

Day Nine Notes for Reflection

The Arahant

The Three Projections

When the Destruction of the Projections occur, then one can know with certitude that one has completed the task and attained Final Fruition.

In the process of DO, Ignorance is the misperception of existence, not knowing and understanding the Four Noble Truths and the Three Symptoms of Reality. This gives space for the Projections to influence and give rise to the Formations that are then chained with these Projections, and fettered with Craving, Conceit, and Ignorance.

Conversely these Projections also give rise to Ignorance by blinding one to the Perception and understanding of the Four Noble Truths, the Three Symptoms of Reality and the Eightfold Path.

Like the links in Dependent Origination, which possess the qualities of impermanence, Suffering and not-self, and are given rise to and cease by way of the Four Noble Truths, the Projections too possess these same qualities and function.

Here is the short form of Cessation –

Mass of Suffering ceases when Birth ceases
Birth ceases when Being ceases
Being ceases when Clinging ceases
Clinging ceases when Craving ceases
Craving ceases when Feeling ceases
Feeling ceases when Contact ceases
Contact ceases when Six Sense Base ceases
Six Sense Base ceases when Mentality Materiality ceases
Mentality Materiality ceases when Consciousness ceases
Consciousness ceases when Formations cease
Formations cease when Ignorance ceases

So how do Projections arise and cease? Via Ignorance. What gives rise to Ignorance? The Projections. Therefore, the Projections and Ignorance are interdependent.

The Projections prevent understanding, and this gives rise to Ignorance. Because Ignorance arises, the Projections are given way to influence Formations, which gives rise to the rest of the links that are then chained with Craving, Conceit and Ignorance. That is why when Effective Insight dawns, the Projections are seen to be destroyed, which can no longer give rise to Ignorance and which can no longer fetter Formations.

Ignorance is destroyed when the Projections are destroyed. When the Projections are destroyed, the Formations they've corrupted are also destroyed, unable to produce new Kamma for Rebirth to arise.

The Projections can be likened to a computer virus in the links, starting from Ignorance, becoming stronger in momentum as one goes further down the links. The Projections are factors for Birth. If one follows the map through Ignorance down to the rest of the links of DO, one sees the false sense of self fully come to be, but if one stops the flow of this programming through the Eightfold Path, there is a Cessation, a seeing, an understanding and the Projections are destroyed in the light of wisdom. A complete reformatting has now erased over the corrupted software i.e. the Formations so that the computer can now run smoothly.

The Projections are like an infection and wisdom is the antibody that eats away at it. There is the recovery marked by intermediary stages - each level of awakening. At the final stage, there is total homeostasis, complete health - the complete seeing of the truth of Nibbana and now the infection can no longer take hold and cause harm ever again.

The Projections determine the factors of Kamma and vice versa.

The Projection of Craving is activated by the force of reactions (link of Craving) to Feeling and vice versa.

The Projection of Being is activated by the accumulation of tendencies (within the link of Being) and vice versa.

The Projection of Ignorance is activated by seeing self in all that is not-self, permanence in all that is impermanent, and bliss in all that is unsatisfactory as well as being unaware of the Four Noble Truths, and vice versa.

Therefore there is a pendulous reactivity between the Projections and the process of the links in which they feed off each other. It hypnotizes beings to stay in Samsara. This stops only when an external force (Cessation) is applied through the Eightfold Path.

Arahantship Attainment

The links arise but when they do so, the mind has become so pristine that it is able to see the space between each link, that is the Cessation of each link right after it arises and before the next link arises. In other words, mind tends towards Cessation automatically and because of this, there is no Feeling of relief that one identifies with. Here, mindfulness is so sharp that mind is able to see the arising, the middle, the Cessation, and the space between each one Cessation and the next arising after

and identifies with none of it. It a special kind of seeing, in which a specific observation of Conscious Cessation is “unlocked” in the mind.

The mechanics are quite detailed, but suffice it to say that there is the observation of the arising, the Cessation, and the arising and Cessation together of the links up to Feeling in both directions as well. One understands that Conceit has been destroyed and with it the fetters of Craving for Existence and Non-Existence and Restlessness, which all depend upon Conceit. With the knowledge of the Projections destroyed, the fetter of Ignorance is destroyed.

Therefore, one understands this is the final life. Rebirth is no more, this life’s purpose has been fulfilled and that there is no more Being. What had to be done has been done. There is nothing left to do.

Parinibbana

At the dissolution of the body, an Arahant enters Parinibbana or Nibbana one final time before disintegration of the body. At the final dissolution of the body, an Arahant understands the depth of the Buddha’s final advice – “all Formations are impermanent.” Knowing this, the Arahant’s mind naturally doesn’t abide anywhere and will not hold onto anything that can create further Consciousness post-dissolution.

