

SPIRITUAL RECEPTIVITY

Symbolised by the clear blue sky

Into which the image of a Buddha/Bodhisattva arises

Receptivity to adhisthana is integral

MIPHAM'S VERSE

Basing this session on a verse of Mipham, which I've found very useful as a way in

Looking in to the very face of the true nature of mind
Which is beyond attraction and aversion
Which is beginningless and unfabricated
The primordial purity of the immaculate dharmakaya
Within which all appearances arise like magical illusions
These illusionary appearances are the very nature of the guru
The inseparability of form and emptiness.

SEEING DIRECTLY

To look in to the very face is to see directly, immediately, unobscured, unveiled.

"when I was a child I saw as through a glass darkly, but now face to face"

For example, one might know of someone, have heard tale of them, perhaps heard a recording of them giving a talk. But when one meets them in person, face to face, the possibility for depth of communication and so for knowing them is so much greater.

The true nature of mind is pure awareness – this is my suggestion. Try taking it to indicate pure awareness for the purpose of this session.

WHICH IS BEYOND ATTRACTION AND AVERSION

The next lines indicate a way in to pure awareness/the nature of mind: by bringing awareness to anything which is there in experience – which is not itself awareness.

Anything with the slightest tinge of intentionality, of attraction drawing one towards or of aversion pushing one away, is an experience to which one can bring one's awareness.

So as a way of moving in to awareness, practice being present with any experience of attraction/aversion that is present

Presence language can help: "something in me really doesn't want me to have to experience this / really wants this for me"

Being with, with kindly awareness, with sensitive presence. Not trying to fix anything or make it better: just as one might sit with a friend in their distress

Awareness in itself is able to be with anything: it doesn't have any preference: where there is a preference we can bring awareness to that 'something' that's experiencing it.

Cf Hsin-Hsin Ming:

The great way is not difficult for those not attached to preferences.

To come from awareness, beyond attraction and aversion, beyond likes and dislikes, hopes and fears, is not to be attached to preferences.

WHICH IS BEGINNINGLESS AND UNFABRICATED

Beginningless: all experience is conditioned: it arises from conditions, unfolds and ceases as conditions change.

So anything which has a beginning: anything that arises in awareness – is something we can bring awareness to: it is not itself awareness or the nature of mind.

Unfabricated: or confected, or contrived.

All experience is fabricated: a confection of aspects. Confection and causation are the twin aspects of conditionality.

Whatever is fabricated is something we can bring awareness to: something in awareness. It is not itself awareness.

THE PRIMORDIAL PURITY OF THE IMMACULATE DHARMAKAYA

Awareness in itself is pure in the sense of unmixed: like pure alcohol – or pure water without silt.

So anything mixed in: dust, silt, clouds in the sky, dye, grit: is something we can bring awareness to.

The more we practice consistently bringing awareness to experience, to whatever is not in itself awareness, the more the quality of awareness itself becomes apparent.

This awareness in itself is the nature of mind, and is in the end the dharmakaya: human awareness in its essential nature is not different from enlightened awareness.

WITHIN WHICH ALL APPEARANCES ARISE LIKE MAGICAL ILLUSIONS

Having got a feel for awareness, we can see how all experience arises in awareness as appearances: sense impressions which are no more than impressions in awareness.

Everything apparent to awareness is an appearance. Everything we perceive is a perception.

Perception (samjna) is like a mirage: bright sunlight shining obliquely on to hot sand appears as a lake. Conditions come together and the lake is manifestly and undeniably apparent to us: yet there is nothing there to get hold of: it's an illusion.

All perception is like a mirage: there seems to be a substantial object independent of us, yet we cannot get hold of any such thing: all we can get hold of are sense impressions: appearances in awareness.

THE INSEPARABILITY OF FORM AND EMPTINESS

From the heart sutra: form is only emptiness, emptiness only form.

So all appearances are magical illusions: they are undeniably and manifestly apparent: they have their form. Yet there is nothing there to get hold of beyond sense impressions: they are empty of any substantial independent self-nature.

THE VERY NATURE OF THE GURU

And this inseparability of form and emptiness is the nature of all things: the single nature of mind that encompasses all of samsara and nirvana.

As such the nature of the Guru: the Yidam: of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

So this non-difference is an opening, a letting go of fixed views of seeing reality recognizing the real nature of mind (awareness) and of experience (inseparability of form and emptiness). One is recognizing the nature of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and in this way becoming receptive to adhistana.

To live in a world of solid matter is to be closed to the visionary splendour of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

To live in a world in which form, inseparable from emptiness, plays in awareness is to be spiritually receptive.

One thing, all things, move amongst and intermingle without obstruction.

To live in this truth is to be without anxiety about non-perfection.

To live in this faith is the road to non-duality

For the non-dual is one with the trusting mind.