

Shamatha-Vipashyana Meditation
From Jamgon Kongtrul (and Others) to Chogyam Trungpa
A Rime Shedra NYC Course
Tuesdays, January 19 to April 15, 2021, 7-9:15 pm

Class Seven: Syllabus

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Materials for Class Seven

1) Classical Readings:

- a) The Prerequisites and Particular Types of Vipashyana, The Stages of Meditation of Shamatha and Vipashyana, Jamgon Kongtrul, *The Treasury of Knowledge*, Translated by Kiki Ekselius and Chryssoula Zerbini, two pages
- b) The Different Forms of Vipāśyanā, The Practice of Tranquility and Insight: A Guide to Tibetan Buddhist Meditation, A Commentary on the Eighth Chapter of the *Treasury of Knowledge* by Jamgön Kongtrül by Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, Translated by Peter Roberts, pp. 69-107, six pages
- c) Distinction Between Shamatha and Vipashyana, *The Royal Seal of Mahamudra, Volume One, A Guidebook for the Realization of Coemergence*, Khamtrul Ngawang Kunga Tenzin, Trs. by Gerardo Abboud, pp. 227-228, two pages
- d) The Ways to Cultivate Mahāmudrā Vipāśyanā, From *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā*, by Dakpo Tashi Namgyal, Trs. by Elizabeth M. Callahan, p. 218-220, three pages

2) Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche Readings:

- a) Talk 4: Shamatha and Vipashyana, *The Path of Meditation Seminar*, by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, Naropa Institute 1974, privately transcribed, eight pages
(note that this was included in the package for class six)
- b) Rediscovering Yourself, *The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma, Volume One*, pp. 279-280, two pages
- c) The Freshness of Unconditional Mind, *The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma, Volume One*, excerpts from pp. 329-331, two pages
- d) Meditation is Taking a Leap, from Simplicity and Awareness, in *Work, Sex, Money: Real Life on the Path of Mindfulness*, excerpt pp. 48-53, two pages
- e) Beauty and Absurdity, *The Teacup and the Skullcup: Chögyam Trungpa on Zen and Tantra*, pp. 83-87, three pages
- f) Q&A on Vipashyana, *The Heart of the Buddha: Entering the Buddhist Path*, pp. 8-9, two pages
- g) Vipashyana, *Meditation Instructor Training Seminars*, Karma Choling, Winter-Spring 1975, three pages
- h) Systems of Vipashyana, Glimpses of Emptiness, *The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma, Volume One*, pp. 348-349, one page

3) Optional Materials (Sent Separately)

- a) The Seven Contemplations, Section 3.28.2. from *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamarga) in the Sravakabhumi*, Annotated Translation and Introductory Study by Florin Deleanu, pp. 447-453, seven pages

The Stages of Meditation of Shamatha and Vipashyana
The Treasury of Knowledge by Jamgon Kongtrul
Chapter Eight: The Progressive Classification of the Training in Superior Samadhi
Part One: The Stages of Meditation of Shamatha and Vipashyana –
The General Basis of All Samadhis
Translated by Kiki Ekselius and Chryssoula Zerbini

Vipashyana: Introduction

The Prerequisites for Vipashyana

The prerequisites for vipashyana are to rely on a wise person and to seek the view by listening extensively and reflecting accordingly.

In his *Stages of Meditation II*, Kamalashila says:

“What are the prerequisites for vipashyana? To rely on a wise teacher, to spare no effort in listening extensively, and to reflect accordingly.”

Relying on a scholar who has full knowledge of the meaning of the teachings, one listens to authentic treatises and develops the view, i.e. the understanding of suchness, through the superior knowledge arising from listening and reflecting; such are the indispensable prerequisites for vipashyana. This is because without an unmistakable view, it is impossible to give rise to the realization of vipashyana. Moreover, it is necessary to rely on the definitive rather than on the provisional teachings in order to develop such a view; thus, an understanding of the deep definitive teachings must be preceded by a knowledge of the differences between these two levels of teaching. Furthermore, one should seek the view, that is, the understanding of profound emptiness, by relying on the genuine traditions founded by Nagarjuna and Asanga.

The Particular Types of Vipashyana

The types are the non-buddhists' contemplation of the peaceful and coarse levels; the shravakas' and pratyekabuddhas' contemplation of the four noble

truths and their attributes; and the paramitayana's contemplation of emptiness, which in the mantrayana is taught to be endowed with bliss. The common preparatory stages are similar to those of the mundane path; however, those who have entered the mantrayana and the others do not strive for them.

The classification of vipashyana in terms of types is as follows;

- i) Mundane vipashyana, which suppresses evident afflictions, and consists in contemplating the higher and lower levels as peaceful and coarse respectively—this is common to both buddhist and non-buddhist systems;
- ii) The Shravakas' and Pratyekabuddhas' practice of contemplating the four noble truths and their sixteen attributes such as impermanence, etc.;
- iii) The Paramitayana's contemplation of emptiness; and
- iv) The Mantrayana teaching according to which emptiness is endowed with bliss.

The latter three types are supramundane vipashyana, which completely eradicates afflictions. The way to accomplish the actual concentrations, common to buddhist and non-buddhist systems, by means of the seven preparatory stages of which the first is shamatha, has been described in the chapter dealing with the mundane path. However, those who have entered the Mantrayana and those who have realized the outstanding view of the Paramitayana do not particularly strive for these.

Distinction Between Shamatha and Vipashyana
The Royal Seal of Mahamudra, Volume One
A Guidebook for the Realization of Coemergence
Khamtrul Ngawang Kunga Tenzin, Trs. by Gerardo Abboud, pp. 227-228

Generally, vipashyana has many divisions:

1. The vipashyana that has the specific feature of coarse peace is the worldly kind;
2. And the one that has the specific feature of the four noble truths is the vipashyana of the hinayana. Although it is an excellent accomplishment, it is not an indispensable factor;
3. The vipashyana consisting of meditation on the meaning of egolessness is the vipashyana to be accomplished in our case, because based on it we should seek to establish the natural state of all phenomena included in subject and object.

As to the way of arousing this type of vipashyana:

- The expanded form consists of the four vipashyanas taught in the *Sutra That Unravels the Intent* and the *Compendium of the Abhidharma*.
- The intermediate version consists of the three vipashyanas taught in the *Sutra That Unravels the Intent*.
- The condensed meaning of all these is found in the vipashyana meditations on the twofold egolessness and others. This has many divisions, but we cannot discuss them all.

Here we will discuss the classifications of vipashyana together with those of shamatha and vipashyana united. In general, at the time of one-pointedness, what is called vipashyana is mostly considered to be somewhat low, but this is because distinctions have not been made between its divisions.

Although there are a lot of divisions in vipashyana, in fact they can be condensed into just three. These are known as:

1. The vipashyana focusing on vipashyana,
2. The vipashyana during the experiences,
3. And the vipashyana of realization.

