



Fall Debate School Book 3
A Flower for Nalanda
Logic for Life

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Book 3

A Flower for Nalanda – Logic for Life

Essential concepts for understanding consciousness and seeing the world with logic

2023 Edition

Sera Jey Monastic University

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A Flower for Nalanda

Logic for Life

(Revealing Our Own Theories)

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*“Unthinkable, Unspeakable, Wisdom gone to the far side,
Unproduceable, Unstoppable, the essence of space itself;*

*The object experienced by self-knowing great wisdom –
A bow to the Mother of the Holiness of the Three Times”*

- Shakyamuni Buddha

Chapter 1

An Examination of Speech and Language

Purpose of Language

Language has a purpose. Oftentimes, a speech act is made with multiple purposes in mind. The main purpose for a speech act is for the contents of the words – aka, the meaning - to be understood by another person. The Buddha and his followers considered speech to be very important, as evidenced by the 100 volumes of Buddha’s Word and 213 volumes of commentaries that were compiled in the Tibetan textual canon alone.

The Buddha spoke extensively. But why? While it is believed that the Buddha has many unique abilities and powers that he can use in the service of helping sentient beings, the Buddha’s ultimate method for giving benefit to others is by speaking. As the renowned verse says:

*“The Powerful Ones cannot wash away negative deeds with water,
They cannot clear away the suffering of beings migrating through existence with their hands,
They can’t even transmit their own realizations and knowledge to others;
Instead, they liberate others by teaching the truth of the nature of reality.”*

It is through the speech that expresses the nature of reality that sentient beings can learn about reality. We engage with the words of the Buddha through reading and hearing them, contemplating their meaning, and meditating on that meaning. This allows us to emulate what the Buddha himself did, since his speech all comes from his own experience of the true nature of things, the state of peace that comes out of knowing reality, and the path he followed to achieve such a state.

All of these are purposes of the Buddha's speech – starting from simply understanding the meaning of the words he said, all the way up to achieving the omniscient mind of an awakened being. Thus, words not only have meaning – they have power.

The four qualities of realistic speech

Realistic speech has four properties:

1. Meaning
2. Purpose
3. Purpose of the purpose
4. Connection

The **meaning** is the semantic contents of the speech. It is what is expressed by the words and phrases. The **purpose** is what the speaker intends to accomplish through speaking. The **purpose of the purpose** is what the speaker intends to ultimately accomplish through speaking, by first accomplishing the purpose. The **connection** is the relation that the purpose of the purpose has with the purpose, and the relation that the purpose has with the meaning.

For example, the sentence, “Pour some water in this glass, please,” has a meaning, purpose, purpose of purpose, and a connection.

1. Meaning – pouring water into this glass
2. Purpose – In dependence on hearing the words, the meaning being understood by the listener.
3. Purpose of purpose – In dependence on the listener understanding the meaning, ultimately have your thirst quenched.
4. Connection – The purpose of the purpose being related with the purpose, and the purpose being related with the meaning.

Realistic speech – *intelligible sound that has a real-world referent*

Non-realistic speech – *intelligible sound whose referent doesn't exist*

Non-fictional speech – *speech for which the speaker of it understands its intended meaning with a Gauge Mind*

Exercise

Identify examples of the Joints for each of the following pairs. Their relations are already given.

Fictional speech and non-fictional speech are Contradictory.

Realistic speech and fictional speech have Four Joints.

Fictional speech and lies have Four Joints.

Non-fictional speech and lies have Four Joints.

Speech and the act of lying are Contradictory.

Truth has Four Joints with both Fictional speech and Non-fictional speech.

Something that's true is Contradictory with Speech.

If it is Buddha's Word, then it's necessarily non-fictional speech.

The Words of a Supreme Nirmanakaya (like Shakyamuni Buddha) are called Sutras.

Buddha's Word is of three types:

- 1. the Word spoken from his own mouth**
- 2. the Word spoken through blessing**
- 3. the Word spoken with permission.**

Chapter 2

Relations

Now that the concept of relations has been introduced through exploring the four qualities of realistic speech, we can ask – what is a relation?

Relations are the basis for *pervasions*. Pervasions are the heart of debate. Therefore, understanding relations is essential for understanding how a reason comes to be a flawless reason, and therefore how it comes to cause new knowledge to be generated in your mind.

The definition of *relation* in general will become clearer by first thinking of it in terms of being related to a specific object, like a cup. Something that's related to a cup depends upon the cup. What kinds of things depend on a cup? It would be anything that relies upon a cup for its existence, or anything that needs a cup to be there for it itself to be there.

This would include things that exist simultaneously with the cup and are such that without the cup being there they could not be cognized, could be not be found, and could not exist. For example, things like the parts of a cup, the particles within a cup, the impermanence of the cup, and the color and shape of the cup would fit this description. The other type of relation includes things that exist consecutively with the cup and would not exist were it not for the cup; the results of the cup are like this. Thus there are two types of relations; things that are causally related (in this illustration, to a cup) and things that have a same essence relation with a phenomenon (i.e., with a cup).

We don't define the relation by reference to the fact of its dependence, but instead its defined in terms of a counterfactual. If the cup did not exist, then the cup's results would not exist. By the force of the cup being counteracted or removed, the impermanence of the cup is counteracted and removed. Relation is defined as follows -

Relation: *It is different from that, and by the power of counteracting that, it is counteracted*

We can also give the definition in reference to a specific object.

Related to a cup: *It is different from a cup, and by the power of counteracting a cup, it is counteracted.*

e.g., a plastic cup, the parts of a cup, the water inside of a cup

Categories of Relation

1) Same essence relation

2) Causal relation

Related with a thing as the same essence - *it is different from a thing within the context of being the same essence, and by the power of thing being counteracted, it is counteracted*

e.g., permanent object, the isolate of a thing.

Causally related with a thing - *it arises from a thing and by the power of a thing being counteracting, it is counteracted*

e.g., a thing's results, the second moment of a thing, the thing that arises after a thing

The phrasing of “by the power of counteracting” something is a bit challenging. There are two main ways for something to be counteracted in this context. One way is to be counteracted by knowledge in the mind of a subject. The other way is to be counteracted by the actual object disintegrating, being destroyed or removed, or prevented from arising in the first place.

When someone looks at a table and cognizes the table to not be a cup (i.e., to be a “non-cup”), that is a case of knowledge within a mind counteracting a cup on the basis of the table. When the cup is counteracted like that, the impermanence of a cup, the shape and color of a cup, are all also counteracted on the basis of the table.

When a cup falls and breaks, the cup is counteracted from existing; at that same time, the impermanence of a cup also goes out of existence. Likewise, the atoms of a cup, the existence of a cup, and the shape and color of cup all go out of existence.

Thinking about relations can help us understand impermanence and momentary change. Because a cup is related with its causes, we know that by the power of the cup's causes being counteracted, the cup will be counteracted. The causes for the cup do not exist at the time of the cup – by the time the cup has

arisen, the causes have already been counteracted. Thus, the cup has no chance to remain for more than the very moment of its arising. The cause which created it is the very cause of its destruction. Birth is the cause of death. Abiding, arising, and disintegration of all produced objects occur simultaneously.

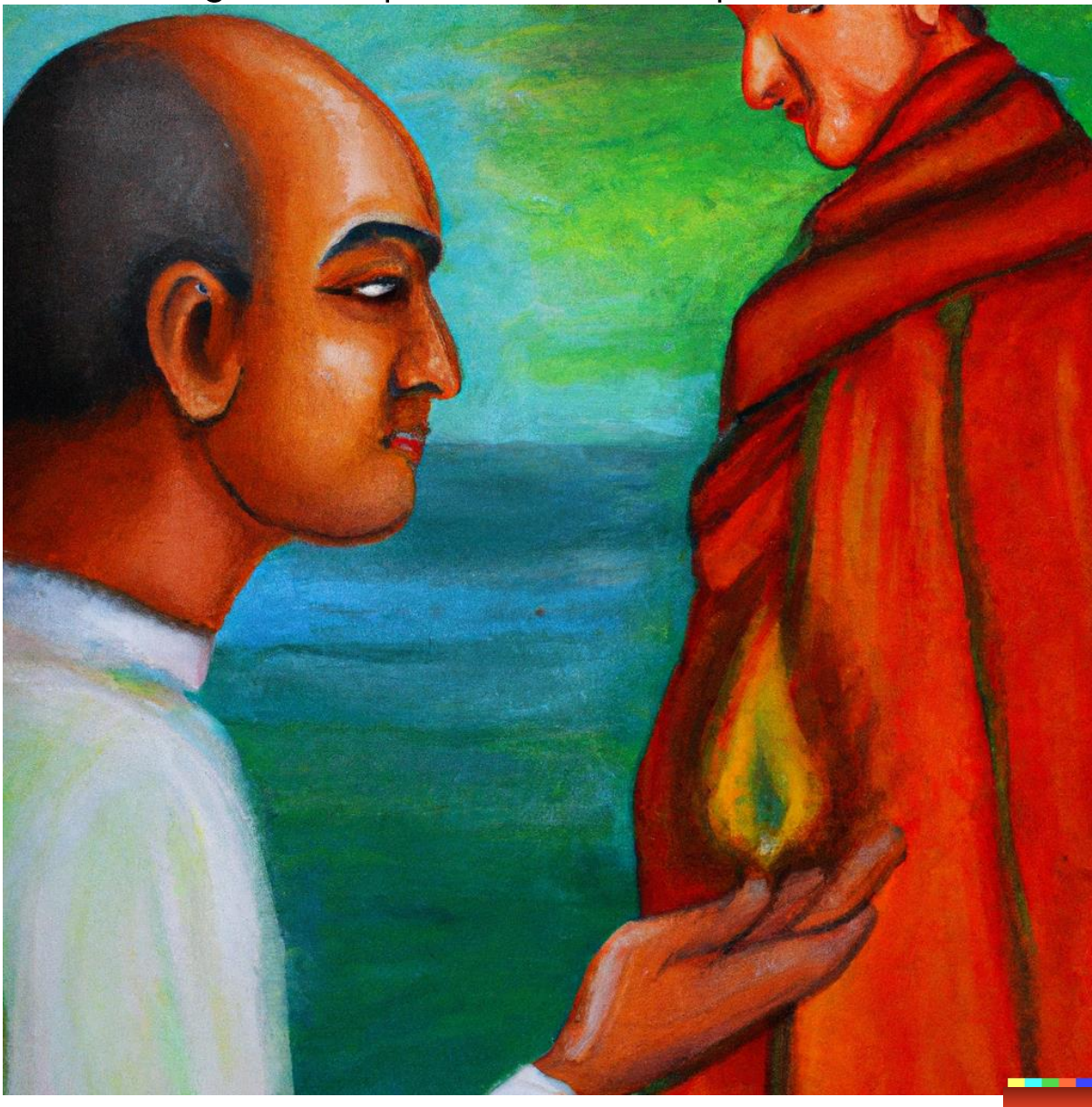
Chapter 3

Taking Debate Into the Path

Relying on a Spiritual Friend

Now that you understand the philosophical meaning of a relation, you may wonder - how does this apply to the relationship with a spiritual friend?

After all, all the holy masters say that on the path to liberation, there is nothing more important than one's spiritual friends...



