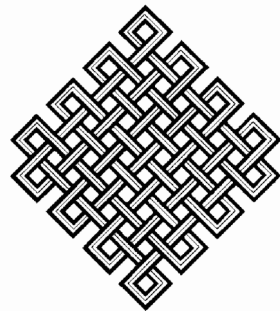


MSC RETREAT

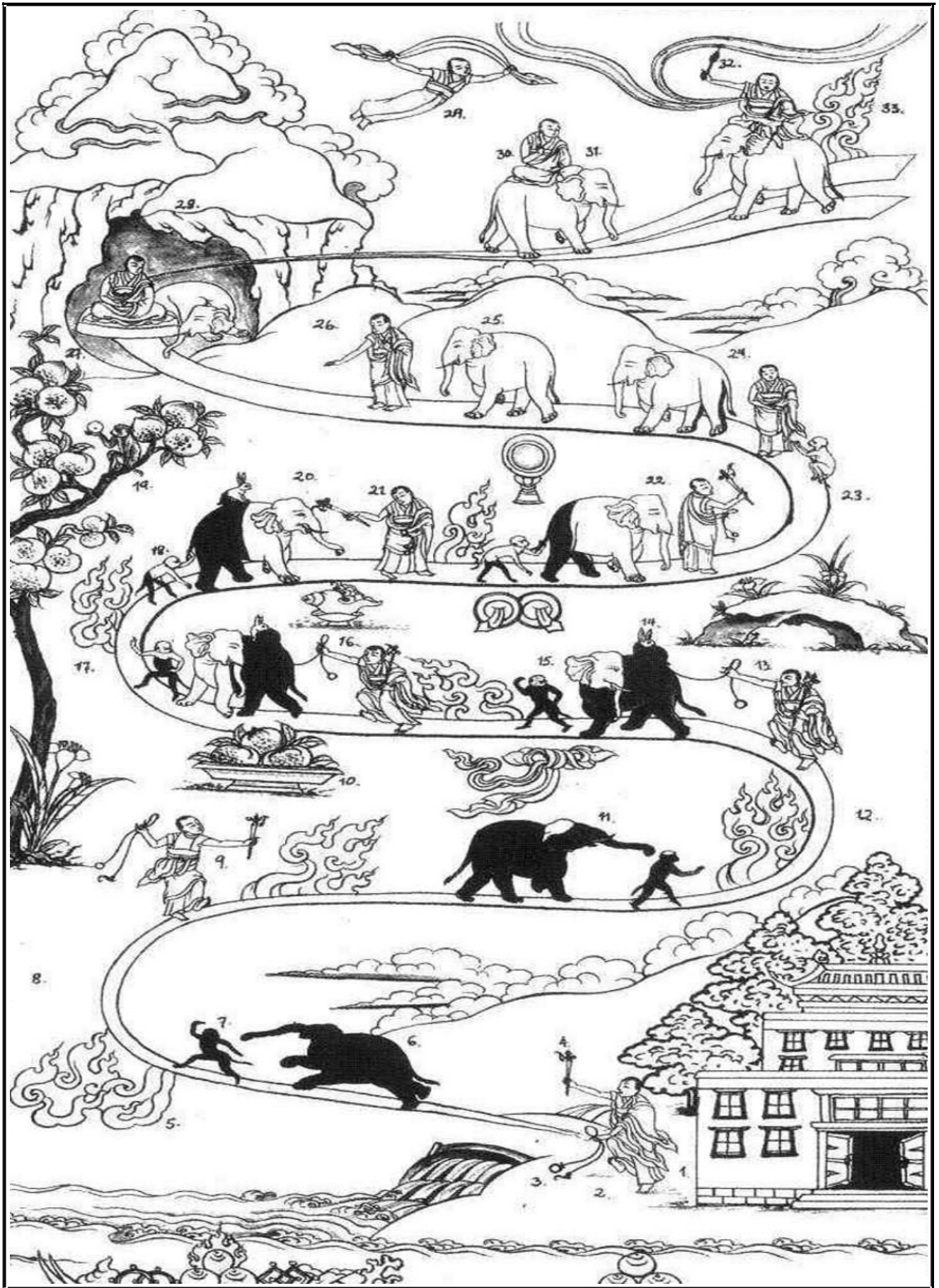
MINDFULNESS

SELFLESSNESS

COMPASSION



SHAMATHA



Shamatha is attained by progressing through the nine stages, relying on the eight antidotes to abandon the five faults. This is accomplished through the six powers and the four mental engagements.