These can be further condensed and classified as two: path vipashyana and fruition vipashyana:

1. Path vipashyana is the examination carried out by discerning prajna in the lucidity

during shamatha.

2. Fruition vipashyana is the correct realization of the final conviction of the nonduality of observer and observed.

Here, the division of shamatha and vipashyana united is that the mind resting purely of its own accord is shamatha; that state itself, including the aspect of awareness, is vipashyana. As said in the *Cloud of Precious Jewels Sutra*:

[228] Shamatha is one-pointedness of mind. Vipashyana is to correctly discern the absolute reality as it is.

In the *Sutra Requested by Jonpa*:

Shamatha is one-pointedness.
Vipashyana is awareness.

Further, in the *Lotus Graded Path of the Great Perfection*:

By letting the mind rest of its own accord, all subtle and gross thoughts repose and subside in their original condition. Then a calm abiding of the mind naturally occurs that is what is called “shamatha.” In its unimpeded radiance, the natural lucidity, a vivid nakedness takes place; this is called “vipashyana.”

Also in the *Bodhichitta Pitaka Sutra*:

The shamatha of the bodhisattva is perfect concentration; there is no dwelling in the notion of peace. Through vipashyana, by looking there is seeing; but although there is looking, nothing is seen. That is how they see and by doing so they see reality as it is.

This quotation explains the common shamatha, including the essence of the view of vipashyana. Also, the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* states:

If you query as to the shamatha and vipashyana of a bodhisattva mahasattva, this is it: the wisdom that knows all phenomena is the shamatha and vipashyana of the bodhisattva mahasattva.

Hence this refers to the fruition, i.e., shamatha and vipashyana united. There are many similar references to this in sutras, tantras, and shastras.

The Ways to Cultivate Mahāmudrā Vipāśyanā
From *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā*
By Dakpo Tashi Namgyal, Trs. by Elizabeth M. Callahan, p. 218-220

The Classifications of the Ways to Cultivate Vipāśyanā

[page 218] Among the many types of vipāśyanā, there are mundane vipāśyanā, with its aspects of calmness and coarseness, and Hīnayāna vipāśyanā that is concerned with the four truths. Although it is excellent to practice those, they [page 219] are not essential. The vipāśyanā of meditating on the absence of self is the vipāśyanā to be practiced here because it is the necessary basis by which we ascertain the abiding mode of all phenomena (which are included within percepts and perceivers).

The way to give rise to such vipāśyanā is as follows. The extensive approach is the fourfold vipāśyanā taught in *Unraveling the Intent* and the *Compendium of Abhidharma*. The intermediate approach is the threefold vipāśyanā explained in *Unraveling the Intent*. There is also the vipāśyanā of meditating on the twofold absence of self-entity, which summarizes those [other approaches]. Looking at this from the perspective of the latter, most who expound the scriptures and reasonings of the Indian masters explain many ways to meditate on the view of emptiness. Based on the treatises of the noble Nāgārjuna and Asanga, they analyze using the great reasonings, such as [demonstrating that a phenomenon] is neither a single unit nor a plurality, and thereby cultivate the view of emptiness in which all percepts and perceivers are determined to lack any reality. In this land of Tibet, while it is possible to realize the correct view on the basis of that approach, nowadays it seems that most rely on their inferential rational cognition and take an abstract idea of emptiness as their mental object. The way that leads to an intellectually fabricated, partial emptiness (an analytical emptiness, an emptiness of the inanimate, and so forth) was discussed already with references to scriptures and reasonings.

In this context, by relying on the major and minor texts, as well as shorter esoteric instructions, transmitted from the Great Brahman (Saraha), the glorious Śavaripa, and the lord of yogins Tilopa, we focus on just the mind to determine [the nature of] all percepts and perceivers—which is the instruction for taking direct perception as the path. This is the way to give rise to the view of the emptiness of nature. It has many distinctive profundities in that it involves little hardship and brings great benefit. It is, for the most part, identical with the key points of the Sūtra-oriented texts on the stages of meditation, the *Instructions on Prajñāpāramitā*, Kamalaśīla's three *Stages of Meditation*, and the Exalted [Lord Atīśa's] *Instructions on Madhyamaka*. It is most wonderful. This is the approach that I will explain as best I can.

The Way to Cultivate Vipāśyanā in This Context

[page 220] This has two parts:

- a) Determining the Essence of Mind and Its Various Appearances
- b) Eliminating Misinterpretations About a Root or Basis

a) Determining the Essence of Mind and Its Various Appearances

This has three sections:

- i) The Reasons That Objectives Are Achieved by Observing Just the Mind
- ii) Determining the Essence of Mind, the Root
- iii) Determining the Essence of Thoughts and Appearances, [Mind's] Expressive Power

i) The Reasons That Objectives Are Achieved by Observing Just the Mind

In a general sense, the presentation that all phenomena are mind, the problems that ensue from not meditating on the nature of mind, and the benefits of doing so were already explained. In brief, since the troubles of saṃsāra and the virtues of nirvāna depend on the mind, or arise from mind, it is crucial that we focus on our mind in meditation, as the *Compendium of Dharma Sūtra* explains:

The bodhisattva Mativikrama supplicated, to which the Bhagavān responded: "Phenomena, what we refer to as 'things,' do not abide as objects and do not abide spatially. Furthermore, phenomena are simply dependent on your own mind. Thus it is that you should concentrate on your mind, take it to its limits, tame it, rest it in equipoise, and subjugate it."

It is taught that if we understand mind, we understand all phenomena, and that if mind is liberated, everything is liberated. The *Jewel Cloud Sūtra* says:

The mind comes before all phenomena. If you comprehend the mind, you know all phenomena.

The *Wisdom at the Moment of Death* states:

When the mind is realized, there is wisdom. Therefore, meditate with the

awareness that buddhahood is not to be sought anywhere else.

The Great Brahman [Saraha] says:

When mind is fettered you are bound.
It can be liberated—have no doubts.

He also says:

KYE Ho. When the confused mind is realized to be mind,
it is self-liberated from all evil views.
Remaining in the sublime great bliss
under its power is the genuine siddhi.

Tilopa states:

If you sever the one root of a tree with spreading branches full of leaves,
all those many branches will wither.
The same thing happens to samsāra when you sever the root of mind.

Thus it is explained that cutting through the basis, or root, of mind cuts the continuum of samsāra.

Śāntideva teaches that when we do not understand mind, everything is a cause of suffering, and that recognizing the mind is the best protection and discipline. *Entrance to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* says:

Those who don't know the secret of mind,
what is of sublime importance in the dharma,
will wander futilely for a long time—
despite their desire to attain happiness and destroy suffering.

