§0

Begin practice with purifying breaths and small vase breathing…

§1 - Four Contemplations with supplementary information

All spiritual practice comes from contemplating the meaning of a human life – particularly, the human life endowed with the eighteen qualities causing it to be a precious opportunity for awakening. These are:

§1.1 - Eighteen freedoms and advantages

§1.1a - the Eight Freedoms

Freedom from the eight states where there is no opportunity to practise the Dharma. These are divided into two sets:

{1}: Being born in other realms

1. Hell realms, (2) preta realms, (3) animal realms, (4) long-living god realms,

{2} Being born in a human realm but

(5) only living in uncivilized lands, (6) possessing incomplete faculties, (7) clinging to wrong views, (8) a buddha has not come

§1.1ai - The Five Circumstantial Advantages

1. a buddha has come, (2) he has taught the Dharma, (3) the teachings have survived, (4) there are followers of the teachings, (5) there are favorable conditions for Dharma practice.

This is actually quite complicated. While a Buddha has definitely come and taught the Dharma on this Earth, what is not clear to some is which of the Buddhadharma teachings are the Buddhadharma and which are actually Dharma wrapped as Buddhadharma for the purpose of instilling faith. That is, throughout time, due to aimless compassion of the Buddha being directed towards benefiting beings of low capacity, the Buddha taught according to their level, which necessitates speaking to them through their own understanding of the world. Through this process, those who understand the Buddhadharma have explained it in myriad ways and some of those ways are wrong views intended to lead a sentient being from an even more wrong view and so on. The essence of the Buddhadharma is the teaching of the Eightfold Path of the Noble Ones that leads to the Wisdom of Reality Awakening. These teachings are then adapted by Masters so the remedy matches the constitution of the students, a weaving of many different cultures and personalities.

§1.1aii - The Five Personal Advantages

1. being a human being, (2) born in a central land, (3) with faculties intact, (4) lifestyle not harmful or wrong, (5) with faith in the three pitakas.

§1.1aiii - Change

So once you consider these conditional criteria that your own continuum’s karma has manifested as its display of self-emergent primordial consciousness’ creative power, you might glimpse the rarity of the situation you find yourself in at this very moment.

§1.1b - Reverse Directions

(As a quick note, you should also understand the immense gravity of the following:

The eight impossible states where mind cuts us off from the Dharma:

having little renunciation

lacking the jewel of devotion

caught in the bonds of worldly ties and cravings

having crude, degenerate behavior

never holding back from negative, harmful actions

lacking the slightest real interest

vows all broken

samaya commitments torn to shreds)

§1.2 - Impermanence or “momentariness”

Regarding impermanence or momentariness which is an adorning quality of all that arises, it is of two kinds:

1. the coarse impermanence of a given continuum

and

1. the subtle impermanence of momentary change

Reflecting on Death and Impermanence has three parts:

§1.2a - First, Know that Death is Certain

i) Death can not be avoided

ii) Life can not be extended; it is always diminishing

iii) Even while we are alive there is little time for practice

§1.2b - Second, Know the Time of Death is Uncertain

i) Our lifespan is not fixed

ii) There are many causes of death, and few for sustaining life

iii) The body is very fragile

§1.2c - Third, Know at the Time of Death, only Dharma can help us

i) Our friends can not help us

ii) Our resources can not help us

iii) Our body can not help us

§1.3 - Reflecting on the Defects of Samsara

Understand that samsara means continuous wandering about like a river current, so it does not technically refer to something cyclic. Ironically, it is nevertheless the case that the continuous wandering you incessantly engage in is the delusional cycle of distraction (and this fact is the aspect of your continuum conceptually called “ignorance”; and the superordinate fact, “primordial ignorance,” is the aspect that is not recognizing the nature of reality).

Dudjom rinpoche chain of delusion quote

List of types of ignorance and their definitions

§1.3a - Eight types of suffering

1. Birth, (2) old age, (3) sickness, (4) death, (5) meeting what is unpleasant, (6) parting from what is pleasant, (7) not finding what is being sought, and (8) the five aggregates (which are the basis for self-grasping).

The Five Aggregates

1. forms, (2) feeling or sensation, (3) perception, (4) formations, (5) consciousness (Skt. vijñāna, Tib. Sems)

The noble eightfold path, which is part of the truth of the path, is taught as an antidote to these eight types of suffering.

§1.3b - Eight types condensed to three

1. suffering of suffering,

which refers to overt instances

1. suffering of change,

which refers to the constant instantiation of impermanence

1. all-pervasive suffering of conditioning,

which refers to the constant nature of the quality of the experience of sentient beings, which is permeated by ignorance, which therefore induced all-pervasive suffering

§1.4 - Reflecting on the Truth of the Law of Karma, Cause and Effect

Karma literally means 'action' but it also refers to the process of cause and effect whereby actions have value related outcomes (such as positive intentions and actions leading to positive outcomes and vice versa). Karma implies we need to take responsibility for our actions and that since everything is constantly changing, we have not only non-deterministic free will but also the ability to change positively, no matter what.