The kind and venerable spiritual mentor is the foundation of all good qualities. Seeing that dependence on him or her is the root of the path, I request inspiration to rely on him or her with great respect and continuous effort.

- *“The Foundation of All Good Qualities” by Je Tsongkhapa*

[Ananda] 'This is half of the holy life, lord: virtuous friendship, virtuous companionship, virtuous camaraderie.'

[Buddha's reply] 'Don't say that, Ananda. Don't say that. Virtuous friendship, virtuous companionship, virtuous camaraderie is actually the whole of the holy life. When a monk has virtuous people as friends, companions, & comrades, he can be expected to develop & pursue the Noble Eightfold Path.'

- *Upaddha Sutta (SN 45.2)*

The above quotations give us some sense of how the Buddha and Buddha-like teachers have regarded the importance of a Virtuous Friend (aka Geshe) or Spiritual Mentor. For those who desire to accomplish some genuine spiritual development themselves, a teacher who has the knowledge of how to do so is essential. This extends beyond the spiritual journey to all facets of life. Every skill we have depends on having learned it – at least to some degree – from another person. Some even say that this is the very thing that makes humans unique; the capacity for language allowed for an unprecedented passing on of knowledge from one generation to the next.

Even the most basic skills of how to speak, walk, and care for ourselves had to be taught – oftentimes by a person's own mother. The technological marvels of the modern world were made possible by the creation of institutions of learning where the knowledge, discoveries, and insights of prior generations can be imparted to today's generation.

Just as the basic skills of life and knowledge of the complex sciences that allow for electricity, internet, and airplanes all depend on learning from a teacher, so do the profound and life-changing transformations of mind that we effect through spiritual practice. For those who wish to understand and transform your inner world of consciousness through practices like Bodhicitta and accustoming yourself to the worldview of emptiness, what kind of teacher is needed?

The Ten Qualities of a Mahayana Dharma Teacher

The teacher's qualities and characteristics are explained in various ways in the different scriptures. In *The Ornament of the Great Vehicle Sūtra (Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra)* by Maitreya, it is taught that a dharma teacher must have ten specific qualities:

*“One should follow a spiritual teacher who is gentle, at peace, thoroughly at peace,
Possesses superior qualities, is diligent, rich in terms of scripture,
Realized with respect to reality, skilled in teaching,
Loving in nature, and has relinquished weariness.”*

As explained therein:

1. Endowed with discipline, the teacher is gentle
2. Endowed with samadhi, the teacher is at peace;
3. Endowed with wisdom, they have thoroughly pacified the afflictions;
4. Possessing qualities that surpass all others, they possess superior qualities;
5. Free of laziness when it comes to benefiting others, they are diligent;
6. Having studied extensively, they are rich in terms of scripture;
7. Knowing the true nature as that which is to be known, they are realized with respect to reality;
8. They are eloquent and skilled in teaching;
9. They are loving in nature and not influenced by concerns for material wealth;
10. They have relinquished weariness with regard to teaching the dharma.

These are the ten qualities.

(This section has been adapted from *A Lamp Illuminating the Path to Liberation: An Explanation of Essential Topics for Dharma Students* by Khenpo Gyaltzen, pp. 7-9.)

Debates and Analysis

Relying on a Spiritual Friend

1. Teachers come into our lives when we attend school, and also when we embark on a spiritual path or learn a religious practice. But what other kinds of teachers are there? Do we learn certain skills or knowledge from people who aren't formal teachers?

☞| It follows that you can posit the difference of joints between:

- a) teacher and family member
- b) teacher and stranger
- c) teacher and bad guy/enemy
- d) teacher and someone who's no longer alive during your lifetime
- e) teacher and an AI/computer/machine

2. If there are so many different kinds of teachers, and so many ways someone can be a teacher, how can we define what a teacher is? Can it be internal or must it be an external person?

☞| Posit the definition of a teacher.

3. "Geshe" is a Tibetan word for a spiritual teacher that literally translates as "virtuous friend." What kind of friend is a virtuous friend?

☸ | **Posit the difference between friend and virtuous friend (3 Joints, 4 Joints, Equivalence, or Contradiction).**

4. The purpose of a Spiritual Friend is to show one the methods to improve one's good qualities, eliminate delusions and ignorance, and ultimately achieve full awakening. Yet, the Lam Rim Chen Mo reports that it is reasonable to rely on a person with only one of the 10 qualifications of Spiritual Friend, if that's the best you can find. One of these qualities is true love and concern for the student.

☸ | **It follows if someone has love and concern for their students, they are necessarily a qualified spiritual teacher?**

5. One reflection to help internalize a positive attitude towards a Spiritual Friend is thinking about the kindness they've shown towards you. But does there actually exist any living being who has not shown you kindness?

☸ | **Posit the difference between a living being and someone who has shown you kindness.**

Also, is it a requirement to receive kindness from something that it has a motivation to be kind? Then...

☸ | **Take the subject: the Dharma (Or food, a cool breeze on a hot day, etc). It follows that you have not received kindness from it, because it does not have a motivation to be kind.**

6. Relying on a Spiritual Friend involves taking seriously another person's advice, even if it runs contrary to your own plans or perspectives. This involves issues of autonomy, independence, trust, and authority. But what

kind of autonomy or independence do we assume we should have? Is it realistic, or even possible?

☞| It follows that you can posit the definition of independence, as used in the statement, “I’m going to do what I like, because I’m independent!”

Likewise, is it reasonable to place your trust in an authority just by virtue of their authority?

☞| It follows that if someone is an authority, then they are necessarily trustworthy.

7. In the above Sutta quotation, the Buddha tells Ananda that Virtuous Friends are the whole of the spiritual life. What does this imply for our learning and study? Can we not learn spiritual practices and meditations from books? Can you have a Virtuous Friend who is not physically present before you?

☞| It follows that if someone is your Virtuous Friend, then they are necessarily teaching you directly while in their physical presence.

8. In the above Tsongkhapa quotation, he says the depending on the Spiritual Mentor is the root of the path. What does it mean to be the root of the path? Bodhicitta, for instance, is a path – how is the Spiritual Mentor the root of this? Are they the cause of bodhicitta?

☞| **It follows that if it is a path, then the Spiritual Mentor is necessarily its root.**

9. **Spiritual aspirants must work to develop a relationship with a Virtuous Friend, but can we say that we are related to a Virtuous Friend? Being related means that if the Virtuous Friend is counteracted, then we are counteracted. What about the virtue, and our good qualities and knowledge that are developed by relying on a Virtuous Friend? Are those related to the Virtuous Friend?**

☞| **Take the subject: virtue. It follows that it is related to a Virtuous Friend.**

Chapter 4

The World of the Senses

Now that we understand how the four qualities of realistic speech are related - with the latter related to the former as described above - let's return to the explanation of speech...

Speech and intelligible sound are Equivalent.

There are three types of intelligible sounds:

- 1. Words**
- 2. Phrases**
- 3. Letters**

Sounds are a type of matter; specifically, external matter. They are the type of external matter that is experienced in the domain of auditory consciousness. There is a three-condition model to explain how a consciousness hearing a sound comes to be created.

Based on the three conditions of 1) a sound, 2) a functioning auditory system, 3) and a prior connectivity of consciousness, an experience of hearing a sound is produced.

- 1. Object condition** - The sound is required for the auditory consciousness to have an object. Without an object, it would be blank. A blank consciousness is meaningless.

2. **Controller condition** – The functioning auditory system gives the auditory consciousness the capacity to experience the domain of auditory objects (sounds). It controls the type of consciousness that arises, deciding which type of object the consciousness can experience. People without a functioning auditory system cannot directly experience sounds.
3. **Connectivity condition** – The prior connectivity of consciousness is required for a present moment of consciousness to arise. Mind exists in a temporal continuum, where each prior moment acts as a condition for the subsequent moment. It is this connectivity to a continuum of mind that enables new minds (i.e., instances or moments of mind) to arise. Things like rocks and atoms, without a prior moment of consciousness, cannot experience sounds in the present moment.

This three-condition model applies to all types of consciousness. To directly experience any kind of matter in any sense domain, each of these three is required. What other types of matter are there? Following is a description of the different types of matter – yet it is made not based on an ontology of the atomic composition of material entities. Rather, it is made based on an ontology of the different domains of sensory consciousness through which the matter comes to be experienced by living, consciousness-endowed subjects.

Let's begin by defining matter itself...

Matter¹ – *something that is established as particle-like or is composed of particles*

There are two types of matter when looked at from the perspective of their relationship to the affective quality of living organisms' minds:

- **1) Internal matter (matter foundational to the interior experiences of conscious organisms)**
- **2) External matter (matter taken in as sensory content)**

Material form – *something that can be pointed to or struck*

Material form and **matter** are equivalent. **Physical forms, material objects, and physical bodies** are other equivalents of **material form**.

Internal matter – *a physical cause giving rise to sense impressions which is found within the continuum of a conscious organism.*

- **1) the eye's modality** - subtle visual sensing structure
- **2) the ear's modality** - subtle auditory sensing structure
- **3) the nose's modality** - subtle olfactory sensing structure
- **4) the tongue's modality** - subtle gustatory sensing structure
- **5) the body's modality** - subtle tactile sensing structure

External matter – *a physical cause giving rise to sense impressions which is not found within the continuum of a conscious organism.*

¹ Most textbooks list simply *form* as the main category here, and *matter* is emphasized less. Here we opted for the expression "material form" to reduce the confusion that comes when listing form as one of the five categories of external matter, where it is an equivalent of visual form (shapes and colors). An alternative definition of *form/material form* is posited as "That which is suitable as form." The definition in our text indicates localization and tangibility as qualities of form. We are using matter as a primary category instead of material form to better align with contemporary culture.,

- **1) Visual form** – *object given over to experience through the eye sensing modality and seen in the domain of visual consciousness*
- **2) Sound** – *object given over to experience through the ear sensing modality and heard in the domain of auditory consciousness*
- **3) Smell** - *object given over to experience through the nose sensing modality and smelled in the domain of olfactory consciousness*
- **4) Taste** - *object given over to experience through the tongue sensing modality and tasted in the domain of taste consciousness*
- **5) Tactile object** - *object given over to experience through the body sensing modality and experienced in the domain of touch consciousness*

Alternatively, there is a shortened form of these definitions...

- **1) Visual form** – *object seen in the domain of eye consciousness*
Follow this pattern for each category of external form.

Eye consciousness and **visual consciousness** are equivalent; **ear consciousness** and **auditory consciousness** are equivalent, etc.

Body consciousness experiences tactile objects both within and outside of the body; thus it includes interoception.

Visual Forms: When we categorize visual form along the lines of an ontology of what are experienced as basic visual objects, we get two classes:

- **1) Shape** – *something reasonably identified as shape*
- **2) Color** – *something reasonable described as hue*

Shapes: further categorizing these along the lines of fundamental components of visual experience, we find eight classes:

- **1) long shape** – *a shape characterized by lengthiness*
- **2) short shape** – *a shape characterized by shortness of breadth*
- **3) high shape** – *a shape characterized by tallness*
- **4) low shape** – *a shape characterized by shortness of height*
- **5) round shape** – *a shape of orb-like quality*
- **6) cubed shape** – *a shape of box-like quality*
- **7) even shape** – *a shape characterized by evenness or flatness*
- **8) uneven shape** – *a shape characterized by jaggedness or unevenness*

Colors: these are categorized on the basis of whether the color is a mix of two other colors or not. Two different ways of understanding which colors are primary and which are secondary exist; in terms of additive color mixing and in terms of subtractive color mixing.