The Different Forms of Vipāśyanā
The Practice of Tranquility and Insight:
A Guide to Tibetan Buddhist Meditation
A Commentary on the Eighth Chapter of the *Treasury*
***of Knowledge* by Jamgön Kongtrül by Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche**
Translated by Peter Roberts, pp. 69-107

There are four main forms of vipāśyanā. The first kind of vipāśyanā is the vipāśyanā of the Tirthika (non-Buddhist) traditions and is found primarily in India. These non-Buddhist traditions practice śamatha meditation to pacify and eliminate most of the obvious kleśas. The second kind of vipāśyanā is the vipāśyanā teachings the Buddha gave to the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who could not understand the very profound or vast meaning. The third kind of vipāśyanā is the vipāśyanā of the bodhisattvas who follow the six pāramitās. These teachings are very profound and vast. The fourth kind of vipāśyanā is that which uses bliss as a special method for quickly attaining realization, or the vipāśyanā of the mantrayāna.

In the vipāśyanā of the Tirthika tradition, one contemplates the “peaceful and the coarse” aspects. For example, one might contemplate a coarse kleśa such as anger in one’s meditation. One can realize that anger is harmful to oneself and others and that without anger the mind would be peaceful and happy. So it is easy to see the benefits of the absence of this obvious kleśa of anger, which is peace. So with this meditation one can then overcome anger. One may wonder if there is something wrong with this non-Buddhist form of vipāśyanā. Actually, there isn’t anything wrong with this tradition, which is called the “common tradition” because it is common to Buddhists and non-Buddhists. In the Buddhist tradition this vipāśyanā is known as the worldly level of vipāśyanā because one recognizes the mind poisons and their faults and tries to make the mind still and stable. The practice is performed to calm the mind and subjugate the mind poisons rather than to understand emptiness or the absence of self. Calming the mind eliminates the faults on the level of the desire realm so that one can attain the first level of mental stability in the form realm.

The vipāśyanā of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas (the solitary buddhas) is for those who are without the necessary fortitude to accomplish complete Buddhahood. These two kinds of realized beings, the śrāvakas and the pratyekabuddhas, are found within the hīnayāna tradition. The difference between them is the accumulation of merit. If there is some accumulation of merit, then one is a śrāvaka; if there is a great accumulation of merit, then one

is a pratyekabuddha. However, in terms of śamatha and vipaśyanā meditation there is only a slight difference between them because both meditate on the four noble truths. The practice of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas is based on the four noble truths, which are divided into sixteen aspects (see table 2).

With this type of vipaśyanā, peace is based on the four noble truths as a description of samsāra and nirvāna. The first noble truth is a description of samsāra, which is called the truth of suffering. The second truth of origination looks at the cause of samsāra, which originates from karma and the kleśas. The third truth of cessation occurs if karma and the kleśas are eliminated and this results in nirvāna. The fourth truth is following and practicing the truth of the path. In the vipaśyanā of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas the actual nature of these four truths has to be understood along with their subcategories. The truth of suffering is divided into impermanence, suffering, absence of self, and emptiness. The truth of origination, the truth of cessation, and the truth of the path are also divided into four parts, making a total of sixteen subdivisions.

What are the four noble truths? There is samsāra, from which one seeks to gain liberation, and there is nirvāna, which one seeks to attain. One wishes to attain liberation from samsāra, the nature of which is suffering. So the first truth of suffering is that one wishes to attain liberation from the suffering of samsāra. One wishes to attain nirvāna, and this is the third truth of cessation. However, one cannot simply say one wants to attain liberation and achieve it. This is because all phenomena arise from causes, so samsāra and nirvāna also arise from a cause. This cause is the second truth of origination, which is karma and the kleśas. Therefore, one needs to eliminate the cause of samsāra, which is karma and the mind poisons. When these are eliminated, one has attained freedom from the truth of suffering, from samsāra. To be able to attain freedom from the truth of suffering and samsāra, one must be able to eliminate the origin of suffering. One can't eliminate karma and the kleśas directly because their source is ego-clinging that has to be eliminated. The way to eliminate this is the fourth noble truth of path which is the meditation on selflessness, that is, to meditate on the five aggregates and one's association of the idea of "self" or "mine" to these five aggregates. Through realization of selflessness, one can eliminate the clinging to a self, and the mind poisons will naturally subside. When these subside, one will be able to practice the path, which is the fourth truth, and finally attain the truth of cessation.

In the vipaśyanā of the Tirthikas there is the partial elimination of the obvious mental negativities, but they are not completely eliminated. In the vipaśyanā of the śrāvakas the cause of the kleśas is identified as the clinging to the idea of self or of

“I” or “mine.” A belief in a self is a delusion because actually there is no self or things that belong to a self. When one is able to realize the absence of self in vipaśyanā meditation, then the natural clinging to self just vanishes. So the main meditation of the śrāvakas is the meditation on the absence of self. An example of this ego-clinging happened to me the other day when I noticed that one of the links in the metal strap of my watch was broken. When I saw that, I thought, “Oh no, the strap might break and I will lose my watch!” I was worried even though only a tiny bit of metal was missing. When one examines the watch, one cannot find any “mine” associated with the watch—it was made in a factory and it is just a piece of metal that didn’t originate from me in any way. If I were without the delusion of “my” associated with the watch, I wouldn’t have experienced the discomfort and suffering of seeing the broken link.

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The meditation of vipaśyanā of the bodhisattva of the mahāyāna path is the meditation on the selflessness of phenomena. A bodhisattva practices meditation based on the six paramitas. There is the selflessness of the individual already discussed and the selflessness of phenomena. This second kind of selflessness is the realization that inner consciousness and external phenomena are naturally peaceful and empty. So the mahāyāna meditator believes that the root of samsāra is the kleśas and that the root of the kleśas is ego-clinging. Eliminating clinging to a self is the way to be liberated from samsāra.

To eliminate kleśas, the mahāyāna meditators meditate on the nature of external and internal phenomena in detail to discover that they are completely insubstantial, like bubbles in water. With this realization the kleśas naturally disappear. The belief in the reality of external phenomena is called the obscuration of knowledge, and when this obscuration is eliminated there is liberation from samsāra. The bodhisattvas therefore meditate on emptiness (*śūnyatā*). In the *Heart Sūtra* the Buddha says there are “no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, [etc.]” and that there is “no form, no sound, no smell, no taste, [etc.]” One might interpret this as the Buddha saying there are literally no eyes, and so on. When the Buddha gave this teaching, he was explaining what one experiences when one rests in this state of samādhi meditation. He didn’t explain this in the sūtra because at the time his pupils were in a meditative state and therefore were able to understand the teaching without explanation. The Buddha taught this way in the *Heart Sūtra* and the other *Prajñāpāramitā* sūtras. These teachings are explained in commentaries such as Chandrakīrti’s *Entering into the Middle Way*; by examining cause and effect he demonstrates the nature of emptiness by examining the nature of cause. There is also Master Jñānagarbha who, in his *Differentiation of the Two Truths*, shows the

nature of emptiness through the analysis of the effect. Then there is Nāgārjuna's *Knowledge of the Middle Way*, which demonstrates the emptiness of all phenomena.