§1.4a - Types of Actions

Karma means action; two types of actions:

1. tainted actions

and

1. untainted actions

§1.4b - Subtypes of Actions

Meritorious, Non-meritorious, Non-transferrable:

i) 'Meritorious actions' are the positive actions that create pleasant experiences within the desire realms; or can lead to rebirth in higher states in samsaric existence.

ii) 'Non-meritorious actions' are the negative actions that create painful experiences within the desire realms.

iii) 'Non-transferrable actions' or ‘unwavering karma’ refers to abiding in very subtle states of meditation that lead to rebirth in the two highest realms within samsara. It is so called since, apart from ripening in their respective realms ― the form realm and formless realm ― it does not transfer one to other realms as there’s no flexibility for it to ripen in any other way.

§1.4bi - Ripening

With meritorious and non-meritorious actions there’s some flexibility with how the karma can ripen. It can’t be said with certainty what the result will be but it can be categorized according to when the result is experienced:

Karma to be experienced in the present life, after rebirth, in other future lives, and karma that is not certain to be experienced.

There are numerous texts explicating the ins and outs of what only the Awakened One can know about karma, so it is best not to waste too much time trying to understand each little piece of each cause and condition of everything about your life and past lives while requesting prophecies about your future ones — that is all really delusional wandering about that can is lusting for incidental siddhis on the path to the supreme one and opens you up to the work of charlatans.

This concludes the four contemplations that turn the mind towards the Dharma.

§2 - The Four Noble Truths and Their Tasks

The Four Noble Truths or the Four Realities of the Noble Ones were taught by the Awakened One, Shakyamuni, as the central theme of the first turning of the wheel of the Dharma after his attainment of enlightenment.

They are:

1. the truth (or reality) of suffering, which is to be understood,
2. the truth (or reality) of the origin of suffering, which is to be abandoned,
3. the truth (or reality) of cessation, which is to be actualized,

and

1. the truth (or reality) of the path, which is to be relied upon.

These four statements are beyond the meaning of the word holy. If you spend some time reflecting on the above, there will be no doubt this is the treasure essence of the intent of what the Awakened One taught to sentient beings!

In his General Topics commentary on the Abhisamayalamkara, Patrul Rinpoche explains:

“The Compendium on Determinations says:

What is the meaning of "truth"?

It has the characteristic of not being in discord with the teachings,

And when seen it becomes the cause for complete purity. That is the meaning of "truth".

The meaning of the first line refers to the object, that is, exactly the way the Tathagata has taught [objects] to be impermanent and so on is how they are. The latter refers to the subject, that is, when [objects] are seen exactly as they are [which the Tathagata said they would be beforehand], an unmistaken mind is produced [as well as confidence]. That is the meaning of the term "truth" by itself. As for the meaning of "the truths of the noble ones", since the noble ones see the truths exactly as the truths are, both their mind and the object [perceived] are true. Therefore they are [the truths] of the noble ones [and once again this displays the amazingness of the completeness of the Awakened One’s realization]. For childish beings, although in reality things are "true", since their minds do not realize this [reality], it is not presented as truth [but instead the truth of the four noble truths is simply to them a concept that was labeled as truth by those who believe in it].”

So that is also why you should see the teachings of the Awakened One as being the eightfold path, the perfection of wisdom, and nothing else.

§2.1 - The Four Noble Truths as Two Pairs of Cause and Effect

1. The cause (Truth 1) and effect (Truth 2) of 'thorough affliction': samsara,

and

1. the cause (Truth 4) and effect (Truth 3) of 'complete purification': nirvana.

§2.2 - Sixteen Aspects of the Four Noble Truths

§2.2a - Pair One: Suffering & Origination

§2.2ai - Suffering

1. Suffering (Skt. duḥkha; Tib. སྡུག་བསྔལ་བ་)

2. Impermanence (Skt. anitya; Tib. མི་རྟག་པ་)

3. Emptiness (Skt. śūnyatā; Tib. སྟོང་པ་ཉིད་)

4. Selflessness (Skt. anātmaka; Tib. བདག་མེད་པ་)

§2.2aii - Origination

5. Cause (Skt. hetu; Tib. རྒྱུ་)

6. Origination (Skt.samudaya; Tib. ཀུན་འབྱུང་)

7. Intense Arising (Skt. prabhava; Tib. རབ་སྐྱེ་)

8. Condition (Skt. pratyaya; Tib. རྐྱེན་)

§2.2b - Pair Two: Cessation & Path

§2.2bi - Cessation

9. Peace (Skt. śānta; Tib. ཞི་བ་)

10. Cessation (Skt. nirodha; Tib. འགོག་པ་)

11. Perfection (Skt. praṇīta; Tib. གྱ་ནོམ་པ་)

12. True Deliverance (Skt. niḥsaraṇa; Tib. ངེས་འབྱུང་, Wyl. nges 'byung)

§2.2bii - Path

13. Path (Skt. mārga; Tib. ལམ་)

14. Appropriate (Skt. nyāya; Tib. རིགས་པ་)

15. Effective (Skt. pratipatti; Tib. སྒྲུབ་པ་)

16. Truly Delivering (Skt. nairyāṇika; Tib. ངེས་འབྱིན་)

§2.3 - Correlation to the Sixteen Instants

The sixteen aspects also correlate to the realizations experienced during the sixteen instants of awakening to the path of seeing.