- **1) Primary color** – *something reasonably described as a primary hue*
- **2) Secondary color** – *something reasonably described as a secondary hue*

Primary colors: these require no mixing of other colors to make them, but differ depending on whether we're discussing colors of light or of pigments.

In additive color mixing (mixing light):

- **1) Red**
- **2) Green**
- **3) Blue**

In subtractive color mixing (mixing pigments):

- 1) Blue
- 2) Yellow
- 3) White
- 4) Red

Secondary colors: are any colors created by mixing two or more other colors.

We can specify colors of certain natural phenomena in order to address misconceptions that can easily arise in relation to them. For instance, the colors of certain phenomena are visible from a distance but no longer visible as you move too close or shift your viewing angle, yet we still must acknowledge that they have color; thus, we can specify:

- 1) the color of clouds
- 2) the color of smoke
- 3) the color of dust
- 4) the color of mist

Likewise, the colors of some natural phenomena are only visible in relation to a solid object or a broader environment of objects, yet we must still acknowledge that they are not themselves the color of that solid object against which we can see them; thus, we can specify:

- 5) the color of light
- 6) the color of darkness
- 7) the color of sunrays
- 8) the color of shadows

Sounds: we can categorize sound according to various physical properties of the soundwaves, such as frequency and amplitude, which gives us the vocabulary of music and the dimensions of tone, pitch, harmony, resonance, etc. There are many different qualities of sound, but here the primary classification will be made in terms of the capacity of sounds to express semantic content – in other words, whether or not they have meaning.

- **1) Intelligible sound** – *an object in the domain of auditory consciousness which creates an understanding of semantic content*
 - This is equivalent to speech sounds
 - Example – the word “Hello!”
- **2) Unintelligible sound** – *an object in the domain of auditory consciousness which does not express a meaning*
 - This is equivalent to non-speech sounds
 - Example – the sound of a babbling brook

Smells: many types of molecules can be transduced by olfactory neurons and experienced as smell; there is no known way of determining or classifying smells based on molecular structure. Smells must simply be categorized according to common convention, and in this regard, there is a classification into ten:

- **1) Fruity**
- **2) Citrusy**
- **3) Fragrant**
- **4) Minty**
- **5) Sweet**
- **6) Nutty**
- **7) Woody**
- **8) Chemical**
- **9) Pungent**
- **10) Decaying**

Since the human nose is very apt at distinguishing naturally occurring odors from man-made scents, we can simplify the above classification into:

- **1) Natural smells**
- **2) Artificial smells**

Tastes: like smells, tastes are classified according to common convention; there also appears to be some physical basis in the arrangement of sensory neurons in the tongue, as well as in the molecular structures of taste molecules, for distinguishing different tastes.

- 1) Sweet
- 2) Sour
- 3) Bitter
- 4) Spicy
- 5) Salty
- 6) Astringent

Tactile objects: by observing the fundamental elements of our tactile experience – and likewise, the primary features of emergent physical objects that are empirically evident to our sense of touch – we can see how the traditional understanding of “the four elements” accounts for a robust classification of tactile objects. They constitute the primary constituents of tactile and interoceptive experience and form the basis for other, secondary tactile objects.

- 1) The elements of tangibility
- 2) Derivative tactile objects

The elements of tangibility: these four elements are elementary in the sense that they are primary objects as experienced internally and externally by way of bodily sensations. Additionally, they can be identified as primary components of all macroscopic physical objects in terms of the characteristics that they embody. They are not primary elements in the same way that carbon, oxygen, lithium, etc. are primary elements. However, they are akin to the basic states of matter: solids, liquids, gases. The element of warmth is akin to the phenomena of heat and combustion.

- 1) The earth element – *a thing that is hard and obstructive*
- 2) The water element – *a thing that is wet and fluid*

- 3) The fire element – *a thing that is hot and burning*
- 4) The air element – *a thing that is light and moving*

Alternatively, the following categories can be used, with the same definitions as given above:

- 1) Solids
- 2) Liquids
- 3) Heat
- 4) Gases

Derivative tactile objects: these include a variety of objects experienced as sensations in the domain of bodily consciousness – some of them are solely experienced interoceptively while others are experienced both interoceptively and via the nerve receptors on the outer surface of the skin.

- 1) Softness
- 2) Roughness
- 3) Heaviness
- 4) Lightness
- 5) Hunger
- 6) Thirst
- 7) Cold

A basic categorization of colors into primary and secondary lines up with most presentations of color theory. In contemporary art and science, we distinguish between additive color and subtractive color. A list based on subtractive color is made by looking at how *pigments* mix and create other colors rather than how *light* mixes to create colors. Subtractive color is what we have when we're talking about color pigments and not colors of light itself. When we perceive the blue color of a solid object (as opposed to seeing raw blue light emitted directly from a light source) it appears blue because the pigments in the object absorb all light wavelengths other than blue and reflect the blue wavelength back towards our eyes.

This is called "subtractive" because the color we perceive results from wavelengths of light being absorbed or subtracted out – thus if we mix enough color pigments together, we will end up with a perception of a black color. All of the wavelengths of light get absorbed, so none are reflected and we just perceive black. Simply due to surface reflectance, and other phenomena such as fluorescence, there is still some light reflected off a black object – an object that entirely absorbed all light would be like a black hole!

Additive colors, on the other hand, don't rely on some wavelengths of light being absorbed and others reflected. It's the wavelengths of light themselves that we see, so when they're mixed they produce white light. So then, we can conclude that there is no such thing as black light. So how does the screen that you're looking at right now produce black, when the images on a screen are made from pure light being emitted?

Mindfulness Corner

The Nalanda Tradition gives the tools for a systematic inquiry into the nature of human experience, aka human consciousness. How does the current chapter – with its focus on the external world – lead to deeper understanding of your own experience?

As you reflect on and debate about these material objects, keep track of the interesting questions and doubts that arise. Then challenge yourself to observe your own experience of the five types of external matter more attentively and deeply. Cultivate mindfulness by clearly perceiving each one in turn; observe visual forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects. Observe each of these in relation to one object, such as a tree or flower.

Recognize in your experience the difference between the raw data of sensory consciousness and the thoughts, that you have about an object. Distinguish the conception of an object – how it appears in your thoughts – from the naked appearance that is present in your sense consciousnesses.

Chapter 5

The Consequences of Speech

Now that you've seen all of the material world, we can return to the world of meaning. Let's return back to the exploration of how sound, as it functions for humans as communication, can cause people to understand new meaning and transform their beliefs and their minds...

Speech communicates a meaning that a speaker intends to express. What kinds of meanings does a speaker intend to express? There are infinite meanings and specific motivations that a speaker may have. One powerful use of communication is to convey logic.

By expressing reasons, we can use our speech to prove some concept or fact to another person. If the person who is hearing our words is suitably primed to understand our logic, then it can cause them to develop new knowledge – to make a discovery, giving rise to a Gauge Mind. Even though we call our debate partners opponents, in a very real sense they become our teachers.

Logic in the Nalanda Tradition starts from this basic premise – that communication is a tool that can trigger another person to make logical connections that they previously did not see. Thus, logic-oriented speech – formalized into what are known as syllogisms - are what triggers someone to arrive at a new conclusion and gain new knowledge. That new knowledge is referred to as an Inference Gauge Mind².

In Nalanda Logic, there are several different ways of classifying logical statements and reasons. Let's take a general look at this now.

Sign – something that's used as a sign

A sign proving that sound is impermanent – something that's used to prove that sound is impermanent

² Inferential Pramana, often called inferential valid cognition (རྫོགས་སྲུང་དབུགས་པའི་ཚད་མ།)

If it's selfless, then it's necessarily a sign proving that sound is impermanent.

If it's a sign used to prove that sound is impermanent through the sign of a product, then it's necessarily one with a product.

Here, we for the first time are encountering the notion of *oneness*. Oneness can also be called sameness, and in some philosophical contexts it's referred to as identity. When something is one with itself, then it is identical with itself. Likewise, it is the same as itself. It is tempting to say "if two things are the same" or "when two things are identical." However, you'll quickly notice an issue with speaking in this way – as soon as we have two things, then they are already not one! They are already two *different* things.

If something is one, simply speaking, it is non-distinguishable from itself in any way whatsoever. If we think over the ways in which they could be distinguishable, we can understand this sense of oneness with two basic components: oneness in name, as well as oneness in meaning.

The next logical conclusion that follows, then, can be stated as:

If it is an existent, then it's necessarily one with itself.

What, then, is one with a product? A product is one with a product. There is nothing else in the visible or invisible, imaginable or unimaginable realm of objects that is one with – identical with - a product.

Naturally, when we look at the topic of one, we also must understand its counterpart – different. Their definitions follow.

One – a phenomenon that is non-distinct from itself

Different – Distinct phenomena

One with a product – a phenomenon that is non-distinct from a product

Different from product – phenomena that are distinct from a product

Returning to the different types of reasons, we see in the Pramana literature an explanation of “The eight branches of reasoning and cognition.³” These are divided into two sets:

The Eight Branches of Reasoning and Cognition

Methods for developing doubt-free cognition of measured objects by oneself:

- 1. Flawless true direct perceptions**
- 2. Flawed true direct perceptions**
- 3. Flawless inferences**
- 4. Flawed inferences**

Methods for caring for other people:

- 1. Flawless proof syllogisms**
- 2. Flawed proof syllogisms**
- 3. Flawless consequential syllogisms**
- 4. Flawed consequential syllogisms**

When speaking of these eight branches of reasoning and cognition as methods for gaining knowledge by oneself or helping others, it might seem unusual that flawed methods are included. This is because it is by understanding what constitutes the flawed methods that we are able to correctly ascertain the flawless methods. For example, it’s in contradistinction to a flawed consequential syllogism that we can understand what it means to be a flawless consequential syllogism.

³ Rtog g’ai tshig don bgyad

The proof syllogism and the consequential syllogism are two forms of syllogism that are explained in the Pramana literature, yet the one that came to be utilized in the debate format that we have today is the consequential syllogism. This particular form has a special feature to it. You've already seen how they work in a special way, because all the debates in the "Refute and Respond" booklet are based on this special feature. To better understand what's happening in those debates, we can look in more detail at this special function of consequential syllogisms.

Straight-forward syllogisms and proof syllogisms work by giving a reason that has the ability to prove a reason by way of fulfilling the three limbs of a flawless reason. Consequential syllogisms, on the other hand, do not necessarily need to have a reason which is the three limbs in order to be a flawless consequence. This is because of their unique feature – their ability to *imply* a flawless reason.

We can just look at the term of "consequence" itself to gain clarity about how they work. We start with a person who has a mistaken belief about something; a mis-cognition. Let's look at an example:

'Person Z' has three conditions of their cognitive states: they (condition # 1) know that electrons are particles. They also (condition # 2) believe that if it's a particle, then it's necessarily localized in space and not spread out like a wave. *And at the same time*, they (condition # 3) believe that electrons are waves (which are spread out over space). Now what kind of consequence can be posited to this person to change their mistaken belief?

Take the subject: an electron. It *follows that* it's not a particle, because it's a wave that's spread out over space.

