

The Fourth Noble Truth: The Path

mod4-9handout

Module 4: Foundation of Buddhist Study. Class 9 Nov. 20, 2014

Reading: Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, Intro to Buddhism 111, The Four Truths: The Path The Eightfold Path, The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation

Ground: Our longing for liberation from this dissatisfaction we feel in our lives.

Path: Courage to be who we are right now. Follow the eightfold path.

Fruition: Individual liberation and longing to help others

Class 9. last class in the teaching on the Four Noble Truths.

The Truth of Suffering, The Cause of Suffering, The Cessation of Suffering

Tonight: **The Path that is the cause for the cessation of suffering.**

The Path: look at the life of the Buddha. Buddha's path is just one example.

When we say *the path* it sounds like it is all mapped out for us. We get a map and follow the path. But it isn't like that. No map given. More like a jungle with obscure paths. We have to make our own path. Each person's journey is unique.

There are many teachings on aspects of the Path as the Fourth Noble Truth

The 10 unvirtuous actions and the 10 meritorious actions

7 characteristics of a dharmic person

5 paths and 10 bhumis

8 fold path

What is the common theme that runs through all of these teachings? **Courage to be who we are right now.** We have to start where we are. It takes courage to travel on the path of awakening.

What is the path to individual liberation?

1. refrain from doing what causes suffering for oneself and others
2. cultivate the causes that truly bring lasting happiness.

What do we refrain from? indulging in our addictions, emotions, solidifying our ego, doing things that hurt others.

What do we cultivate? the causes that bring happiness.

Living an "upright" life. Setting priorities. Having time to practice meditation. Appreciating our life. Being of benefit to living beings and the world.

The Eightfold Path taught by the Buddha.

(teachings from Zen Master Seung Sahn and Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche)

“The Buddha taught the Eightfold Path for taking away desire, anger, and ignorance and returning to our true nature.” Zen Master Seung Sahn in *The Compass of Zen* page 100

Meaning of the word **right**. Not right vs wrong. Sanskrit *samyak* means complete. Self-sufficient. Seeing life as it is without crutches.

Samyaksambuddha Completely Awakened Buddha

1. **Right View**: holding no view. Put down your thinking and opinions and see this world exactly as it is. Why should we pursue temporary feelings and desires born out of desire, anger or ignorance?

Don't have to label someone coming towards you as friend or enemy. Don't have to prejudge.

2. **Right Thought** or Right Intention: Not becoming attached to any thought or intention. Not becoming attached to any views, not holding our opinion and condition and situation. Keep a before-thinking mind.

“Having conceptually fixed the person now you are ready either to grasp or attack him.” This is not right intention. Right intention is not being inclined toward anything other than what is. Pleasure as it is, pain as it is.

3. **Right Speech**: being careful what you say. Use speech in clear, compassionate way. Speech comes from thought. If you drop your opinions and conditions then Right Speech appears by itself.

Perfect speech is perfect communication. Simple minimum of words.

Listening and speaking without agenda.

4. **Right Action**: How we can help this world? The five precepts. Should not kill, lie, steal, engage in sexual misconduct or use intoxicants to produce heedlessness. Mental habit (thought) becomes an action which produces karma. Right Action means always being aware of how our actions affect other beings, because that also affects our mind.

(Right Morality, Right Discipline) Right Discipline is a giving up process which bring us into complete simplicity. Simplify life. Giving up ego.

5. **Right Livelihood**: our inside work is keeping a clear mind. Outside work is earning money. Cause and effect are very clear. Buddha taught that we must have jobs that don't hurt this world.

6. **Right Effort**: Try hard in your meditation practice. No matter how you feel or the conditions you are in, practice.

(Right Energy, endurance, exertion) Need gaps in our discursive thinking to experience right effort. Natural openness is right effort. Uphill at first, painful then at some point practice becomes a delight.

7. **Right Mindfulness:** If you wake up right now you get happiness. If you follow your desire, anger and ignorance you get suffering.

Right Mindfulness does not simply mean being aware. There is more spaciousness in right mindfulness than in right effort. Space is open to you.

We always have a choice in the present moment.

8. **Right Meditation:** From moment to moment keeping a not-moving mind. Rock and roll band moved into apt below the Providence Zen Center. People wanted a peaceful meditation.

“Finding quiet in the quiet is not true quiet. Quiet in the noisy is true quiet.”

“How do you keep your mind right now? That makes your life. If your mind is clear, the whole universe is clear.” p 103

Right Samadhi right absorption. Relating with the space of a situation. Being completely involved in a non-dualistic way.

OVERCOMING HABITUAL PATTERNS BRINGS RELIEF

To overcome ego, we have to undo our habitual patterns, which we have been developing for thousands of years, thousands of aeons, up to this point. Such habitual patterns may not have any realistic ground, but nonetheless, we have been accustomed to their dirty work, so to speak. We are used to our habitual patterns and neuroses. We have been used to them for such a long time that we end up believing they are the real thing. To overcome that, we have to see our egolessness, how we can actually overcome our anxiety and pain. In Buddhist terms this is known as liberation, freedom from anxiety, and nirvana, or relief.

From Daily Quotes from The Collected Works of Chogyam Trunpa Rinpoche, Volume Two, page 469.

“Buddhism promises nothing. It teaches us to be what we are where we are, constantly, and it teaches us to relate to our living situations accordingly.” The Myth of Freedom, p. 93

“Since there is no obscuration of mind, there is no fear.” The Heart Sutra

Two obscurations:

1. Conflicted emotions (kleshas) such as attachment, aggression, ignorance.
2. Knowledge obscurations: not realizing egolessness and emptiness of phenomena.