This is due to the non-arising of any Formations within the experience of Nibbana. Instead, that final Consciousness that remains unlinked and unconditioned by any Formation and all the rest of the Five Aggregates are extinguished. Parinibbana has occurred.

Kamma and Fruition of Kamma for an Arahant

For an Arahant, Realized Effective Vision conditions Formations. One knows Formations as purely impersonal that simply rise as a function to give rise to old Kamma down the links to pure thought, pure speech and pure action - void of the potential to generate new Kamma.

Functionally, Formations are brought to arising by old Kamma, the effect of actions committed prior to full awakening, which manifests through Formations down to Contact, to Feeling and finally to Perception. That momentum of old Kamma is terminated at Feeling while Perception rooted in Effective Choice renders it null and ineffective in producing further seeds.

Action is now automatically in accordance with the Realized Eightfold Path, which means no new Kamma is produced through Craving, Conceit, or Ignorance. Therefore

an Arahant must bear the effects of actions committed prior to full awakening but will not produce seeds for new Kamma.

Conscious Cessation

In the mind of an Arahant, there is constant Cessation, which means such a mind always tends to the Cessation aspect of each link when it arises. This Conscious Cessation is both what is the natural state of mind for an Arahant and also what refers to a state in which the Arahant touches the Nibbana Element, taking it as the object of meditation (although Nibbana itself, which is an activity, cannot be considered an object in conventional terms).

Mind is conscious but there is no Consciousness acting. It senses with no Feeling interacting. It is perceptive but no Perceptions occur. It is meditation without an object. It is Cessation in every moment. With the illusions known, there is no going back to getting caught up in Ignorance. Nibbana occurs when one sees the links arise and pass away without involvement. Here one sees the constant Cessation of the links.

The mind remains as it is but one is always awake to the Cessation of the links. It is a mind without borders, without stickiness, where one is awake at all times to the Cessation aspect of Formations and the links thereafter.

Craving cannot arise because its fuel has burned out. Personality or Being cannot arise because the illusion has been seen.

Ignorance is destroyed because the Four Noble Truths are embedded into the mind completely. This is done through –

- 1) the penetration of Suffering,
- 2) the destruction of Craving,
- 3) the fulfillment of Cessation and
- 4) the ripening of the Eightfold Path.

One is in Cessation without effort. It is natural, instant and effortless Cessation that occurs constantly. There is Perception but no Perceptions take hold. There is Feeling but no Feeling take hold. There is Consciousness but it takes no hold. It is an active version of Cessation. A different quality from the fabricated Cessation of Perception, Feeling and Consciousness.

Here, the mind is always in an Unconditioned state, in Nibbana, where mind naturally rests. Here concepts fall away, object and subject are disintegrated. That is why it is likened to effortless meditation without an object.

The Third Noble Truth of Cessation and the State of Cessation of Perception, Feeling and Consciousness

While there is no activity found in Cessation of Consciousness Perception and Feeling and there is no escape beyond it, it is still a state dependent upon factors to enter into it, namely the Intention and Formations related to that Intention when the mind trains to enter into such Cessation at the level of an Anagami or an Arahant. This is why it is still a “conditioned” state. The attachment to Cessation of Perception, Feeling and Consciousness is what prevents the “jump” into the final level. The jhanas and Cessation of Perception, Feeling and Consciousness can only take one to a certain level. But it is the continual entrance into these states while seeing a sense of self in them and identifying with them that prevents the completion of the Path.

When even these states are seen through with wisdom and understanding, one lets go of mind's contrivance to enter into them.

In the Conscious Cessation – the Third Noble Truth – while there seems to be brain activity there is total rest to be found. Since Consciousness, Feeling and Perception are “on” there is activity detected. However it is referred to as Unconditioned because there is the seeing of Formations no longer arising conditioned by Projections. Hence the mass of Suffering does not arise in such a mind. No concepts take hold. It is seeing the painting of the world for what it is. The paints are conditions that arise to form the world but the empty canvas is seen beyond where no Formations take hold. When one sees the painting for what it is there is no abiding in the world.

The world as it is called is perceived through the senses. In Conscious Cessation, the senses are as they are and thus the brain seems to show activity but the total Cessation of the world through them also occurs at the same time. When mind is still seemingly active to the world outside by others, in Reality there is nothing that sticks to it to create the arising of Suffering. There is the irreversible knowledge and experience of the Unconditioned. Using the analogy of the painting, when one goes beyond to see the canvas of the Unconditioned one still sees the paints but one knows the truth behind the painting.

The Matrix is a good analogy for this as well. One has seen the coding behind the world but while the senses experience the world it is never the same once one has seen the code. Seeing the code is Nibbana. Interacting in the Matrix as it would seem still occurs but the wisdom of the code has made it impossible for the mind to ever consider the illusion real again.

The mind of the Arahant is this in action — seeing the code and the Matrix at the same time but the Matrix no longer takes hold.