Condition #1 – Knows with Gauge Mind that A is B (knows A is the opposite of B).

Condition #2 – Believes that if it's not B, then it's necessarily not C.

Condition #3 – Believes that A is C.

With this perfect storm of cognitive states, the following will be a Flawless Consequential Syllogism

Take the subject: A. It follows that it's *not* B because it is C.

Here we can get a sense of what it means to follow from something... based on the beliefs of Person Z, it logically follows – i.e., it's a logical consequence that – an electron is not

a particle. The fact is that they already know – with a Gauge Cognition – that an electron is a particle. So which of their beliefs leads to the unwanted logical consequence? The latter two beliefs (condition #2 and condition #3) are what set up the logical necessity for electrons to *not be* particles; that is, if they were true, as Person Z believes them to be. But it's an unwanted and absurd consequence because Person Z knows that it's not true! In other words, Person Z has trapped themselves into a corner where they must give up one of their false beliefs (condition #2 and #3), or else come to deny the thesis (that electrons are particles, condition #1) that they already have genuine knowledge of from a Gauge Mind based on reliable evidence and reasoning.

The amazing thing about all of this is the sheer fact that we are all Person Z! It just happens to be a fact of our human psychology that we can hold beliefs that contradict our knowledge without even noticing it – this is why we need a Challenger to posit such a consequential syllogism to us. That's what makes us come to see our contradictions. Such a process forces us to face and repair our cognitive dissonance.

Mindfulness Corner

Let's take an even simpler example, but one with no less profound repercussions. Suppose Horton believes that if someone is a Who, then they're necessarily evil – they're just on the wrong side of history, brainwashed, propagandized, beyond redemption. *And* he knows that little Sue is a Who. But he also believes that she is a very kind person. So a Challenger can say:

Take little Sue. It follows that she's not a Who, because she is very kind.

While the logic is simple, this kind of syllogism is actually a very powerful antidote to something that is a pervasive and pernicious aspect of our lives: prejudice. Oftentimes, someone just needs to have some experience with a single person (an illustration) of a group that they have prejudice towards to start to weaken their mistaken belief in the pervasion that *if someone is in group X, then they're necessarily bad*.

Think about your experience debating so far, and how the process leads you to give up beliefs that you previously held. Sometimes you begin to doubt yourself, and other times you realize fully that your view was wrong. Become aware of how other beliefs that you still hold may, in fact, also be wrong. Rest in the openness of the possibility that some of your most strongly held beliefs may not stand up to evidence and logic once probed. Rest in the openness of not knowing.

One of the types of flawless reason explained in the Science of Logic textbooks shows how we do not know whether a person sitting in front of oneself is a Buddha or not, because we have no genuine evidence sufficient for a Guage Mind of their state of mind. Think about the possibility that everyone you see may in fact be Buddhas.

(A) Consequential Syllogism and (B) 3-Part Syllogism have Four Joints

Joint that is both A and B – the consequence, “Take the subject: sound. It follows that it’s not produced because it is permanent.”

Joint that is A, but not B – the consequence, “It follows that it’s impermanent, because it was produced.”

Joint that is B, but not A – the straight-forward syllogism, “Take the subject: sound. It is impermanent, because it is produced.”

Joint that is neither A nor B – rabbit horns.

Consequential syllogism: *something verbalized as a consequence.*

1. **Flawless consequential syllogism:** *a verbal proposition that is the common locus of that which has an opponent for whom it*

becomes a correct consequence and that to which such an opponent cannot provide a valid answer.

a) **Consequential syllogism that implies the reason:** *that which is a correct consequence whose reversed meaning fulfills the three modes.*

Example: *take sound, it follows that it is not produced, because it is permanent.*

b) **Consequential syllogism that does not imply the reason:** *that which is a correct consequence whose reversed meaning does not fulfill the three modes.*

Example: *take sound, it follows it is impermanent, because it is produced.*

2. Flawed consequential syllogism: *a verbal consequence whose thesis can be denied with a correct response.*

Example: *take sound, it follows it is permanent, because it is an object of eye consciousness.*

If it is flawless consequential syllogism that implies the reason, (1) the reason must not be verified by a Gauge Mind possessed by the Defender, but instead only accepted by the Defender, (2) the pervasion must be verified by a Gauge Mind possessed by the Defender, (3) the thesis must be one that is untrue, and thus can be cleared away.

If it weren't such, then...

- (1) If the reason were verified by a Gauge Mind, the reason would be true. If the reason were true, then the thesis of the syllogism that's implied by it will be faulty, since the thesis of that syllogism is the direct opposite of the reason.
- (2) If the pervasion is not established by a Gauge Mind, the counter pervasion of the implied reason (syllogism) will not be established. The counter pervasion of the implied reason and the pervasion of the consequential syllogism are equivalent.

(3) If the thesis cannot be cleared away, that means it's true. If the thesis is true, then the reason that's implied will not be true, since it's the direct opposite of the thesis.

In summary, the conditions for a consequential syllogism that implies the reason are that the thesis and reason are wrong, but the pervasion is established as true.

Exercise

Write an example of a flawless consequential syllogism, and then explain why it is a flawless consequential syllogism.

Write an example of a flawed consequential syllogism, and then explain why it is flawed.

Analyzing the mechanics of how a consequential syllogism works in this way drives home an essential point about logic in general – logic, epistemology, and psychology are in fact not distinct disciplines. The only way to properly understand logic is to see how it operates in the context of an actual human being's beliefs and experiences. What's more, it is only due to the power of communication between two people that implicitly or unconsciously held beliefs can be made explicit and conscious. The cognitive dissonance that may seem so obviously absurd to other people lies within oneself unnoticed – until another person simply points it out. This is how Nalanda Debate becomes analytical meditation and overcomes mistaken cognitions; this is how it helps to increase wisdom and clear away ignorance.

Chapter 6

The Nature of Mind – Experience, Clear and Aware

Now that we've seen how positing flawless proof syllogisms and consequential syllogisms has the function to point out our misconceptions and then usher us into correct conceptions, then what guarantees that we'll truly be able to make such a transformation in our minds? What enables us to deplete our reservoir of miscognitions and increase our store of cognitions that reflect reality? The answer lies in the nature of mind itself.

There is no limit to the variety of experiences that can occur within a mind. The space of possibilities for consciousness are vast – limitless. What binds them all together is one fundamental quality that is consistent throughout every moment of consciousness, from the simplest feeling of the sun's warmth on your back in the mental continuum of a frog on a log to the limitless breadth and beauty of the meditative equipoise of the dimension of infinite space. Whether we're talking pleasant, unpleasant, or equanimous; mental, visual, or physical; virtuous, non-virtuous, or neutral; a mind of a single attosecond length, a mind long enough to ascertain an object, or the entire beginningless and endless mindstream of one living being – these are all entities of experience.

They are experiential and subjective by nature. This also entails another important quality: they are not extended in space. In other words, they lack the fundamental defining quality of material or physical entities and are thus non-physical. Physical entities are defined by their *capacity to be touched or contacted* and *to be changed by that contact*. Material objects can be destroyed by applying forces from other material objects. Mental objects evade such tangible impressions. They are not damaged or changed through physical contact from a separate, distinct entity. Nor can they be experienced in the domains of the five physical senses.

The way they are experienced is by arising in the continuum of a person, and that person experiencing them internally and subjectively. They thus lack all dimensionality, all

measurability through tools and systems that rely on physical contact, and all third-person verifiability⁴.

Before attempting to understand consciousness as laid out in the theories of the Nalanda Tradition thinkers, it is helpful to acknowledge some background assumptions. When we speak of investigating consciousness or understanding psychology and cognition, we are talking about exploring our own consciousness, as experienced subjectively by oneself. This is due to the simple fact that it is the only continuum of consciousness of which we have any ability to make empirical observations. While we can indeed reason about the minds of others by reference to our own subjective experiences, it is our own states and our direct access to them are the basis of any such reasoning. Even the basic fact of the existence of other people's minds must be arrived at through reasoning that's based in one's own experience.

Since mental phenomena and consciousness are only accessible through internal introspection, consciousness remains to this day a bit of a mystery within the contemporary scientific community. There is a degree of distrust in an individual's ability to accurately introspect, so the entirety of mental phenomena is called into question by people more accustomed to the third-person verification expected of the "hard sciences."

Yet, the process of becoming an individual who is a trustworthy and competent observer of mental phenomena is not so different from the training someone would undergo when learning to perform research in the "hard sciences." A biologist learns about cell theory through lecture, reading, and other means before making observations of cells. They do not simply sit down at a microscope on the first day of their training and start looking at cell samples. Having a theoretical understanding of the structure of cells and the way they work gives them a mental model so that when they make the direct observations of cells, they can accurately interpret what they are seeing. Even if you've had a basic pre-collegiate level of education in biology, this was likely your experience.

It is the same with someone interested in learning about consciousness. By having an understanding of the structure of the mental world - a map of the mind - an investigator can then properly interpret their introspective observations. These interpretations, in turn, can be further modified by gaining more knowledge and experience through either experimentation or study, just as with the cell biologist. Thus, introspection is an appropriate tool for

⁴ This statement is made from the perspective of ordinary living beings who have not developed extrasensory abilities; some people do have the ability to directly perceive the mind of another person, through a highly trained meditative state.

understanding consciousness, but is vastly more useful and trustworthy when supported by the findings made by earlier investigators.

Another assumption about the following presentation of mind, then, is that a student learning this material will make their best effort to introspect and observe the mental processes and different forms of consciousness occurring in their own experience. With the following overview, it is advised to approach it with a skeptical, open mind and a motivation to explore your immediate experience.

The last background assumption that merits a mention is that by gaining more awareness and accurate knowledge of your mind, you will have greater freedom to regulate and transform your mind – just like the cell biologist.

Consciousness - *experience, clear and aware*

Mind, awareness, and consciousness are Equivalent.

In discussing mind, the above three phenomena can be thought of and spoken of interchangeably.

In the theories of mind developed in the Buddhist intellectual and contemplative world, consciousness is defined in terms of its experiential character. The feature of clarity indicates mind's immaterial character; it is immaterial in the sense that it cannot be observed as one of the five types of sense datum and has no tangible or obstructive element to it.

In other words, it has no dimensionality whereby it can physically interact with other objects by means of physical forces. Instead of interacting through spatial extension, it exists in a temporal continuum as a regenerative process, each moment arising anew in the form of whatever object is present in the domain of its experience.

Because it is not a physical space, but an experiential space in which objects can be presented and appear, it is *clear*.

Consciousness also has a cognitive element. Objects not only appear in the experiential space of consciousness, but consciousness actively knows those objects. Thus, it is *aware*.

Consciousness can have many different factors – called subordinate minds – that influence how it is experienced, or how it feels. These also influence how the mind cognizes its object; even when something like anger or attachment is arising in tandem with a consciousness and thus is distorting the cognition, there is still the *experience, clear and aware*. Dharmakirti has said of the mind that “the nature of mind is clear light; obscurations are adventitious.” Therefore, it is understood that the mental factors involved in creating distortion of reality – and therefore leading to poor decision making and encountering suffering instead of happiness – are all removeable. They are not part of the nature of mind, so they can be separated out and destroyed. The clarity and awareness, however, are the nature of mind, and so can never be separated from a mind.