In Tibet there are a number of great commentaries on emptiness, such as that of Lama Mipam, who described how the Indian master Śāntaraksita came to Tibet and wrote the *Adornment of the Middle Way*, which explains emptiness in terms of things not being "one thing or many things." Mipam describes this approach as being very powerful and easy to understand. For example, for things to be real, they must be a single thing; let us say for a "hand" to exist it must be one thing: a hand. If one looks at it, one sees a hand; if one shows it to others, they agree it is a hand. However, examining it more closely, one sees that it is a thumb, a finger, skin, flesh and bones, and so on. So it is not a hand, but, as the Buddha said, it is just an aggregation of all sorts of parts that have come together. So the hand really is the appearance that arises from the interdependence of parts that we call a hand, but there is no real hand there. It is like this for all things, and using this logic, one becomes convinced of the nature of emptiness.

The vipaśyanā meditation of the mahāyāna is on the realization of emptiness, which is also called dependent origination. This means that all phenomena that arise have a dependence upon other phenomena and therefore no true existence of their own. For example, with the reflection of the moon on water, there is no real moon in the water, but due to the interdependence of the moon in the sky and the water on the ground, a reflection of the moon appears. Also, when one examines the water to see where the moon is, there isn't a single location where the moon's reflection is. In this same way, all phenomena originate through dependence upon something else and have no true existence of their own. The realization of this fact is the realization of emptiness, and with this realization, the kleśas cease. So to put an end to the kleśas, one meditates on emptiness.

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If one examines phenomena with logic and establishes that they are empty, one can gain an understanding of emptiness, but one doesn't gain a direct experience of emptiness. Also this logical method takes a long time. In the vajrayāna approach outer phenomena are understood to be empty; but the practice is to observe the mind. The mind is the source of all happiness and all suffering, the source of all craving and all anger, the source of all love and compassion; whatever occurs comes from the mind. When we first examine the mind, we think that it must be very powerful to create all this. However, looking inward, we are completely unable to find the mind; it is not outside the body, nor inside the body, nor in between these

two. So the mind is empty.

When we say the mind is empty, we don't mean that the mind doesn't exist like the "horns of a rabbit," which obviously do not exist. Nor is the emptiness of mind like empty space that has nothing in it. Rather the nature of mind is natural clarity. When we try to find the actual nature of mind directly, we cannot do so. It is both clarity and emptiness. When we examine mind, it is not just complete dullness or unconsciousness like a stone, but there is an uninterrupted continuum of clarity. The mind is normally full of thoughts and problems, but when we have understood the emptiness and clarity of the mind, then everything becomes very gentle and peaceful. So the text says the vipaśyanā in the vajrayāna has the nature of bliss.

The study of emptiness in the sūtras is the study of the *Prajñāpāramitā*. In the vajrayāna or tantra teachings the realization of emptiness is accomplished by looking at mind itself. Normally one thinks of the mind as being very strong and powerful, especially when all the thoughts and kleśas arise. But when one carefully examines to see where the mind actually is, one finds that there is nothing there, just a state of peace. This is called the state of great bliss because there is an absence of suffering and kleśas. While meditating one may think, "I cannot meditate because there are so many thoughts coming up." But when one examines where the thoughts come from and what they really are, one finds that they do not exist. There is just this natural state of peace.

When I was very young, my teacher would tell me that all phenomena were empty, but I thought that this was impossible and could not be right. Later when studying the texts, I realized that phenomena were empty after all, but I did not see how the mind could be empty. There were so many thoughts and there was a power to all these thoughts and feelings, so it was impossible for the mind to be empty. But after receiving the instructions for meditation and analyzing the mind, I realized, "Oh, the mind is empty after all." So first one discovers that phenomena are empty, then one analyzes the mind and finds that it is also empty. With analysis it is easy to understand the emptiness of mind. What is difficult is to familiarize oneself with and habituate oneself to that understanding. Just to analyze the mind to see that its nature is empty is not very beneficial. For instance, when suffering begins it is of little help to simply think, "The nature of suffering is emptiness." But if one accustoms one's mind to the understanding of emptiness, then the mind poisons will be eliminated and suffering will be pacified.

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There are six root afflictions, or kleśas. The first is *anger*, so one looks for where anger first appears, where it comes from, where it stays, and so on. One does the same for the second kleśa, which is *craving* or *desire* for external objects. The third kleśa is *ignorance* and the fourth is *pride*. The fifth kleśa is *doubt* or *uncertainty*, which has a positive or negative form. The sixth is *afflicted view*, which means the belief in self, a clinging to a self. These are the six root mind poisons as described in the commentaries. With each of these one looks for where they first appear, where they dwell, and where they go. This is analytic meditation and through it one realizes the nature of the poisons.

When one has this realization, one rests one's mind in this realization. In this way one obtains the realization of the emptiness of things often described as the union of emptiness and knowledge. This knowledge is clarity, an activity that doesn't have any actual true nature because it is emptiness itself. It is just a function, but not an actual thing in itself. Clarity is like a quality or attribute, but there is no basis to that quality. There is a process of knowing, but there is no knower who knows. Other than its nature, it is just emptiness. So one has this union of clarity and emptiness or this union of knowledge and emptiness. Atīśa in his meditation instructions says that normally we think of mind as being a combination of past, present, and future thoughts. We put these together and think that it is mind. If we analyze it, however, we find that past thoughts don't exist, that they have gone and aren't there any more, that is, they are nonexistent. Future thoughts have not yet been created so they are naturally empty. So what we have is just the present, which is a very brief period of time. Examining the present mind is very difficult because we find nothing there with any color, shape, form, or nature. So we find present mind is not really anything either and is therefore also empty.

Having understood the nature of emptiness through analytic meditation, we now look to see who is knowing, who has this understanding, and we find the knower doesn't exist. So we recognize this indivisibility of knowing and emptiness. This is known as discriminating wisdom or discriminating prajñā.

There are siddhas, that is, accomplished vajrayāna masters, who have said that when one looks directly at anger, the anger disappears. Anger has its own emptiness. It attains its own natural empty state. Previously, it has been said that there is no direct remedy that one can apply to anger that is correct in the context of hīnayāna and mahāyāna meditation. But in vajrayāna meditation there is the remedy of looking directly into the nature of anger.

