

incorrectly. Both the visual consciousness apprehending a visual form and a mental consciousness grasping it as truly existent are mistaken because their appearing object is truly existent form. However, the mind grasping true existence is erroneous while this particular visual consciousness is not. Here we see that although a mind is mistaken, it can be valid. In other words, a valid cognizer can be mistaken.

Similarly to the valid I-apprehending mind, the I appears inherently existent, so this mind is mistaken with respect to its appearing object. In fact, every conventional valid mind of sentient beings is mistaken in terms of how things appear to it because its object always appears to it as if it were existing from its own side. However, as we have discussed, the valid I-apprehending mind is not mistaken in the way it apprehends the I because it does not *grasp* the I as existing inherently as it appears. Thus it is a valid mind. The I-grasping, on the other hand, not only has the appearance of an inherently existent I, but it also grasps that appearance as true; it thinks the I exists inherently as it appears. While this mind is mistaken with respect to its appearing object, it is also erroneous because it grasps the conventional I to exist inherently.

Thus things vividly appear as self-existent even to valid minds, but such minds do not grasp the object as being self-existent as it appears. If all minds grasped their objects as existing in the way that they appear, no mind would be valid. But that is not the case.

The only mind of a sentient being that has no appearance of true existence at all is the arya's wisdom of meditative equipoise. When the arya comes out of meditative equipoise, things still appear truly existent, but they do not believe or grasp at things as existing in that way. For example, when we watch television, all sorts of things appear to us to be there, on the screen. However, we do not think there are real trees and people inside the television although there appears to be. In the same way, when an arya comes out of meditative equipoise on emptiness and engages in daily activities, things appear to exist from their own side, but she does not believe in those appearances for a moment.

Not only aryas in post-meditation time but also anyone who has realized emptiness—even inferentially, conceptually—realizes that there is a disparity between the way things appear and the way they actually exist. This is because they realize that things are not truly existent and do not exist from their own side because they are dependent arisings, relying on many

CHART: THE OBJECTS OF VARIOUS TYPES OF MINDS

	Focal object	Appearing object	Apprehended object	Mistaken	Erroneous
Visual consciousness apprehending blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Yes	No
True-grasping mind apprehending blue	Blue	Truly existent conceptual appearance of blue	Truly existent blue	Yes	Yes
I-apprehending mind	Conventional I	Truly existent I	Conventional I	Yes	No
I-grasping mind	Conventional I	Truly existent I	Truly existent I	Yes	Yes
Inferential realization of emptiness	Emptiness	Truly existent conceptual appearance of emptiness	Emptiness	Yes	No
Arya's meditative equipoise on emptiness	Emptiness	Emptiness	Emptiness	No	No

factors. Although things appear truly existent to these people, they do not believe in that appearance. Instead, they practice seeing such appearance as illusory.

Phenomena whose way of appearing and way of being are concordant in relation to the mind that directly realizes them are called *ultimate phenomena*. These phenomena—emptinesses—are true. Phenomena whose way of appearing and way of existing are discordant to the mind that directly realizes them are conventional phenomena. Conventional phenomena are false. They appear to be self-existent but they are empty of self-existence.

By definition, conventional phenomena are objects found by a valid