Mind can be discussed in the general sense or in terms of more specific instances of experience. Yet, it is not an abstract construct, any more than colors and shapes and billiard balls and atoms.

For example, we can speak of a visual consciousness perceiving a red ball. This is an experience of a red ball, where there is a round shape and red color appearing in the experiential space of the visual consciousness and that visual consciousness is engaging with its object. There is something that *it is like* to know a red ball.

Consciousness is a subject, and as such, it always has an object. There does not exist a truly objectless mind – even if there are times when it is difficult to describe what a mind is experiencing, it is always experiencing something. Even if there is no sense of duality between the subject and object, the mind is still experiencing something.

We can also speak of a general class of minds – for example, a mind which is accurate and a mind which is distorted. Minds with a physical sensory basis or those with no basis in a physical sensory modality. We can speak of the mind of a human being, the mind of a dog, or the mind of a bat. We can look at Tashi’s mind or Wangmo’s mind, the mind of an unbiased person and the mind of an ordinary person.

There are many different ways to categorize different kinds of mind, depending on the question you are posing. Now we will look at three important ways of categorizing mind which come about from asking the following three questions: What is the general domain of objects being experienced by this mind? Through which process is this mind engaging with its object? What are the various functions and subordinate factors involved in this cognition and how do they contribute to it?

Categorizing consciousness by domain of experience

This way of categorizing minds rests on the fact that objects are subjectively experienced in unmistakably different ways depending on which sensory modality produced the consciousness. The visual domain of experience is notably distinct from the auditory domain, etc. Furthermore, there is no cross-over between the domains, such that sounds can be experience in the domain of the nose's consciousness, etc.

- 1) Eye consciousness
(visual)**
- 2) Ear consciousness
(auditory)**
- 3) Nose consciousness
(olfactory)**
- 4) Tongue consciousness
(gustatory)**
- 5) Body consciousness
(physical)**
- 6) Mind consciousness**

While each of the five physical domains of consciousness have a limitation in the type of objects they experience, the mind's domain is able to accept all types of object.

Here are examples of each of these in turn: an eye consciousness perceiving a tree, an ear consciousness hearing a song, a nose consciousness smelling a rose, a tongue consciousness tasting the flavor of black coffee, a body consciousness feeling the warmth of the sun, and a mental consciousness wondering what time it is.

Consciousness categorized by how the cognition occurs

- 1. Conceptual minds**
- 2. Non-conceptual minds**

This way of categorizing the mind focuses on the cognitive process, answering the question: How does this mind take in information and interact with the object that it is cognizing? It does not provide a detailed account of physical or chemical interactions which take place but provides explanation for the experiential reality of fundamentally distinctive consciousnesses.

Conceptual minds cognize their objects by way of a concept, or mental image. They are language-based and rely on a labeling process, whereby they use a type of symbolic representation. There is a mental image that is like a projection of an object even though the object is not truly present. This mental symbolism highlights only the characteristics or features that are communicated by the term and thought which is presently active. It also ignores specificity of time, location, and type of object, lumping different instances together as if they were one.

For example, a conceptual mind cognizing a ball highlights the ball and extracts it out from the complex of qualities which exist together with the ball. In doing so, it removes whatever is not the ball from view (for the perspective of that particular mind). It also does not specify what kind of ball, where it exists, or when it exists – it blends those specific instances together.

A conceptual mind cognizing the shape of a ball likewise only highlights the shape of the ball. It's as if it splits apart the qualities of a ball from the ball; while in reality, this it's impossible to separate a ball from its shape, to the conceptual mind cognizing the shape of a ball, it's as if the shape of the ball is a unique object, distinct from the ball. A conceptual mind cognizing the color of a ball is similar. Thought is heavily linked with language, although non-linguistic people and animals also use this process in their conceptual minds to engage with objects.

Now let's give a definition of the conceptual mind:

Conceptual mind – *a cognition that apprehends language and meaning as mixable.*

Conceptual mind and isolating cognizer are Equivalent.

Non-conceptual mind and collective cognizer are Equivalent.

Isolating cognizer – *a cognition that cognizes its object by dissecting it into parts*

Collective cognizer – *a cognition that cognizes its object by not dissecting it into parts*

Non-conceptual minds (collective cognizers) engage their objects without relying on this kind of symbolic representation of mental imagery. They do not isolate out a quality of an object from the object which possesses the quality. They arise from the meeting of an object, stimulus (or information), and a sensory modality. They get the full picture of the object, experiencing many qualities together in one perception, collectively. The visual consciousness apprehending a ball sees the ball, its shape, its color, its momentary and changing nature, etc. It tracks its object in real time, instead of lumping together the different times, places, and instances.

Note that directly seeing the qualities of an object does not imply that the person in whose mental continuum the perception arises necessarily can ascertain or remember the quality – the momentary change of a ball appears in the domain of the non-conceptual visual consciousness, but does not produce knowledge of that subtle degree of change for the person having the perception. It is too subtle for the visual consciousness to grasp; an Inference Gauge Mind is still required to actually understand or know that subtle impermanence.

Also note that non-conceptual minds can be mistaken. There are four ways in which a non-conceptual mind comes to be mistaken:

1. **Environmental condition for error**
e.g., a visual cognition of the platform moving when one is riding in a train, a visual cognition of a mirage as water
2. **Defective organ**
e.g., a visual cognition of vitreous floaters as external objects
3. **Condition for error within the object**
e.g., a visual cognition of characters in a movie moving
4. **Condition for error within the connecting consciousness**

e.g., a visual cognition of the visual field as red due to extreme anger

Chapter 7

Taking Debate into the Path

The Precious Human Life

Now that you understand the nature of mind, you might begin to wonder whether this nature of mind is really present in all living beings and all humans. If so, why is it so rare for a human to tap into that clear light nature of mind and remove their adventitious obscurations? The answer lies in the rarity of the conditions for doing so - only those with a precious human life really have the freedom and privilege to genuinely tap into the nature of their minds. Or do they? Let's analyze...



Bless me to realize that the excellent life of leisure I've found just this once is ever so hard to find and ever so valuable. Grant me then to wish, and never stop to wish, that I can take its essence night and day.
- *The Foundation of All Good Qualities by Lama Tsongkhapa*

Precious human life - a life with the eight freedoms and 10 privileges

The Eight Freedoms

Freedom from the eight states where there is no opportunity to practise the Dharma:

1. hells
2. preta realms
3. animals
4. long-living gods
5. uncivilized lands
6. incomplete faculties
7. with wrong views
8. a buddha has not come

The Ten States of Privilege

The Five Circumstantial Privileges

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 favourable conditions for Dharma practice

The Five Personal Privileges

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

Debates and Analysis

The Precious Human Life

1. A human life is considered very rare and precious. But from what perspective is a human life precious? It follows that if it's a human life, then it's necessarily precious.

If we consider the explanations from the traditional Buddhist texts, like the one cited in the Lam Rim Chenmo from Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland*, we see a list

of required conditions to render someone's life a precious human life. But must we really have all 18 of these conditions for our lives to be precious?

☞| **It follows that if it's a human life which *does not have all eighteen freedoms and privileges*, then it's necessarily not precious?**

2. From the perspective of Nalanda Tradition philosophy, any talk of the deep value of a human life is tied with its capacity to create value far into the future – well beyond the end of this life itself. Put simply, there's no great spiritual value without the backdrop of a continuation of lives, or at the very least a continuation of mind and subjective experience.

But the existence of past and future lives is far from obvious! Would there be a difference in one's chosen use of their human life depending on whether or not they have a belief in rebirth, that each person has a continuity of past and future lives?

☞| **Posit the difference between (a) someone who believes in a continuity of lives and (b) someone who puts effort into creating a desirable future life.**

Between (a) someone who believes in a continuity of lives and (b) someone who puts effort into creating a better world for the sake of humanity at large.

Between (a) a belief in a continuity of lives and (b) a conviction in a continuity of lives.

Between (a) a belief in a continuity of lives and (b) knowledge of a continuity of lives.

3. When we speak of a human life, of how rare and valuable it is, how unique it is – what are we really speaking of? Is it the body of a human being, including the special brain? Is it the mind of a human, with its intelligence and capacity to develop love and compassion and wisdom? Is it the human

being itself – the person labeled in dependence upon the five aggregates that a human possesses? Or is it something else?

☞| **It follows that you can posit the definition of a human life. Posit the relationship between a human body and a human life.... Between a human mind and a human life... between a human being and a human life.**

4. Generally speaking, we can classify all phenomena – all knowable things – into two categories: negatives and positives. The basis for a such a distinction is simply how the thing is conceived of – in other words, how it appears in our mind when we think of it. A coffee mug is a positive. The absence of fluid in an empty coffee mug is a negative.

How about the precious human life with the eighteen freedoms and fortunes?

☞| **Posit the difference between anything selected from the eighteen freedoms and fortunes and a negative.**

5. Freedom from birth as a hell-being, hungry ghost, animal, and a long-life god are all included among the eight freedoms. But what about a human life that's hell-like, with war waging, torture, and abuse? What about someone starving like a hungry ghost? Is it essential to be free of those conditions to have a precious human life, and truly make the most of one's life?

☞| **It follows that if someone is in a hell-like state of suffering as a human, they necessarily do not have a precious human life.**

6. The qualifications this described by the 8 freedoms and 10 fortunes are based in the understanding that having a meaningful life includes creating

the possibility for happiness in the future, even after this current life. Are there other metrics for a meaningful life that you can think of?

Is there a difference between meaning and ultimate meaning? Can an animal have a meaningful life. Here we have to spend some time to think about what meaning itself is what is it mean for something to be meaningful.

☞ | **It follows that if someone is there's something is a meaningful life than it necessarily is engaged in creating happiness for the future especially future lives.**

It follows that if it is an animal life, it is necessarily not a precious life.

Chapter 8

Identifying Objects of Thought

Now that we've seen how conceptual minds function, some work needs to be done to gain introspective clarity of our own conceptual minds and the objects which they apprehend. The way that the Nalanda Tradition logic and debate training manuals do this is through identifying isolates...

If you've ever attended any classes on Madhyamaka philosophy or emptiness, you may have heard the following phrase before:

a cup and the emptiness of a cup are one nature but different isolates.

The purpose of this chapter is to help understand how two phenomena can be one nature, but different isolates. It helps us understand how objects can be related in certain ways, and yet distinct. That distinctiveness of each object is important, because of the way in which misconceptions of objects are developed and overcome.

Isolate – that which is deflected from not being one with itself.

Isolate of a cup – that which is deflected from not being one with a cup

E.g., a cup

Types of isolates (using thing as a basis)

Self-isolate. E.g., thing

General isolate. Equivalent with self-isolate and isolate. E.g., thing

Illustration isolate. E.g., cup, car, cat

Meaning isolate. E.g., something that can complete tasks

The self-isolate of thing and the isolate of thing are equivalent. The illustration isolate of thing is equivalent with illustrations of thing, and the meaning isolate of thing refers to the definition of thing.

The phenomena coextensive with the isolate of thing

1. **One with thing**
2. **Thing which is one with thing**
3. **The definiendum of something can complete tasks**
4. **The triply qualified imputed existent of something that can complete tasks**

To understand how these four are related and lead back to the isolate of thing, one must debate them. The mind must go through each of these four using the structure of Nalanda Debate, giving both statements of pervasion and thesis statements. Gradually, they begin to make sense.

