you get the more you want, so that the craving for satisfaction actually leads to more and more dissatisfaction.

To a practitioner -- one who meditates, who applies discriminating wisdom in order to understand how this process works -- this perpetual dissatisfaction will appear to be a very great sickness indeed.

Then the question becomes "How can this sickness become cured?" The only treatment for this disease is the practice of the path.

All of these meditations are designed to reveal the true causality of cyclic existence and the true causality of emancipation.

If you do not make an effort to change directions in this life, you will just continue going around again and again, endlessly wasting life after life. Contemplating this reality you should generate regret and disenchantment with cyclic existence, and determine that in the future you will turn down a different path.

You have had to face many ups and downs in this cyclic existence; do not place your hopes on this kind of experience.

– Geshe Sangphuwa

You need to contemplate this until you see clearly how samsara is a state of sorrow and disappointment, in which you have no freedom and no power of your experience. When you see your true conditions very deeply, with the attitude that finds these miserable circumstances to be completely unsatisfactory, then you need to hold that thought, develop it, and deepen it by continuously making it a part of your practice. Once you have fully cultivated this attitude, wisdom will naturally lead you to a mode of behavior that will take you in the right direction.

3. The fault of repeatedly losing one's life

Once you have taken birth in a particular life form, in a particular body, you become attached to it, and you apply all of your life's energy toward nourishing and protecting it. However that body cannot be preserved and will not remain as you wish. As you travel through cyclic existence you will have to cast off your beloved body over and over again.

4. The fault of having to take rebirth repeatedly

Not only do you lose your body, but you will also be forced to take rebirth even if you don't want to. Why? Because you created the causes and conditions to be reborn out of attachment, hostility, and ignorance. That

karma will ripen whether you wish it does or not.

If you tried to calculate the limit of mothers by counting
With pellets the size of juniper berries, the earth would not be big
enough.

Nagarjuna

Contemplating the endless cycles of suffering in this way will lead you to recognize the faults of cyclic existence and to become disenchanted with it.

When you cannot see the initial cause
Of even a single result,
Then you see how vast are the causes of even one result
Who would not be frightened.

Aryadeva – 400 Stanzas

The causes of things are so complex ^^ For ex. what was the cause of this rebirth.. and those causes causes etc

It is correct to cultivate a constant disenchantment and to meditate on the
true nature of this great lonely wilderness of samsara, in which it is so
difficult to make one's way because of the dense thicket whose dimensions
are impossible to grasp.

Chandrakirti

Samsara is so thick and so hard to get out of. But there is a way out, and it starts with cultivating disenchantment with those circumstances. This leads to a powerful determination to find a way out.

What you discover is that the way out is to "meditate on the true nature" of samsara, which means to reverse the ignorant conceptions that got you into the situation in the first place.

Ordinarily you perceive objects that produce suffering to be sources of pleasure and you become attached to them. You perceive things that are constantly changing to be permanent and reliable. You perceive impure contaminated objects to be pure and wholesome. From these misconceptions arises the panoply of afflictions: attachment, aversion, pride, jealousy, and the rest. When you meditate on their true nature, however, you begin to see these things as they really are: in the nature of suffering, impermanent, impure, empty of any absolute, essential reality. If you meditate on these attributes, you will find your way through the thicket of cyclic existence to the other side.

5. The fault of constantly fluctuating from high to low states

Not only are you compelled to take birth in cyclic existence over and over again, but you are constantly fluctuating between high and low states in a way that is totally out of your control.

You may become Indra, worshiped by the world,
But by the power of karma you will fall once more to earth.
You may become a universal monarch,
But once again you will become a lowly servant in cyclic existence.

Many human beings acquire great wealth, fame, honor, live in luxury comparable to that of gods. All this is the result of their previous good karma. However when that good karma is exhausted, it will be followed by negative karma that is ready to ripen.

Until you cut off karma at the root through the direct realization of that wisdom that cognizes the truth of the self and the truth of phenomena, there is no way to end the misery of the fluctuating up and down within cyclic existence.