Rediscovering Yourself
The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma
Volume One: The Path of Individual Liberation
By Chögyam Trungpa, Ed. Judith L. Lief, pp. 279-280

[page 279] In meditation practice the meditator uses any and all of these eight types of consciousness, so you need to learn how to work with them. The popular idea of meditation is that of trying to attain a higher state of consciousness. You try to clean up the eight consciousnesses into an absolute consciousness or into a higher, superior form of eight types of consciousness. But that approach seems to be a problem. Relating intelligently with the technique of meditation does not have to be a project of sticking out your neck and looking beyond what you are. You are not trying to avoid or to transcend anything. Instead you could remain in the state of what you are.

In meditation practice, using the eight types of consciousness as material, you find to your surprise that you have not made a real and complete relationship with them. You simply exist as you were born, with eight types of consciousness, but you haven't actually looked at those happenings in your being. In that way, you are much more akin to an ape than to an intelligent being. Therefore the first project, so to speak, of meditation practice is to realize and rediscover these eight types of consciousness. In working with them, you are not trying to overcome them or do anything funny with them or manipulate them in some cunning way. You do not have to race with yourself. Instead you are rediscovering them and becoming a more refined animal by developing perfect and complete understanding of your own mind.

Through meditation, you begin to understand the eight consciousnesses and to know their functions inside out and outside in. You begin to understand the five skandhas as well. Realizing the subtleties of consciousness in this way is by no means reinforcing ego. It is like examining your body: you think your body is beautiful and active and powerful, but once you begin to study the muscles, bones, and interior organs, and once you see an X-ray, you begin to feel slightly insecure. At the same time, it is very interesting. You get a new perspective of your body and how your body functions.

Usually the eight consciousnesses are all lumped together; but meditation practice begins to sort them out. You begin to see the functions of mind completely and clearly. You know which part is which. In the meditative state, there could be an experienter of the unconscious. That is the whole point. So far, the whole thing has been so lumped together that you have forgotten your being, your existence. But once you have time to

slow [page 280] down, think, and pay attention to the various little details, like breathing, you begin to realize yourself. It is as if you had been lying on a bed for a long time, not allowed to move around, and you began to rediscover your limbs, your fingers, and your toes—in meditation, you begin to rediscover yourself.

You might say, “What is the virtue of meditation, if we are just rediscovering ourselves? If we are already what we are, then what is the point of rediscovering ourselves?” But even if you develop a state of subtlety and sophistication, you are still rediscovering yourself. You can’t change yourself from an ape to a divine being—that’s impossible. The problem in not being able to see the real state of the eight types of consciousness is that you feel you are being condemned, punished, deprived, belittled. That sense of deprivation and condemnation comes from being unable to relate with yourself completely, let alone bring foreign information into your system. That is out of the question altogether, if there is any such thing. However, there does not seem to be anything transcendental or enlightened outside the eight types of consciousness. So the first step is to rest with what you have and not look ahead too far.

As you meditate, your experience of duality becomes sharpened, and you become more perky. Your deprivation becomes sharpened, but at the same time you begin to feel that your situation is workable. Before you were just stuck in the slums and you had no way of getting out, but now you begin to feel there are ways out. So the starting point is not to get out completely. Instead, you are given a kind of teaser: you get out partially. At that point, your original primitive pain is somewhat lessened—but then you have the ambition to get beyond that, to get completely better! You become very competitive. That kind of ambition grows and grows, and as ambition grows, confusion grows as well—but at a certain point, that confusion becomes encouragement rather than an obstacle. You feel much sturdier and more secure if you carry a heavy walking stick. Although it is heavy, it feels good.

It is exciting and it is good! You can practice the dharma by making use of the eight types of consciousness as vehicle, ground, food, shelter, inspiration, and information. You can become a dharma practitioner and turn the wheel of the dharma. To your surprise, turning the wheel of the dharma is not all that complicated. Anyone can do it.

Excerpt from Chapter 43: The Freshness of Unconditional Mind
The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma: Volume One
By Chögyam Trungpa, compiled and edited by Judith L. Lief, pp. 329-331

[Introduction to Vipashyana]

Vipashyana refers to the sense of precision that could arise from the sitting practice of meditation and slowly infiltrate our everyday life. There are two different schools of vipashyana: the analytical contemplative way, and the nonanalytical experiential way. The analytical school talks about the possibility of becoming more aware if you ask more questions and examine the nature of reality and your own state of mind. In our tradition, in accordance with Jamgön Kongtrül, we talk mainly in terms of the nonanalytical, or experiential, approach. Because of that emphasis, the Kagyü tradition is known as the practice lineage.

Shamatha provides the ground, but too much emphasis on shamatha practice could be a problem. It is said that one should not be attached to the pond of shamatha, but let the flower of vipashyana bloom, like a pond beautified by a lotus flower. Taking shelter in shamatha is a perversion of shamatha discipline, so it is very important to convert the relaxation of shamatha meditation into the postmeditation activity of vipashyana. Traditionally, it is said that you should try to achieve a fifty-fifty balance between shamatha and vipashyana. Having properly regrouped your state of mind and linked it with sanity, the postmeditation experience could be a tremendous expansion toward awareness.

Vipashyana is entirely different from shamatha. Shamatha practice could be regarded as a way of quieting and pacifying the mind. It is a paring-down process that leaves us very little reference point and very little to work on except the technique itself. Shamatha is a way to quiet oneself. It is the development of peace. Having already become quiet, having practiced and achieved that basic ground of shamatha, we could expand out and extend ourselves. With vipashyana, rather than cutting down our mental perceptions, we sharpen our awareness.

Vipashyana is referred to as insight, or the seed of prajna, in that we are preparing ourselves to become worthy of listening to the teachings. Through vipashyana we can hear the teachings properly. We are able to perceive the subtlety and the depth of the teachings. That is precisely why vipashyana is an important practice: it begins to open the gate of wisdom. Vipashyana practice includes the contemplative approach of pondering the dharma intellectually, as well as the meditative practice of the development of awareness.

In the contemplative practice of vipashyana, speculative mind is used as a way of looking beyond oneself. You have certain ideas and conclusions, and through philosophical speculation you try to create further ideas and conclusions in order to transcend yourself. In Buddhist philosophy, you are venturing out into different ground than the ground that you find secure. When you find it very confusing to understand things, then rather than formulating new ideas to make sure you have some ground to stand on, the Buddhist approach is to take a further leap and create your own nest in space. That is the philosophical approach in Buddhism. It is precisely the approach of vipashyana, if not prajna.

Vipashyana awareness arises from several different conditions, but fundamentally it comes from being without aggression. The definition of dharma altogether is the absence of aggression. It is a way of dealing with aggression, and shamatha is the starting point. Shamatha brings clear thinking and slows you down, because the only thing you have to work on is your breathing. Because aggression or anger is based on speed and confusion, shamatha leads to the absence of aggression. So shamatha is the development of peace.

In order to perceive or to understand the dharma, you have to develop a state of mind without aggression, a mind based on non-ego and nonspeed. Dharma being without aggression means the materials of our experience are workable and could be woven into the pattern of the path. It may seem like a tall order to be without aggression, and it may seem impossible for beginners to develop such perfection. However, even for beginners, momentary states of mind occur that have elements of nonaggression and non-ego.