Being coextensive here means that out of the eight doors of pervasion, the door of being is ascertained with each of these and with the isolate of thing.

There are three qualifications that we must look to in order to determine whether or not a phenomenon is coextensive with the isolate of thing. There's the qualification of difference and two qualifications of pervasion.

Three Qualifications for Phenomena Coextensive with the Isolate of Thing:

1. **It is different from the isolate of thing.**
2. **If that is it, that is necessarily the isolate of thing.**
3. **If that is the isolate of thing, it is necessarily it.**

Notice here that there are two 'variables' in the statements of pervasion. There is a 'that' and an 'it.' It may be easier for some people to see them written with x and y.

If x is y, x is necessarily the isolate of thing.

If x is the isolate of thing, x is necessarily y.

Phenomena coextensive with the isolate of something that can complete tasks

1. One with something that can complete tasks
2. Something that can complete tasks which is something that can complete tasks
3. The definition of thing
4. The triply qualified substantial existent of thing

Remember, every phenomenon has an isolate. Thus, for any phenomenon there are going to be several phenomena that are coextensive with its isolate. Here we can see how the isolate of thing differs from the isolate of something that can complete tasks, even though something that can complete tasks is the definition of thing.

Below are some relevant notes to keep in mind as you debate about isolates:

The isolate of cup is not the isolate of cup.

The isolate of cup is not a cup.

If it is the isolate of cup, it is necessarily a cup.

Cup is the isolate of cup.

If it is a cup, it is not necessarily the isolate of cup.

The isolate of cup is permanent.

Permanent is not the isolate of cup.

If it is the isolate of cup, it is necessarily permanent.

Mindfulness Corner

Spend some time checking out for yourself how these different isolates appear in your conceptual minds. Bring to mind a flower. When you do so, you now have a conceptual mind apprehending a flower present in your continuum. Spend some moments observing the appearance of a flower in that mind. Next, take to mind the petals of a flower. Then, the color of a flower. Then, a white flower; a red flower. Now take to mind an impermanent flower; an existent flower. Finally, take to mind a rose; a lotus; a dandelion.

Spend enough time with each of these conceptual minds to see if there is a difference in appearance for each of them. Does an existent flower have a different appearance to conceptual mind from a flower?

Once you have seen the way that even a slightly different phrasing of something tinges the appearance to conceptual mind in a different way, then you have discovered that each unique phenomenon has its own unique isolate; its own way of being deflected away from other similar phenomena.

Exercise

Look at the examples of the following Joints and then come up with your own examples.

(a) the isolate of the truth of cessation and **(b) truth of cessation** have...

3 Joints.

If **it** is **(a) the isolate of the true cessation**, **it** is necessarily **(b) true cessation**.

If **it** is **(b) true cessation**, **it** is not necessarily **(a) the isolate of true cessation**.

There is something that is neither.

1. Something which is both

= **True cessation**

2. Something which is **(b) True cessation** but not **(a) the isolate of true cessation**

= **The truth of cessation in the mind of an Arhat**

3. Something which is neither **(a) the isolate of true cessation** nor

(b) true cessation

= **Omniscience**

(a) the isolate of sky and **(b) sky** have...

3 Joints.

If **it** is **(a) the isolate of sky**, **it** is necessarily **(b) sky**

If **it** is **(b) sky**, **it** is not necessarily **(a) the isolate of sky**.

There is something that is neither.

1. Something which is both

= **sky**

2. Something which is **(b) sky** but not **(a) the isolate of sky**

= the sky in the west

3. Something which is neither (a) the isolate of sky nor (b) sky

= a car

To identify the isolate of thing, we rely on the practice of debating about the phenomena that are co-extensive with the isolate of thing – there, we encountered something that can complete tasks. Something that can complete tasks is the definition of thing. But why is this the definition of thing? To understand something becomes a definition more clearly, let's take a look at the definition of definition.

DEFINITION AND DEFINIENDUM

Definition: *a triply qualified substantial existent.*

A definition is called a “substantial existent” because it is the actual object, the meaning or referent of its definiendum. For brevity and ease of debating, we can abbreviate this definition as the “triple SE,” for example, the triple SE of color.

The three qualities of a definition:

- 1) in general, it is a definition,
- 2) it is established in relation to its definiendum and
- 3) it does not define anything other than that which is its own definiendum.

Definiendum: *a triply qualified imputed existent.*

A definiendum is called an “imputed existent” because it is what is imputed to its definition. For brevity and ease of debating, we can abbreviate this definition as the “triple IE,” for example, the triple IE of something reasonably described as a hue.

The three qualities of a definiendum:

- 1) in general, it is a definiendum,
- 2) it is established in relation to its definition and
- 3) it is not the definiendum of anything other than just its own definition.

There is a process for coming to know a definiendum; to know a definiendum, its definition must be known first. Knowing a definition and definiendum, in turn, must be done in relation to an illustration of them.

This process is exemplified by something called a **Definitional Bridge**, which is a type of statement that looks a lot like a syllogism. Here is an example:

Cup is the illustration. It illustrates being a thing. Because it is something that can complete tasks.

Chapter 9

Objects – Establishing Reality

Now that we are able to identify isolates and are able to distinguish between our conceptual minds and non-conceptual minds, we can take a more sustained look at the objects that are appearing and being cognized in both of these two types of minds. Once again, we are brought into the stark reality that our internal minds and the external world they experience are in constant interplay, and one cannot be coherently understood without an understanding of the other...

Subject – *a thing with any given object*

Object – *something known by a mind*

Types of object:

1. Engaged Object
2. Appraised Object
3. Appearing Object
4. Grasped Object

If it exists, it is necessarily the appraised object of an Inference Gauge Mind.

If it exists, it is necessarily the appraised object of a True Direct Gauge Mind.

Appearing object of a True Direct Gauge Mind and thing are Equivalent.

Appearing object of an Inference Gauge Mind and permanent thing are Equivalent.

For a conceptual mind cognizing a cup:

- A cup is the appraised object and the engaged object.
- The abstract generality of a cup is the appearing object.

For a visual consciousness cognizing a cup:

- A cup is an appraised object and engaged object.
- A cup is an appearing object.

Abstract generality of a cup – *the part of the conceptual mind cognizing a cup that is the projection of appearing to be like a cup even though it is not a cup*

Abstract generality and meaning generality are Equivalent.

As with all the lessons in the introductory logic and debate course of the Nalanda Tradition, the basic idea behind the material comes out of the Pramana literature. For this lesson, we turn to a two-line quotation from the Pramanavartikakarika as our source:

*“Because there are two objects to know,
There are two Gauge Minds likewise, it’s so –
Two object types, because some do tasks,
And others which cannot perform any task.”*

This short verse, by explaining just two types of objects, sets out the basic worldview for Nalanda logic and philosophy. The worldview here is one where the epistemology and ontology are intertwined. The word is divided into two types of things – these two categories, in turn, are linked with the two types of knowledge-inducing gauge minds. There are both valid direct perceptions and inferential gauge minds; likewise, there are both objects which perform tasks and those which don’t. There are objects which are dynamic processes and then those which are inert and static. Further, whatever exists - whether something with a nature of incessant cascading changes or something which is not subject to changing conditions – it is necessarily knowable by some type of mind.

This approach to breaking up reality into two fundamental categories of objects reveals a profound feature of our epistemic reality - of the lived reality of us as humans, and as possessors of consciousness. It reveals that there are two different types of consciousness, which interact with objects in fundamentally distinct ways.

This distinction was covered earlier in the section on conceptual and non-conceptual minds. To review: concept-free consciousnesses have a direct interaction, where a dynamic object acts as a stimulus to create the consciousness perceiving it. The object’s specific details are perceived by such a mind.

Conceptual consciousness, on the other hand, only engages its objects through conceiving of them. It’s a mental act. There is no dynamic external stimulus needed as the immediate spark for a conceptual mind. Instead, the mind itself projects an appearance of the object as a mental image. This mental image is an **abstract generality**; for example, a conceptual mind apprehending a car does not specify the make, model, year, color, or where and when the car exists. It merely thinks, “Car!” (or “a car,” or “cars”) and has a general, abstracted impression of a car without needing to lock onto specific details.

The division of objects into those that can accomplish tasks and those that cannot helps us to understand that there are two different kinds of mind. This then helps us to transform the mind, because we can better identify and rectify the most dangerous minds; the destructive emotions and the **miscognisers** that fuel them.

These are dangerous because they are what bring problems and suffering to humans, both collectively and individually. Why does identifying those two different types of minds help to solve the problem of destructive emotions? Because the destructive emotions that give us the worst problems are all conceptual minds. To overcome such destructive emotions, rooted in ignorance, let's now get clear about what exists.

Selfless

1. Non-existent

2. Existent

Phenomena are selfless in the sense that they lack a self of persons. A self of persons is something that we as human beings innately attribute to ourselves and others, but this sense of self it is merely a cognitive error. This is the great insight of the Buddhist philosophers.

A self of persons would be either something like a soul or like an agent with true free will. A soul is a permanent, unchanging, unitary entity that is the true self, and somehow has its own independent reality apart from the changing parts of a person (the body and mind). The soul comes out of philosophical speculation – it isn't a belief that just spontaneously or naturally occurs. The soul is a **non-existent**. Belief in it is a learned belief.

An agent with true free will is also non-existent, but the sense that it exists is innate; it just arises naturally within us. It does not need to be learned. This type of self is one that is self-sufficient and substantially existent; holding it to exist means that we have a sense that somehow there's an I who is in control of my body and mind, but not dependent on them.

The technical term for the 'sense of self' described above is a **view which apprehends a self of persons**, or simply a **perception of a self of persons**. It is a consciousness that is classified as a miscognizer, because what it perceives or apprehends does not exist; it is like a hallucination.

Existent and Its Equivalentents

Foundation – *something that's established by a gauge mind*

Object of Knowledge – *something objectified by mind*

Existent – *something observed by a gauge mind*

Phenomenon – *that which holds its own identity*

Object of comprehension – *an object known by a gauge mind*

Object – *something known by the mind*

The above six phenomena are equivalent with one another. Everything within the universe is each of these six – an established base, an object of knowledge, etc. This way of thinking about our universe is likely new for you. The best way to get familiar with these concepts is to contemplate them and to debate them.

You can start by choosing some object – a car, a cup, a ball, a house, freedom, justice, or anything you like. Anything that easily and readily appears in your mind. Then go through each of these categories, with their definitions, and see how the subject you chose fits the description of each of these. Why is a car an established base? How is it something that's established by a gauge mind?

Types of Existent

Permanent thing – *a joint hub of phenomena and non-momentary*

e.g., unformed space, selflessness, abstract generality, true cessations, non-car, the non-existence of a duck etc.

Thing – *something that can complete tasks*

e.g., cup, car, compassion, consciousness, cat, etc.

We now come to the primary way of differentiating existent objects, which was mentioned above in the introduction. Really, there are multiple sets of these two, because there are several phenomena equivalent with each of them (all listed with definitions below). Each of the equivalent phenomena highlights a slightly different quality. Something like unformed space is a permanent object, as well as a non-thing, a non-product, a conventional truth, etc. Thinking of unformed space in terms of each of those will fill out your understanding of this class of objects, each one of them shedding new light on the nature of unformed space.

