

Gaining Nondeceptive Knowledge

January 12th 2023

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- Spiritual and religious aim is attaining state of fulfillment and peace
- Need to engage with instructions to test for ourselves
- Seek to know the “objects” of 2 truths and 4 seals
- Need to be aware of what type of mind is knowing these objects

Three Kind of Objects and Their Cognizers

- Budhadharma offers us new concepts that challenge our views of self, world and reality
- How to test, verify or disprove these concepts?
- Shantaraksita's *Compendium on Reality* quotes Buddha as saying,
 - “Do not accept my Dharma merely out of respect for me, but analyze and check it the way a goldsmith analyzes gold - by burning, cutting, and rubbing it”

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- 3 types of impurities
 1. External impurities by burning the gold
 2. Internal impurities by cutting the gold
 3. Very subtle impurities by rubbing or filing the gold.

- “Do not accept my Dharma merely out of respect for me, but analyze and check it the way a goldsmith analyzes gold - by **burning**, cutting, and rubbing it”
- 3 types of “impurities” in teachings
 - Incorrect explanations regarding evident phenomena

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- 3 types of impurities
 - Incorrect explanations regarding very obscure phenomena

- Confidence through finding none of these “impurities” with the teachings
- Each of these three types of phenomena is known by a specific type of reliable cognizer

Evident Phenomena

- Phenomena that ordinary beings can easily perceive
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 - Colors, sounds, odors, tastes, tangible objects
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 2. Internal objects
 - Feelings of happiness, pain, hopes and desires
 - Known by mental consciousness

Slightly Obscure Phenomena

- Cannot initially be directly perceived
- Ordinary beings must initially know them by *factual inferential cognizers* - inferential reliable cognizers based on factual reasons

Slightly Obscure Phenomena

- Examples include subtle impermanence and selflessness
 - Because apple comes into being depending on causes and conditions, we know the apple is impermanent
 - Coarse change evident, but understanding subtle change depends on reasoning

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- Only way an ordinary being can know is by depending on relying on *inferential reliable cognizer by authoritative testimony*
 - Example - our birthday
 - Cannot know this directly
 - Cannot know this through logic and reasoning
 - Can only know this by depending on someone who is a reliable authority in this matter - Mum!

- Summary

- Evident phenomena can be known through our own experience, without depending on inference
- Obscure phenomena must be initially known by depending on a reason
- Therefore the need for logic and reasoning to understand subtle impermanence, selflessness and emptiness

Different for different types of beings

- Everything discussed so far is for ordinary beings
- For aryas, subtle impermanence and selflessness are evident phenomena
- No obscure phenomena for buddhas because they are omniscient

Different for different situations

- Campfire to illustrate

Different for different situations

- Campfire to illustrate
- To those present fire is evident phenomenon
- To those behind the trees fire is slightly obscure - inference
- To those in another state fire is very obscure - need to rely on reliable report

Different according to progression on path

- For ordinary beings subtle impermanence initially slightly obscure
- When the object is realized, then becomes evident

Different according to different aspects of same thing

- Friend's body is evident phenomenon - we can see with our eyes
- Heart is slightly obscure - inferred because human bodies have hearts
- Karmic cause to be born in that body is very obscure