Meditation is Taking a Leap
From Simplicity and Awareness
In Work, Sex, Money: Real Life on the Path of Mindfulness
Chogyam Trungpa, Excerpts from pp. 48-53

We can describe meditation in terms of taking a leap. Taking a leap means experiencing the openness of space. You can take this kind of meditative leap while you are working. It is connected with bringing air and earth together. You can't feel the earth unless you feel the air. The more you feel the air, the more you feel the earth. Feeling the air and the earth together is feeling the space between you and the objects you are working with. This becomes a natural awareness of openness. You automatically begin to feel peace and lightness.

The way to practice this is not to try to concentrate or try to be aware of yourself while managing the task you are doing at the same time. Rather, you should have a general feeling of acknowledging existence with openness while you work. Then you feel that there is more room to do things, more room to work. By cultivating a continual meditative state, you are acknowledging the existence of the openness. You don't have to try to hold on to this or try to bring it about deliberately, just the pure acknowledgment of that state is enough. Acknowledge the vast energy of openness. just flash on it; just acknowledge it. Flash on it for a second. A flash of acknowledgment is all it takes. Having acknowledged it, don't try to hold on. You almost ignore it after that. Continue with your work. The feeling of openness will also continue, and you will begin to develop the actual feel of the situation, the feel of the things you're working with.

So the awareness we are talking about here is not constant awareness as an object of mind. Instead of taking awareness as an object, you become one with awareness, one with the open space, which of course also means becoming one with the actual things you're working with. Then the whole process becomes a very easy one-way process, rather than a situation in which you're trying to split yourself into different levels of awareness, with one level minding the other. With this easy one-way, one-step process, you begin to make a real relationship with objects and with the beauty of objects as well.

Don't try to possess the openness, but just acknowledge it and then turn away from it. It is important to turn away, because if you try to possess the openness, you have to chase after it. You try to follow it, which you can't actually do. You can't actually possess it at all. If you let go of it and disown it, and then continue working, this feeling stays with you all the way along.

Openness here refers to a meditative state of simplicity or lack of complication. The absence of complications becomes simplicity. Within simplicity there is room to do things, to move about. This is true of everyday actions as well as formal meditation itself.

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[53] As long as we feel some sense of empty space and openness, there is something to work with. It's not so very difficult to find this sense of space. It just requires taking a leap into the empty space by not questioning or second-guessing ourselves. This feeling of empty space might be unpleasant to start with, but just leap into it. See what happens.

Meditation, in particular, provides us with the inspiration to relate to the spaciousness of life. To begin with, this comes from working with our thoughts. In your meditation practice, you might find that thoughts are constantly rushing through your mind. If you see them as purely thoughts rather than focusing on the subject of your thinking, then there is more space. When you think of your thoughts purely as a thinking *process*, rather than focusing on the contents of the thoughts, that will make your attitude toward thoughts very impersonal. If you were watching a cloud, and within this cloud you saw your friends and relatives walking around, then immediately you would associate yourself with those people and you would name them and fixate on them, apart from the cloud. Then you are caught up with the whole thing, and it becomes very crowded. Whereas if you just notice the people, and don't try to identify with them, it's more impersonal. It's the same thing with your thoughts. In meditation you develop this impersonal way of looking at thoughts.

Beauty and Absurdity

From The Teacup & The Skullcup: Chogyam Trungpa on Zen and Tantra
Judith L. Lief and David Schneider, Editors, pp. 83-87

Having discussed the ground-how the basic practice of dhyana, or the tradition of Zen, could be developed-the next stage seems to be the question of how concentration produces appreciation. At this stage, you are actually trapping the crazy monkey. So it is a twofold process. First, you develop a sense of accuracy in relating with your thoughts and your mind--with the neuroses and all kinds of things that develop in one's mind. Secondly, you put all that into a certain perspective, as workable. You make a relationship with your thoughts, you work with the thoughts. So this process could be represented by the analogy of trapping the crazy monkey.

The traditional analogy for the monkey-mind is an ox or an elephant. In Tibetan we call that mind *sem*. Mind, or *sem*, is the intelligent state that relates with objects. It is fickle in nature, constantly moving, and this movement leaves impressions behind. The mind leaves impressions, and it also takes on the burden of others. Mind is a constant state of movement. Sometimes, extraordinarily, the mind extends itself into speeding along very fast; and at some points, it seems to slow down, but that is also an expression of speed. Whether it is slow or fast, the nature of mind is restless, completely restless. At times, there may be room for irritations or obstacles to pass through, but even the occasional stillness of mind lasts no longer than a fraction of a second. That is the definition of mind.

Awareness, or intelligence, is quite a different and separate category from the mind. The intelligence, or consciousness, has less speed and does not carry a burden. It also expects some hospitality: this particular intelligence expects to be accommodated. Intelligence or awareness is therefore referred to as the rider or herder who works with the ox or the elephant or the monkey. Awareness regards the mind as its property; intelligence, or consciousness, is the owner of monkey-mind. The idea is that the monkey is supposed to have been domesticated a long time ago, but, somehow, we did not get around to it. So now we have this big project of setting a trap and trapping this monkey.

The schema is that there is consciousness, which is the intelligent aspect of the mind; and within consciousness, the most sane aspect is the awareness fraction or portion. The monkey-mind is caught in the trap because of the constant practice of sitting meditation, which provides a camouflage. Being completely still, it is complete entrapment. But at this point it is still a game. We are uncertain as to whether we are

going to trap the monkey or not; it is uncertain; it is still a challenge. It could be regarded as a big joke, but nevertheless we are pursuing it and going ahead with it.

One of the problems with the monkey-mind is speed. The intensity of the speed, instant by instant, has prevented us from taking a good look at [85] this particular monkey, so it has become a myth. We are uncertain, and question whether such a monkey exists or not. But the monkey-mind is finally caught in the trap purely by constant patience and forbearance. As practitioners, we do not react against the displays that monkey has provided us: the discursive thoughts and subconscious gossip. The monkey has provided us with all kinds of things, but we continue to remain still. We are faithful to the technique of awareness of breathing and walking.

By the practitioner's sheer discipline and sheer patience, the monkey finally feels that there is no life around it or around the trap. As the monkey begins to relax a little, but still practices its inquisitiveness—suddenly it is caught in the net by our sheer stillness and faithfulness to the technique. The monkey struggles and tries to get out of the net, but that net was well-prepared a long time ago by highly accomplished craftsmen, who handed down from generation to generation the tradition of how to provide such a good entrapment. Every knot in the net is well-produced, and it is very tough and functional. So now the monkey mind cannot get out of this trap. Knowing that as well, the monkey makes only feeble attempts, a kind of tokenism. Another analogy for this process is that of capturing an elephant or an ox, as demonstrated in the Zen oxherding pictures.