One equivalent of permanent object (that's not listed below) is **the appearing object of a conceptual mind**. Likewise, **the appearing object of a valid direct perception** is equivalent with thing. Permanent objects cannot appear to non-conceptual minds. They only appear in one way – by being fuse with an abstract generality, which occurs only in a conceptual mind. Things, on the other hand, appear in valid direct perception.

What does it mean to appear in, or appear to, a mind? This is question that can only be answered by introspective observation into your own mind. Look at the book in front of you – when you do so, there is an eye consciousness perceiving a book. This is a sensory experience. Then close your eyes and think of the book. Now there is a conceptual mind apprehending a book. Observe what differs about these two minds. See how the book appears in each of them.

Permanent thing and Equivalents

Non-thing – *something that is unable to complete a task*

Permanent thing – *a joint hub of phenomenon and non-momentary*

Non-product – *non-produced phenomenon*

Uncomposed object – *non-disintegrating phenomenon*

Conventional truth – *a phenomenon that is fundamentally unable to complete a task*

Abstract object – *a phenomenon that is merely imputed by a term or thought consciousness and is not established by its own character*

Thing and Equivalents

Thing – *something able to complete a task*

Impermanent object – *that which is momentary*

Product – *something which arises*

Composed thing – *that which disintegrates*

Ultimate truth – *a phenomenon that is fundamentally able to complete a task*

Specifically characterized – *a phenomenon which is established by way of its own characteristics without being merely imputed by a term or thought consciousness.*

Cause – *creator*

Effect – *an object of creation*

Evident phenomenon – *an object explicitly known by true direct perception*

Categories of Things

Matter – *something established as particle-like or composed of particles*

Consciousness – *an entity of experience itself, which is merely clear and knowing*

(This definition is an expanded form of the one given earlier in the chapter on the nature of mind.)

This is equivalent with mind, awareness, and knower.

Sensory consciousness – *a knower that is produced in dependence on a physical sense modality that acts as its uncommon empowering condition*

Eye consciousness – *a knower that is produced in dependence on an eye sensing modality that acts as its uncommon empowering condition, and a form which is its observed condition.*

Ear consciousness - *a knower that is produced in dependence on an eye sensing modality that acts as its uncommon empowering condition, and a form which is its observed condition.*

Nose consciousness - *a knower that is produced in dependence on an eye sensing modality that acts as its uncommon empowering condition, and a form which is its observed condition.*

Tongue consciousness - *a knower that is produced in dependence on an eye sensing modality that acts as its uncommon empowering condition, and a form which is its observed condition.*

Body consciousness - *a knower that is produced in dependence on an eye sensing modality that acts as its uncommon empowering condition, and a form which is its observed condition.*

The above list is named according to the sense modality which enables them to experience their own domain of objects. They can also be designated in terms of the unique domain of objects that they experience, as below:

Visual consciousness

Sound consciousness

Smell consciousness

Taste consciousness

Tactile consciousness

Mental consciousness – *a knower that is produced in dependence on its own uncommon empowering condition, a mental sense power.*

Abstract composites – *a composed object which is neither matter nor consciousness*

Abstract composites which are persons

e.g. dog, cat, Buddha, or any living being

Abstract composites which are not persons.

e.g., time, number, order, collection, birth, aging, duration, impermanence and so forth.

Other ways of categorizing objects of knowledge

Object of knowledge of which being it is possible and not possible

Object of knowledge of which being it/them is possible – *a joint hub of (1) an object of which being it exists and (2) something objectified by a mind*

e.g., pot, product and impermanent

Object of knowledge of which being it/them is not possible – *a joint hub of (1) an object of which being it does **not** exist and (2) something objectified by a mind*

e.g., form and consciousness, pot and pillar

One and different

One – non-diverse phenomenon.

E.g, existent, person, permanent, one, different, form

One-with-pot – a phenomenon which is not distinct from pot.

Different – diverse phenomena.

E.g., existent and object of knowledge, pot and pillar, momentary and impermanent.

Different-from-pot – a phenomenon distinct from pot.

This set of definitions for one and different is being repeated here, because this distinction is one of the most important to gain a clear understanding of objects in general. To know any single object clearly – to identify its basic identity, its characteristics and properties, its causes and effects (for impermanent things), etc. – we first have to get skilled at seeing the boundaries of objects.

For instance, there is a lot of confusion and contention about what consciousness is. One of the reasons for the confusion is a lack of knowledge of the fact that the brain and consciousness are different. Whatever kind of relationship they do have, it behooves us to acknowledge in the first place that at least they are diverse phenomena.

What makes them diverse? The fact that they appear differently to the conceptual mind. In other words, the thought which thinks “the brain” and the thought which thinks “consciousness” have different contents.

The conceptual mind apprehending a brain does not have the same experiential quality as the conceptual mind apprehending consciousness. Here we’re referring to the appearances to a person who has who has at least a rough understanding of the brain and the mind.

If there is no diversity of appearance when a phenomenon appears to the conceptual mind, then it is one. Pot and pot are one. Brain and brain are one. If there are distinct appearances when the phenomena appear in conceptual experience, then they are different, plural, distinct. In **Chapter 8 Identifying Objects of Thought**, we were given some exercises

and the framework for identifying isolates to help clarify what is meant by a thing being one with itself.

Other Types of One and Different

One Isolate (equivalent with one)

Substantially one – *different composed things which, if able to appear to a valid direct perception, do not appear separately*

One entity – *different phenomena which, if able to appear to direct valid perception, do not appear separately*

Different isolates (equivalent with different)

Substantially different – *that which is substantially existent and if suitable to appear to a direct mind appears as diverse.*

Different entity – *that which, if able to appear to a valid direct perception, appear diverse*

Virtue, non-Virtue and Neutral phenomena

Virtue - *that which is described in the texts and is a type of thing that produce happiness as its result.*

Non-virtue - *that which is described in the texts and is a type of thing that produce suffering as its result.*

Neutral: *a phenomenon that is not included in either virtue or non-virtue.*

This classification is one that emphasizes the nature of human action and how an individual's actions condition them to experience something in the future. This is one of the more difficult theories presented in this chapter. While intuitive, it is still not something that is immediately evident. Certain types of actions and mental states produce future happiness; others produce future suffering.

Given the prime importance of happiness and suffering to humanity, both individually and collectively, it is no surprise that we find this a scheme for categorizing all phenomena. Most phenomena that you will be debating about will fall into the neutral category here; but for understanding your own experiences of suffering and happiness, the categories of virtue and non-virtue are an important piece of the puzzle.

Negatives and Positives

Negative – *something that is known in this way: when its object to be negated is explicitly negated by the conceptual mind cognizing it*

Positive – *something that is known in this way: when its object to be negated is not explicitly negated by the conceptual mind cognizing it*

Chapter 10

Taking Debate into the Path

Death and Impermanence

Now that you understand the difference between permanent and impermanent things, you may wonder - How is this relevant to my spiritual life and practice? In addition to understanding the workings of cognitive processes in general and learning the reasoning that challenges the solid, permanent appearances of things, the reflection on impermanence in relation to our own inability to remain in this world has deep power that is acknowledged in spiritual teachings the world over. But how long can one really stay in this world? Let's analyze...



My body and the life in it are as fleeting as the bubbles in the sea froth of a wave. Bless me first to recall the death that will destroy me soon, and help me find sure knowledge that after I have died, the things I've done – white or black – follow always close behind, as certain as my shadow. Grant me then, ever to be careful, to stop the slightest wrong of the many wrongs we do, and try to carry out instead each and every good of the many that we may.

- *The Foundation of All Good Qualities by Lama Tsongkhapa*

1. Bringing death to mind tends to cause a shift in one's perspective. In the Lam Rim, it is used as a motivator to focus on the study, contemplation, and meditation on the Dharma in order to abandon samsara and afflictions, or at the very least to become attentive to one's day to day actions so that we avoid acting in ways that will cause rebirth in a condition of suffering.

Yet, for some, thinking of death becomes a motivator to even more strongly cherish the pleasures of this life. After all, you only live once!

༄ | Posit the relationship between (a) contemplation of death and (b) motivators to focus on Dharma.

3. While death is certain, the time of death is uncertain. Death can come at any time – even today! But how likely is it that death will come today? Can we quantify the probability of dying today?

༄ | Debate the following positions on the probability of dying today...

(1) One person says: “Everyday is a day on which you either will die or will not die; therefore, today you have a 50% probability of dying.”

(2) Someone else says: “Because there is a limit to how many dies a human can live, every day that you stay alive you are approaching closer to the limit of days of life. Therefore, for each day that passes without dying, the probability of death on the next day increases.”

(3) Another person says: “We have to take the aggregate of all humans and their life expectancies at different ages. The life expectancy of a five-year-old is about 75, but the life expectancy of a seventy-five-year-old is about 85; therefore, my chances of dying today go down as I age!” (data from US Social Security Administration*)**

(4) Finally, someone says: “The global death rate is about 9%, so I have a 9% chance of dying this year. Dividing that over the course of 365 days, I have a .025% chance of dying today.” (data from the World Bank*)**

4. When we think of impermanence, we tend to think of death, or plants decaying, objects breaking and failing, empires collapsing – the ending of a temporal continuum. But there is another kind of impermanence, which is the momentary disintegration of something; the fact that no object can abide into a second moment of its formation. This is the actual meaning of impermanence. But does that imply having to undergo death?

☞| It follows that if it is impermanent, then it necessarily has an end to its temporal continuum.

5. A reason put forward by Buddhist logicians as proof for impermanence as defined above is that things are produced by their causes. But is there really a pervasion; that everything which is produced by its causes necessarily disintegrates moment by moment? What about this very universe? What about the mind? What about nirvana?

༄| **It follows that if its produced, then its necessarily impermanent.**

7. Momentary is posited as the definition of impermanent. However, does it make a difference if we say: impermanent vs impermanence? An impermanent thing vs impermanent? A momentary thing vs momentariness?

༄| **It follows that if it is momentary, then it's necessarily impermanence.**

(*note – this is a language-based debate that stems from a difference in Tibetan and English, where Tibetan often doesn't distinguish between adjectives, nouns, and verbs, in contexts where English does).

5. The Buddhist Masters often say that the only thing that will help at the time of death is the Dharma – you cannot take any wealth, possessions or friends, or even your body. But is this really true? Can't friends help you to remain calm? Can't medicine help you to be free of pain and have peace of mind?

༄| **It follows that if it helps you at the time of your death, then it's necessarily the Dharma.**

6. There is a great deal of debate and discussion about what happens to a person after death. Is there some form of continuation of experience, or simply a complete end, like the lights have been shut off?

☞ | **Take the subject: the mind of an ordinary human at the moment of death. It follows that it has a future continuity.**

7. When someone achieves the state of an Arhat – they have abandoned self-grasping ignorance, the afflictions, karma, and samsara – what happens when they die? Without karma, they cannot take rebirth... does their mental continuum just cease to exist, like a flame going out?

☞ | **Take the subject: the mind of an Arhat at the moment of death. It follows that it does not have a future continuity.**

8. The Abhidharma explains that at the time of death, the imprint of a previously accumulated propelling action (karma) is “ripened” by craving, and then clinging, which is a stronger form of craving. This ripening of such an imprint causes the limb of existence (the 10th of the 12 limbs of dependent arising) to manifest, which then acts to form the next life.