The way the tradition categorizes them is like this:

(1) Acceptance, (2) Knowledge, (3) subsequent acceptance, (4) subsequent knowledge

Where each of these four can be found in each of the four noble truths, resulting in the sequential accomplishment of the four noble tasks of the four noble truths evidenced by their four realizations which take place over the course of sixteen moments.

So, one way to tell it as a story is like this:

§2.3a - The Noble Truth of Suffering

1. Suffering - the aspirant’s acceptance of the noble truth of suffering causes it to permeate their continuum and potentiate their merit with the merit of the Awakened One

2. Impermanence - therefore, the aspirant understands that their experience of suffering is temporary

3. Emptiness - which cascades into realization of open possibility for positively charged realities

4. Selflessness - and simultaneously implies the necessity of the realization of selflessness

§2.3ai - Note

A smaller facsimile of this process happens when people go for Small Refuge to save themselves from fear in this lifetime; the medium facsimile is going for Middling Refuge to liberate themselves in this or future lifetimes; the actual thing is when the aspirant takes cosmic responsibility to awaken themselves for the benefit of others. This superior type of refuge automatically includes the generation and increase of the heart/mind of Awakening - Bodhichitta.

§2.3b - The Noble Truth of the Origination of Suffering

5. Cause - the realization of selflessness cascades into the realization of the cause of suffering

6. Origination - which births the realization of the truth of a more direct, more true root of suffering

7. Intense Arising - which causes the aspirant to immediately behold the Vajra throne of the Awakened Able Sage Shakyamuni’s kusha grass seat under the Tree of Awakening.

8. Condition - which leads them to actually go forth to dhyana.

§2.3c - The Noble Truth of the Cessation of the First Two

9. Peace - due to the force accumulated in the awakening network of causes and conditions, the aspirant’s mind is completely pacified and meditation arises effortlessly with great confidence

10. Cessation - the preliminary experiences to the dhyanas occur

11. Perfection - and increase

12. True Deliverance - and the first dhyana occurs

§2.3d - The Noble Truth of the Path Delivering the Result

13. Path - the dhyanas increase

14. Appropriate - the truth of the wisdom of the Awakened Ones is first seen with yogic direct perception

15. Effective - the aspirant becomes an Awakening Being as their continuum’s true, primordial identity is discovered/revealed by their own self-emergent primordial consciousness and their false understandings, concepts, and perceptions are all at once, simultaneously destroyed

16. Truly Delivering - although liberated, due to karmic residue they have limited wisdom about many things that are unobscured to the Awakened One and also to higher Awakening Ones. This is what unfolds on the path as the Awakening Being simply rests and radiates in the dynamic wisdom of continually realizing their true identity, self-emergent primordial consciousness.

§3 - Meaning of Two Accumulations

Accumulating merit means tending the flame of the awareness lamp of Bodhichitta as the winds blow. Don’t let it go out. The signs of accumulation of merit are outer and inner confidence, luck, and infectious cheer/charisma, (and specific to inner merit - the display of wisdom transmission).

Accumulating wisdom means deepening experience of prajna and jnana attained through increase and stabilization of meditative experience.

§3.1 - Meaning of Six Perfections

The six perfections are the actions of the radiant light of the flame of the awareness lamp of bodhichitta. Refer to “Advice from me to myself, the commentary on Patrul Rinpoche’s Nine Considerations.”

§3.2 - The Bodhisattva Marga

The bodhisattva path is to continually confront whatever makes Bodhichitta decline and emerge victorious through the extraordinary means of the sixth paramita’s special power. This in turn develops the other five (and they are fractally concatenated). Eventually this catalyzes the sixteen moments.

§3.3 - Meaning of Dedication of Merit

Dedicating merit means sealing our activities with the Bodhichitta intent. The stronger our intent, the stronger our activities are sealed.

§3.4 - Dedicating the Merit

By this merit may all obtain omniscience

May it defeat the enemy - wrongdoing

From the turbulence of birth, old age, sickness, and death

From the ocean of samsara

May I free all beings

Sarva mangalam!

Auxiliary Study/Practice - Distilling the Quintessential Nectar of Rigpa

Practice Meditation

* Dudjom Rinpoche instructions

Auxiliary study: ox herding

CTR ox herding

Ontology of terms and different aspects of meditation and stages etc.

- [ ] Practice Dream Yoga

Path from GR book

Path from Dudjom Lingpa

Pith from LYR

Reference Index (need to make)

- [ ] Practice Local protectors

Local protectors/deities represent the entire array of cognitive dissonance related to one’s immediate environment - whether the weather or our karmic debtors. Regardless, making offerings or sacrificial effigies to them is a source of cognitive harmony.

- [ ] Practice Aspirations

- write passage

- [ ] Dedication of merit

- write passage