In the end, the monkey turns out to be not all that monkey-like in strength and solidity—it turns out to be a gorilla! It has power and strength, and it is worthwhile training this gorilla as a vehicle. Sometimes it is ferocious, sometimes slightly stupid, but nevertheless it is very powerful. So that is another realization: this monkey-mind is not all that feeble. It is not as weak, inquisitive, and speedy as we thought it might be.

In the practice of meditation, in dealing with this gorilla, once we have captured such a creature, we have to examine it and study it. We cannot just do something with it without knowing its habits and its behavior—patterns that might have to change. This is called vipashyana practice, or in Tibetan, *lhakthong*, which literally means “clear seeing.” *Lhak* is “superior”; *thong* is “seeing”; therefore, *lhakthong* could be translated as “superior vision” or “clear seeing.”

Now that this mind has been captured by the discipline and techniques we applied, we have to examine it carefully to see what we can do with this animal and how we can use it—whether we could use it as a farming ox or a vehicle or a baggage carrier. So we look

at this discursive thought finally entrapped in the net of discipline and see what we can do with it. This provides a first step, some hope, because after all the trips that we have gone through, the hypothetical ceases to be hypothetical. It finally becomes reality. After all, we are not kidding ourselves and pretending to be meditating, we are actually doing something with our mind—and this is the proof.

Lhakthong is called clear seeing because it is awareness of every detail and at the same time it is very spacious. It goes beyond a breathing exercise alone. There is a sense of openness and a sense of appreciation of the environment around oneself. The focus on the breathing is no longer the important point—you focus on the totality of the breathing. The space around you becomes extremely important and extremely powerful. At that point, mindfulness becomes awareness, which is the next stage of practice.

Awareness also means comprehension. In other words, you cannot just be aware without being intelligent. The notion of wakefulness still continues at this level, but awareness not only means seeing; it means that seeing, as well as the product of seeing, is being perceived properly. So first you see something, but you do not quite perceive it. Your vision has to be very clear to see properly. Then, having already seen, there is still constant discipline, which continues afterwards. Having seen things as they are, the object you discovered comes back to you and you begin to comprehend. That is, you begin to understand what you have seen, rather than purely seeing. That is the difference. It is like the difference [87] between things perceived through a camera lens and things perceived by a human mind. One is completely mechanical: things can be seen as clearly as possible by a macro lens, but that lens does not transmit its message back. In the case of consciousness, the awareness process is a level of perception that utilizes what is seen as a part of its working situation. Through awareness, you get a very abrupt, definite, and clear perspective of the spontaneous working of perception and reality--suddenly! Vision and perception happen constantly; and with lhakthong, seeing and knowing take place at the same time.

We now realize that this gorilla has all kinds of potentialities. This gorilla can be trained in domestic manners, in every sense of the word. At the same time the intelligence, the conscious mind—which is the hunter of this gorilla--has established its ownership and trust and understanding. At this point, the speedy mind becomes somewhat workable--even highly workable.

Vipashyana

Q&A from “What is the Heart of the Buddha?”

In *The Heart of the Buddha*, Chogyam Trungpa, pages 8-9

Student: Rinpoche, could you say a little bit about vipashyana mediation? You mentioned it in your talk, but I'm not really sure what it is.

Trungpa Rinpoche: Vipashyana is a Sanskrit word which literally means “seeing clearly.” In Tibetan we use the word lhakthong. Lhak means “superior” and thong means “seeing.” So lhakthong means “clear seeing,” “superior seeing.”

Vipashyana begins once we have developed substantial shamatha discipline of being precise and mindful, on the spot, all the time. In shamatha, sound, smell, feeling, thought process, and everything else are looked at, but with such precision that they are nothing other than stillness. They don't produce further bubbles, or further percolation, of any kind at all.

You might say, “Ah, I thought of my father telling me no.” At that moment, both your father and the idea of him saying “No, don't do that” are divided into now, now, now, all the time. Everything is chopped into that level of precision, into a grain of sand. That is shamatha.

Usually, memory is predominant in everything you experience. If you are sitting in a meditation hall and the smell of food comes from the kitchen, you think about what kind of dinner they are cooking for you. Or else, you feel the ache in your buttocks and back and you want to [page 9] shift around. Shamatha means that everything is simply looked at. It is sliced up, but not aggressively; it is just looked at- look, look, look.

Through shamatha you are capable of looking at these experiences as individual entities, without referring to the past and without thinking about where they are going, or what they are going to do to you. Everything is without beginning and without end, just on the spot. If you think of onion soup and how you would like to go out and get onion soup, it is only on the level of thought. So you chop your thoughts-now, now, now.

Out of that comes vipashyana. On the level of vipashyana, you chop thoughts because of your training in shamatha, but at the same time you bring them along. The world is a panoramic view, but at the same time things really don't hang together the way they ordinarily used to.

Things are made out of pieces of simple realities, primitive realities. Even if you smell onions for a long time- for half an hour- those smells are chopped into pieces: you smell them, then you don't smell them, you smell them, then you don't smell them. Otherwise, if there were no gap, you couldn't smell at all.

Experiences are not continuous at the ego level. We think they are all together, in cahoots, but it doesn't really happen that way. Everything is made out of dots. When experiences are chopped into small pieces, some realization of the unity of the display could come out of that. That is vipashyana.

You begin to feel good when, for instance, you touch a rock, because you feel that the rock is not a continuous rock, but the rock of the moment. When you hold your fan, it is the fan of the moment; when you blink, your blink is of the moment; when you meet your friends, they are friends of the moment. Nothing is expected and nothing is demanded any more. Everything is seen clearly.

Clear seeing: that is the definition of vipashyana, which is the result of shamatha. Things could be seen as a great display, as a Disney world, or whatever you want to call it. You realize that things are not all that together. But because they are not together, they are fantastically colorful. The more you see the mark of discontinuity, the more you see things as colorful. In order to see color you have to take a rest; then you see color again. So you see, you rest, and then you see brilliance again. That is the precision of how to perceive the phenomenal world.

Vipashyana

Selected Excerpts from *The Manual for Shamatha Instructors*

Based on two Meditation Instructor Seminars, Karmê Chöling, Winter-Spring 1975

Introduction to Vipashyana

There is more sense of awareness on the breathing, whereas the mindfulness of breathing is somewhat optional. So there is a possibility that the mindfulness on the breathing could just sort of diffuse. One might find that it is no longer important to stick with the breath, particularly. In the zen tradition it corresponds to *shikan taza*, which is the non-technique stage. That is vipashyana experience. So at the first level, mindfulness of breathing is important in shamatha. At the second level, of vipashyana, mindfulness of breathing becomes optional. Not because you should give it up by force, but the mindfulness of breathing might go away. There might be a level of expansion taking place, and less sense of one-pointedness. Traditionally the walking practice is much more associated with vipashyana. Walking practice has somewhat more expansiveness, the body moving through the air. There's a more free idea and also there are more obvious things happening, because you are actually walking. Whereas with the breathing it is questionable whether it's dream level, imaginary breathing, or if you're actually breathing.