But what creates such craving? Does that craving always arise for everyone? Is it related to the grasping the notion of a self which is an independent and freely operating agent?

☞ | **It follows that if they’re a person at the time of their death, they necessarily are a person with craving, clinging, and existence?**

9. Death is scary. Yet, according to the Buddhist worldview, we’ve all done it already... an infinite amount of times. Should we really be scared of death? Why or why not?

☞ | **Take the subject: death. It follows that it is reasonable to fear it.**

Chapter 11

The Complexities of Cognition

Now that we've looked at the consciousness in terms of its objects and the different types of possible objects known by a mind, there is still more to explore in the world of consciousness - the basic cognitive processes and subordinate minds that enable cognition, as well as the classification of cognition in terms of how knowledge is produced...

Consciousness categorized by function and process

Since every experience has a variety of mental processes operating in tandem with it, we can talk about minds while specifying a specific mental process or without specifying one. What is meant here by a mental process? They are the various components that underly any given experience, enabling each of the functions of the overall experience. The broader mind, when thought of just in terms of the object being cognized but without a specified process, is called a main mind. For example, an ear consciousness listening to John Lennon's *Imagine* is a main mind.

Subordinate minds are the components of the main mind and they each have a unique function in filling out the experience. When listening to a song like *Imagine*, there is an auditory consciousness. That auditory consciousness has a lot going on; there is a basic orientation towards the song, mindfulness repeatedly placing the song in mind over time, concentration holding the mind to the song, pleasant affect experiencing the song, and intelligence understanding it. All of these processes that accompany an ear consciousness listening to John Lennon's *Imagine* are sub-minds.

Main minds and the sub-minds that accompany them experience the same object and are simultaneous. What we typically think of as emotions here are included in the category of sub-minds.

Five Types of subordinate mental functions

1. Universal
2. Information-processing
3. Adaptive
4. Maladaptive
5. Context-dependent

Universal Sub-minds

These sub-minds are universal in the sense that they occur in every instance of a primary cognition. A mental episode cannot happen without these five present – they are the bare bones required for a mind to engage with an object. Even in minds that last for only a moment, these are present. There are five of them:

- (1) **The affect function**
- (2) **The perceptual function**
- (3) **Orienting**
- (4) **The bridging function**
- (5) **Attention**

The affect function is what enables the broader mind to experience its objects in terms of a pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral affect tone.

The perceptual function serves to identify and mark distinctions between the varied characteristics of whatever is presented in the field of awareness. In an eye consciousness perceiving a red ball on a table, it marks the outlines of the shapes of the ball and the table, their colors, their relative positions, etc.

Orienting directs the mind and all the accompanying sub-minds to the object; it is like the mental force that moves the mind to its object. This is the primary player in our actions, or karma.

The bridging function is needed to form the link between the prior moment of consciousness in a continuum, the object being cognized, and the sensory modality.

Attention serves as the basis for mindfulness and concentration by focusing the mind on its object; whereas *orienting* brings the mind to the overall perceptual field, *attention* directs the mind to a specific object, bit of information, or quality of an object within that field.

Information-processing

These are functions of mind which assist in the generation of knowledge. They process information and contribute to executive function; without these, there would not be any coherent sense of cognitive control or executive function. At the same time, they may be present even in minds which lack executive function, just in a weaker form.

The universal sub-minds tend to involve more or less automatic cognitive functions, whereas these can be applied with intention and encouraged through training techniques, including meditation. The more they are strengthened, the greater cognitive control a person will have.

There are also five of these:

- (1) **Interest**
- (2) **Aspiration**
- (3) **Mindfulness/Working memory**
- (4) **Concentration**
- (5) **Intelligence**

Interest holds to an object such as to prevent the mind from being stolen off to a different object.

Aspiration seeks out an object, state, or goal and motivates the effort to obtain the desired object, state, or goal.

Mindfulness functions to make an object with which one has some familiarity present in the mind repeatedly. It is akin to working memory. It is an essential support for the activity of concentration.

Concentration has the function of making the mind abide single-pointedly on its object over time. It supports the faculty of intelligence and any kind of examination or critical thinking.

Intelligence makes distinctions of the various qualities of an object, understanding what is good and useful, what is flawed and maladaptive, etc. It is what provides access to information and knowledge of phenomena that are not immediately evident to the empirical perceptions of sensory experience.

Adaptive

The adaptive sub-minds are understood in the classic literature in relation to the spiritual goals of a Buddhist who adheres to the normative aims of seeking liberation from the rebirth-cycle, rebirth in a pleasant life, or full development of an omniscient consciousness. However, we can more generally describe them as any mental processes that substantially bring about happiness or pleasant affect. Thus, they include states like compassion, empathy, loving-kindness, resilience, self-restraint, and many others.

Maladaptive

Maladaptive sub-minds restrict the capacity to experience joy, happiness, and peace of mind, but also lead to maladaptive action strategies. They are fundamentally responsible for all human problems, both interpersonal as well as psychological. They entail biased cognitive appraisals which impute qualities onto an object which are not there in reality, or else subtract something from the aspects of reality that do exist. They include such minds as over-exaggerated attachment, anger, arrogance, cruelty, intentions of dishonest representation, narcissistic ideation, etc.

Context-dependent

There are many sub-minds which do not themselves have to render a mind adaptive or maladaptive, but only become so when they are active together with one or more adaptive or maladaptive functions. All the *universal* and *information-processing* sub-minds are context-dependent in this way, but because of their essential functions they are categorized separately. Other context-dependent mental functions include rough analytic activity, refined analytic activity, the sleep state, regret, etc.

Seven-fold Spectrum of Cognition

This way of classifying minds focuses primarily on two components, or two valences which have variable values. Which two valences? A valence of (1) belief and a valence of (2) truth. Truth here means accuracy; a cognition can apprehend its object in either an accurate way, which accords with the actual state of the object, or likewise in an inaccurate way. The way you

would determine if a cognition is inaccurate is if a later cognition arises which is able to prove the first one was wrong.

Other components that come into play in this classification scheme are type of evidence and attention. Let's now take a look at the list of these seven types of mind and where they each fall along these valences.

1. True direct perception

- True and accurate
- Non-deceptive
- Doubt-free
- Empirical (directly observing an actively disintegrating object that is directly present)
- Concept-free
- Apprehends its object clearly
- Relies on the evidence of present empirical facts + the absence of conditions that cause an error
- Definition: an awareness that is unmistakable and concept-free
- Examples:
 - An sensory true direct perception perceiving a form
 - And ear consciousness hearing music

2. Inference

- True and accurate
- Non-deceptive
- Doubt-free
- Conceptual (apprehends its object, but the apprehension is fused with a mental image that is an abstraction)
- Unclear

- Relies on the evidence of logical signs and reasons, where the relation between the reason and the object being known is clear to the person
- Definition: a conception that newly knows its object in dependence on setting out a flawless reason which is its basis
- Examples:
 - An inference knowing that sound is impermanent that arises in dependence on the reason of being a product
 - In inference knowing that there's a fire in the smoky house from the reason that there's smoke.

3. Subsequent cogniser

- True and accurate
- Non-deceptive
- Doubt-free
- Can be called 'after-knowledge' since it is knowing an object which has already been known by a gauge mind in the same temporal continuum
- May be either conceptual or non-conceptual
- Relies on a prior mind that had already known its object, without new evidence being necessary
- Definition: a non-gauge awareness which knows something that was already known by the gauge mind that induced it.
- Examples:
 - An eye consciousness apprehending blue, moment two
 - An inference knowing that sound is impermanent, moment two

4. Inconclusive perception

- True, but incapable of inducing doubt-free knowledge
- Not non-deceptive
- Non-conceptual
- Object appears clearly, but with some condition that impedes the mind from registering the object (such conditions may include lack of attention, the object being present for too brief a time period, etc)
- Definition: an unmistakable, concept-free awareness to which its engaged object that is a specific object appears, but it is not able to induce ascertainment of that object
- Examples:
 - an ear consciousness hearing a sound while one is excessively attached to a beautiful visual form
 - an eye consciousness apprehending a flash of light present for a mere millisecond

5. Assumption

- True and accurate
- Not non-deceptive
- Doubt-free
- Conceptual
- May have evidence or no evidence at all, but the person does not understand clearly the relation between the evidence and the object being apprehended
- Definition: An accurate conception which grasps its object without any doubt and without depending on a reason or experience
- Examples:

- assumption apprehending all compounded phenomena as impermanent that arises from merely hearing the statement, “All compounded phenomena are impermanent”
- assumption apprehending that the word is impermanent based on the reason that it is created by God

6. Doubt

- May be true or untrue (in the sense of leaning more heavily towards one or the other)
- Not non-deceptive
- Not doubt-free, but instead equivocating between two possibilities
- Conceptual
- Definition: an awareness that is oscillating between two possibilities
- Examples:
 - Doubt thinking, “Is consciousness the brain? Probably not.”
 - Doubt thinking, “Is sound impermanent? Probably is.”

7. Miscognizer

- Untrue and inaccurate
- Not non-deceptive
- Doubt-free
- May be conceptual or non-conceptual
- Non-conceptual miscognisers arise from one of four conditions for error: condition of the physical place; condition of the sense

modality; condition of the object; condition of the preceding consciousness

- Definition: an awareness that is engaged with its apprehended object in a distorted way
- Examples:
 - An eye consciousness perceiving one moon as two moons
 - A conceptual mind apprehending the word to be permanent

Exercise

Review the following Joints and come up with your own examples.

(a) Mind and (b) Thing have...

3 Joints.

If **it** is a **(a) mind**, **it** is necessarily a **(b) thing**.

If **it** is a **(b) thing**, **it** is not necessarily a **(a) mind**.

There is something that is neither.

1. Something which is both

= **The consciousness that knows impermanence**

2. Something which is a **(b) thing** but not a **(a) mind**

= **The body of a human being**

3. Something which is neither a **(a) mind** nor a **(b) thing** =
Permanent thing

(a) Gauge consciousness and **(b) Consciousness** have...

3 Joints.

If **it** is a **(a) gauge consciousness**, **it** is necessarily **(b) consciousness**.

If **it** is a **(b) consciousness**, **it** is not necessarily a **(a) gauge consciousness**.

There is something that is neither.

1. Something which is both

= **The consciousness that knows the color of the sunset**

2. Something which is a **(b) consciousness** but not a **(a) gauge consciousness**

= **doubt**

3. Something which is neither a **(a) gauge consciousness** nor a **(b) consciousness**

= **a human being**

(a) Miscogniser and **(b) Conceptual mind** have...

4 Joints.

If **it** is a **(a) miscogniser**, **it** is not necessarily a **(b) conceptual mind**.

If **it** is a **(b) conceptual mind**, **it** is not necessarily a **(a) miscogniser**.

There is something that is neither.

1. Something which is both

= **The conceptual mind that apprehends rabbit horns**

2. Something which is a **(b) conceptual mind** but not a **(a) miscogniser**

= **an inferential valid cognizer knowing sound to be impermanent**

3. Something which is a **(a) miscogniser** but not a **(b) conceptual mind**

= **an eye consciousness perceiving a snow mountain to be blue**

4. Something which is neither a **(a) valid cognizer** nor a **(b)**

consciousness

= **a human being**