There is not much distance between the most blissful sensual pleasures and the most hideous sufferings we can imagine. One night you are in a godly realm where the very ground is as soft as a feather bed, but then the next morning you are sunk to your knees in a bed of hot coals. Between the 2 there is not much distance, through the power of karma it can happen suddenly, just like that. When you wake up to that hellish state you desperately want it to stop but there is nowhere to go. You are trapped in the misery of your own experience.

You may attain the status of the sun and the moon,
The radiance of your body illuminating the entire world,
Then again, you have to return to the pitch black darkness,
Where you cannot even see your own outstretched hand.

Nagarjuna

It goes up and down. The lowest and poorest become the highest. The highest fall from an in-between state or to a lower one.

The main point is that there is nothing reliable about any condition in cyclic existence. There is no way to know where you will be the next moment and no way to control the process. Within cyclic existence there is nothing stable, permanent, worthy of attachment, worth making the central object of your whole life. No matter how much energy you put into it, there is no worldly purpose that can ever bring everlasting peace and happiness. All of the apparently attractive objects and goals within cyclic existence are, in their very nature, unreliable, ready to collapse at any moment, and there is the nature of suffering.

Contemplating these circumstances, you should see the entire range of cyclic existence as one huge jail. You should generate strong disenchantment with the reality that you are trapped within this prison, and make a powerful determination to get out of this situation. This is the main object of these meditations.

All accumulation in the end is spent.
 The elevated in the end falls down.
 The end of meetings is separating.
 The end of life is death.

Buddha

Regardless of how rich, splendid, or beloved you may be, it all ends. No matter what you build, it finally deteriorates and declines. All things come to an undesirable end. This is the nature of cyclic existence.

6. The fault of having no companions

At the time of birth you cannot bring friends along as companions. At the time of death you cannot say to your loved ones, "I am going to die now, you must die with me!" You have to go along, no one can take a share of your misery. Therefore, what use are friends who only create hindrances?

What is being criticized here is the attachment to one's friends and loved ones based on unrealistic expectation that they are a source of stable happiness. The **attachment** is the hindrance that is the enemy. Out of that attachment you perform all kinds of negative actions, which create all the sufferings and all the obstacles to liberation.

When you come to understand the nature of cyclic existence, it does not produce aversion to other living beings. Quite the contrary.

The real friend, the best friend in cyclic existence, is virtue -- virtuous mental qualities and virtuous actions. This is what leads to a better life, a higher rebirth, and finally to total cessation of this suffering, samsaric life. That is the kind of friend you can rely on, that is the kind of friend you can trust.

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In conclusion these 6 types of suffering can be sorted into 3 categories:

1. There is nothing in cyclic existence that can be trusted or relied upon to provide true and lasting benefit
2. However much you indulge in the pleasures of cyclic existence, in the end you will never find perfect satisfaction
3. You have been experiencing this suffering, samsaric nature since beginningless time

The first of these 3 can be divided further into 4 parts.

1a. There is no security in obtaining a body. Wherever you are born in cyclic existence, your condition whether high or low -- will eventually change and you will have to take a new body

1b. There is no security in things that benefit or harm you. Relationships with friends and enemies are not static and cannot be trusted. The dearest friend can suddenly change into the most undesirable enemy. This corresponds to the 'fault of uncertainty' -- the 2nd of the six

1c. There is no security in obtaining the wonders of cyclic existence, because all high things eventually become low. This corresponds to 'the fault of constantly fluctuating from high to low states' - the 5th of the six

1d. There is no security in companions, because when you die, you go without companions. This corresponds to 'the fault of having no companions.' - the 6th of six

The second category in this 3 part format -- 'in the end you will never find perfect satisfaction' -- corresponds to 'the fault of insatiability'

The third category - 'you have been experiencing this suffering, samsaric nature since beginningless time' - corresponds to the fault of repeatedly losing ones life. - the third of the 6 types of suffering.

This condensed presentation gives you another format for meditating on these 6 unattractive qualities of cyclic existence.