

Teaching by Geshe Sangey Thinley on the Two Truths

Translated by Virginia Blum, Sunday 23rd March 2014.

Please take a moment to create a positive intention. With regards to this pure intention as the 4th Panchen Lama said: Everything undesirable to us and our own suffering stem directly from one's own self-centred attitude, that is the mind fixated on one's self.

All happiness comes from the mind of compassion fixed on the welfare of others - this is the cause of genuine happiness and joy.

So we need to create the causes for our self-centred attitude to diminish. If we are genuinely able to do this, then we will not have this dissatisfaction and our joy will increase.

Based on this mind of self-centeredness we have travelled through many life-times motivated from a mind of self-clinging which directly causes our suffering throughout our time in samsara.

Since this is the case, we can see what it is that brings true happiness.

The Buddha's have focused on developing the altruistic mind which ultimately is how they attained enlightenment. By increasing this same mind state you will achieve both the happiness for others and that of one's self.

In our study and practice of dharma there are many important points like the pure intention and the variation of these throughout the lower, middle and higher scopes. One of the most important factors to understand, is the nature of reality, the Two Truths, that is relative and ultimate nature of reality.

Understanding the two truths is crucial to the Buddhist paths. The foundation of these two truths is the practice of the union of method (compassion) and wisdom (ultimate nature of reality.)

By engaging in the path of practice of method and wisdom, ie: compassion and emptiness the fruition or ultimate result of cultivating this practice is the two kayas of Buddhahood.

This is the path of the Buddhist practice in a nutshell.

We must really recognise that the Buddhas didn't start as a perfect beings. They all were afflicted by negative emotions and temporary obscuration's, and self-centredness. Gradually they abandoned negativity and non-virtue and achieved the highest state of mind – that is the Buddha mind.

Those who have purified their negative mind states and the causes of afflictive emotions have done so by removing temporary obscuration's. They have the primordially pure essence and it is through the practice that one purifies this obscuration. The stains are incidental or provisional and can be removed. Consider that if they were the true nature we would not be able to remove them.

Of the two: body and mind, it is the mind that perceives the body and the body follows. The mind is empty and the essence of awareness.

There are the characteristics of awareness and the internal mental arising's.

The example of this person called 'Tashi' – who has the characteristics of the person being his attributes. The same with the mind – the essence and the mental arising's, which can be

altered by applying antidotes are two separate 'entities' the essential mind which is pure and the mental thoughts. Remember these are not the mind itself. There are different qualities of the mind, the intrinsic and then that which is based on conditions.

The seed of the flower is its essence, the inherent cause. But the seed will not always flower unless it meets with the correct conditions like soil, nutrients water sunlight. These have to be applied to the essence of the seed to result in the final fruition of the flower.

This mind is the bases of mistakes and also the basis of the absence of error. That is determined by the presence or absence of delusion or ignorance. This is how our mind goes astray.

To eliminate this habit of unawareness, we must generate the cause of wisdom of realising the truth of selflessness to completely overturn the mind of ignorance. When one realises the truth of selflessness, we are no longer confused by the laws of reality.

One must see the perfect intricacies of cause and effect of Karma, when we perfectly perceive ultimate truth of emptiness. These are the Two Truths and it is when we truly internalise these by realising the nature of them we can perceive the reality of true existence.

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So the foundation is that we understand this as Buddha dharma. Non Buddhist traditions also have the practice of love and compassion and the hinting of the truth of emptiness, so is the foundation all spiritual practice.

Everything that appears to us is subsumed into the Two Truths. If you look at the Four Noble Truths and look at inanimate objects, the Four Noble Truths don't apply when you look at them according to these. But they do fit with the Two Truths. So they appear but they are in the nature of emptiness.

There is nothing that cannot be subsumed into these Two Truths of relative and ultimate reality.

It is important that you really study this foundation of the two truths and contemplate until you grasp them strongly. Also the practice of method and wisdom. The method is skilful means and compassion and is the path that accords with the relative truth. Wisdom is the understanding of emptiness. The union of relative and ultimate truth is simultaneously the nature of emptiness.

There is nothing that is not pervaded by emptiness. When we engage through the practice of Buddha dharma with enlightenment being the goal of the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya. There is not anything that does not fall into these two Kayas.

Rupakaya is the Enlightened form. The Buddha is an emanation of this form, and emanates for the benefit of sentient beings.

Dharmakaya, which cannot be seen by the eye - is the essence of mind or awareness itself.

The Rupakaya manifest from here - the Buddha mind.

The four or eight Kayas of Buddha hood. Look into these and study them and then you will become clear. "Cho". Through intellectual study, deeply study you will really understand.

All sentient being possess the seed of enlightenment that is the cause of Buddhahood. However we have these faults of afflictive emotions but these can be purified and removed and this is how beings progress to the goal by clearing these temporary obscuration's. It is important to deeply grasp the incidental nature of obscuration's and remember they are impermanent. Like the cloudy sky, they don't stay there and they cover the clear nature of the sky. But the clouds are not the nature of the sky and are temporary. If the clouds were the nature of the sky they wouldn't be able to dissipate. This is same as the true nature they can be cleared through our own efforts. Take this as a reason to really apply yourself to practice.