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Well, today we should discuss some points about vipashyana experience. The vipashyana experience is a gradual process that develops from the shamatha experience. In many cases students automatically arrive at that situation. In fact, it's almost predictable. So you are not particularly changing their style of technique from one to another, like graduating suddenly from one level to another. But when practitioners do enough sitting and expand their sense of identity with the practice, they tend to feel somewhat at home with it. At that point the actual mindfulness of breathing begins to become less important or less obvious to them. They slowly find themselves not needing to sit with the breathing alone; they find they can do without using the breath. In other words, the technique of breathing begins to drop away. And also some kind of fundamental continuity of mindfulness begins to happen. That's what's known as awareness, as opposed to mindfulness.

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The general nature of vipashyana is that you slowly begin to go away from techniques of any kind. That is the awareness. You have systematic formal, rigid discipline at the beginning, and then you begin to go away from that formality slowly and become more and more involved with general panoramic mindfulness, which is awareness. That also makes the everyday sitting practice, as well as leading life in the postmeditation

experience, easy for you. In other words the mindfulness is very hard to carry out exactly—while you're cooking, while you're eating, and everything. On the other hand, awareness becomes much easier to carry out, because there's no particular specific technique involved, for one thing, and there's not a concentration which is based on pinpointing the situation. So the whole thing is generalized, but at the same time wakeful.

That is the general tendency of vipashyana, which means awareness. Vipashyana literally means “development of clear-seeing,” but it also means clear-seeing in the sense of general vision rather than focused attention on one particular object of perception. It is panoramic, all pervasive. Somehow, it is very difficult to begin on vipashyana first, with the development of general awareness, because we haven't actually worked on the specific awareness first, in all situations—like one's pace in walking meditation or one's pace of sitting and breathing. It would be difficult to institute anything general because we haven't developed the individualities. Once the individuality is already developed, there would be no difficulty at all with just expansion of that. That seems to be one of the basic points of vipashyana. It seems to take a long, long time for people to get to that point.

The general sense of vipashyana possibility is always there. Sometimes the vipashyana experience comes from the other angle. That is, in sitting practice a person works on the breathing—that still seems to be needed very much—but after the sitting session is finished you have an everyday life situation happening, and a sense of panoramic awareness develops as an after-effect of the very concentrated shamatha. So the concentrated shamatha tends to bring vipashyana in everyday life situations with some people. Such people can't do without using the breathing while sitting, but later they can be fully there, fully aware, and at the same time accomplish what they're doing. So those are the two possibilities. People have different styles and find different ways to develop that, but both of them lead to the same situation. The whole purpose of practice here is to provide a very vague boundary between sitting and not-sitting practice, so that finally everything becomes part of meditation.

We begin to see through the technique. One might be very faithful and willing to continue with the breathing. But then feel that it is somewhat irrelevant, somehow they feel there's something which happens behind the breathing, behind the actual mindfulness of breathing activity. Then feel that there is some awareness still going on. Then begin to see through the techniques. You see, that process goes through all the nine yanas of the journey. Each time one begins to see through the technique, he or she is ready to get into the next one. You begin to drop your crutches and see them as irrelevant. You still obey your doctor's orders—although you can walk perfectly normally, you might still carry your crutches along. There's that kind of tendency, and

somehow a kind of insight develops. “I am still faithful to the technique, but I feel that something larger than onepointedness is taking place.”

I think it is necessary to go very slowly. The general tendency is that one tends to rush and not be patient enough; and one might suggest, unskillfully, to a student that there is more to come. As if the practice is like a course that you go through, which is a mistake. So when a student comes back and asks you, “What next?” one has to push them back and say, “Keep doing the same things.” One has to be very persistent, otherwise nobody takes deep enough root in the practice. So I think if you’ve been hasty things become disassociated, and people have less feeling of the practice of meditation. The vipashyana experience comes much later. The shamatha approach is like a worm in a tree; it eats the tree, it digests, and it leaves excrement behind; and then it goes on eating. So it creates a tunnel rather than any escape. That seems to be traditionally what’s called the walk of a tortoise, which is very slow and very definite, but covers ground. In other words, if there is any kind of glamour, it’s very attractive to present.

I think vipashyana awareness is a general sense that there’s a greater understanding of the whole thing taking place. Almost you can see in back of your head. It’s like everything can be operated in the daylight. We are not particularly aware of the sun shining on us, but everything functions in the daylight, as opposed to nighttime. There is a sense of total clarity, which isn’t extraordinary at all—it’s just very simple. It’s another kind of preoccupation, if you’d like to put it that way. You know, if you are upset about something, you still feel it in the back of your mind; but at the same time you can pay your bills and make your phone calls.

Systems of Vipashyana

The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma:

Volume One, The Path of Individual Liberation

By Chögyam Trungpa, compiled and edited by Judith L. Lief, pp. 348-352

Categories of Vipashyana

To understand buddhadharma, a person must meditate under the guidance of a teacher and be properly trained in vipashyana. Without an understanding of vipashyana, such discoveries as the four noble truths or egolessness cannot be completely comprehended or experienced.

Vipashyana practice is divided into various categories. In one system, vipashyana is divided into lower vipashyana and higher vipashyana. Lower vipashyana is a shamatha-type of vipashyana, based purely on concentration; higher vipashyana is more inspirational, based on such insights as discovering the four noble truths.

Aspects of Vipashyana

In another system, vipashyana is divided into two aspects: discriminating awareness and immovability. Discriminating awareness is the ability to see clearly, and through that clarity to develop definite mindfulness practice. Immovability is a kind of absorption in which awareness is constantly present and stable, and cannot move or shift. Different degrees of immovability happen in the various stages of vipashyana. Immovability is a powerful experience, based on the confidence that you have found the correct path, and therefore you cannot forget it. You finally realize that there is no other practice than this. You have been converted to vipashyana, and you have faith and trust in it.

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Unless you develop vipashyana and realize the importance of wakefulness, you will have only a very distant view of vajrayana or even the higher levels of mahayana. It is necessary to have that kind of basic training and growth. So vipashyana experience and practice is absolutely necessary for a person who follows the Buddhist path and really wants to understand the dharma. Both intellectually and intuitively, vipashyana practice is necessary. You have to make an acquaintance with yourself. You have to meet yourself, to know who you are and what you are. Without vipashyana experience, you don't have any idea of who you are, what you are, how you are, or why you are, at all! So it is very important and absolutely necessary to respect the need for vipashyana experience and practice.