

Attitude of a Person of Small Capacity

The Measure of a Person of Small Capacity

Previously you had an uncontrived interest in this life, while your interest in future lives has merely been an understanding that follows what others say. You have generated the attitude of a person of small capacity when these interests change places, and your interest in the future has become paramount, while your interest in this life has become merely incidental. However, you must make this attitude stable. Thus, once it has occurred, cultivate it diligently.

Clearing Misconceptions

Q.) In the scriptures it says you must turn your mind from cyclic existence. Someone could misinterpret this and think that is improper to develop an interest in high status as a human or deity in which body, resources, and the like are excellent, because it is in cyclic existence.

A.) There are 2 types of objects of interest: those you seek temporarily and ultimately. Even persons who strive for liberation must diligently, but temporarily seek excellent bodies, etc. in cyclic existence. For, they will ultimately attain certain goodness through a succession of lives in high status.

Also, not everything within high status -- excellent body, resources, attendants -- is included within cyclic existence. The most excellent body is the Buddha's embodiment as form; the most excellent resources are the riches of the embodiments realm; and the most excellent attendants of that embodiment's retinue.

Maitreya said that you achieve these through the first 4 perfections.

Excellent resources and body
And excellent retinue-- high status

Therefore, those who achieve omniscience accomplish a great amount of exceptional ethical discipline, generosity, and patience, and the like for a long time. Consequentially, they diligently seek the effects of these as well.

Relying on the boat of a human body,
Free yourself from the great river of suffering

-Santideva

As Santideva says you must rely on a life in a happy realm exemplified in this verse by a

human body. Consequently, ethical discipline-- the preeminent cause of achieving a body in a happy realm -- is the root of the path.

Moreover, you need a perfectly qualified body and life, and for this you need to strive to maintain the fundamental trainings of the monks and so on in their entirety.

You should strive to maintain the fundamental trainings completely, gradually assuming the higher vows while using the lower ones as supports.