Fault	Antidote
1. laziness	1. faith 2. aspiration 3. effort 4. pliancy
2. forgetfulness	5. mindfulness
3. laxity and excitement	6. introspection
4. non-application	7. application
5. over-application	8. equanimity

1. The first stage is attained through the *power of hearing*.
- 2. Stage 1 - Setting the mind**
3. Mindfulness
4. Introspection
5. From here until the seventh stage the flame progressively decreases in size until it becomes absent. This difference denotes the measure of the strength of effort required regarding mindfulness and introspection.
6. The elephant is the mind and the black colour symbolises laxity.
7. The monkey is the proliferation of thoughts and the black colour symbolises excitement.
8. The second stage is attained through the *power of thinking*.
- 9. Stage 2 - Continuous setting**
10. Excitement has the five sense pleasures as its objects.
11. From here, the black colour progressively becomes white. This symbolises the factor of clarity and the factor of stability progressively increasing.
12. The third and fourth stages are attained through the *power of mindfulness*.
- 13. Stage 3 - Resetting**
14. The rabbit is subtle laxity. From here, one can individually identify coarse and subtle laxity.
15. Looking back means that having recognized that the mind has wandered, it is again directed back to the object.
- 16. Stage 4 - Close setting**
17. The fifth and sixth stages are attained through the *power of introspection*.
18. The potential for excitement to arise prior to meditation has weakened.
19. Since virtuous thoughts are an interruption at the time of shamatha meditation, it is necessary to stop them. At other times it is not necessary.
20. Due to introspection the mind does not fall into scattering and through being uplifted, it is drawn into concentration.
- 21. Stage 5 - Disciplining**
- 22. Stage 6 - Pacifying**
23. The seventh and eighth stages are attained through the *power of effort*.
- 24. Stage 7 - Thorough pacifying**
- At this stage it is difficult for subtle laxity or excitement to arise and even if they do arise a little, they are immediately eliminated with the slightest effort.
25. The black colour of the elephant is gone and there is no monkey. This means that in dependence on initially applying a little mindfulness and introspection, the mind can engage continuously in concentration without any potential of being interrupted by laxity, excitement or thoughts.
- 26. Stage 8 - Making one-pointed**
27. The ninth stage is attained through the *power of familiarity*.
- 28. Stage 9 - Setting in equipoise**
29. Physical pliancy
30. Mental pliancy
31. Attainment of **shamatha**
32. The root of samsara is cut by the union of shamatha and vipashyana observing emptiness.
33. Equipped with mindfulness and introspection, seek the correct view of emptiness.

THE NINE STAGES LEADING TO SHAMATHA

SOURCE: B. ALAN WALLACE

Stage	What is achieved	Power by which that is achieved	What problems persist	Attentional imbalances	Type of mental engagement	Quality of experience	Involuntary thoughts
1. directed attention	One is able to direct the attention to the chosen object	Learning the instructions	There is no attentional continuity on the object	Coarse excitation	Focused	Movement	The flow of involuntary thoughts is like a cascading waterfall
2. continuous attention	Attentional continuity on the chosen object up to a minute	Thinking about the practice	Most of the time the attention is not on the object				
3. resurgent attention	Swift recovery of distracted attention, mostly on the object	Mindfulness	One still forgets the object entirely for brief periods	Coarse laxity and medium excitation	Interrupted	Achievement	Involuntary thoughts are like a river quickly flowing through a gorge
4. close attention	One no longer completely forgets the chosen object		Some degree of complacency concerning samadhi				
5. tamed attention	One takes satisfaction in samadhi	Introspection	Some resistance to samadhi	Medium laxity and medium excitation	Uninterrupted	Familiarity	Involuntary thoughts are like a river slowly flowing through a valley
6. pacified attention	No resistance to training the attention		Desire, depression, lethargy and drowsiness	Medium laxity and subtle excitation			
7. fully pacified attention	Pacification of attachment, melancholy and lethargy	Enthusiasm	Subtle imbalances of the attention, swiftly rectified	Subtle laxity and subtle excitation	Uninterrupted	Stillness	The conceptually discursive mind is calm like an ocean unmoved by waves
8. single-pointed attention	Samadhi is long and sustained without any excitation or laxity		It still takes effort to ward off excitation and laxity	Latent impulses for subtle laxity and subtle excitation			
9. attentional balance	Flawless samadhi is long and sustained effortlessly	Familiarity	Attentional imbalances may recur in the future	The causes for those imbalances are still latent	Effortless	Perfection	The conceptually discursive mind is still like Mount Meru, King of Mountains

Coarse excitation: The attention completely disengages from the meditative object

Medium excitation: Involuntary thoughts occupy the centre of attention, while the meditative object is displaced to the periphery

Subtle excitation: The meditative object remains at the centre of attention, but involuntary thoughts emerge at the periphery of attention

Coarse laxity: The attention mostly disengages from the object due to insufficient vividness

Medium laxity: The object appears, but with not much vividness

Subtle laxity: The object appears vividly, but the attention is slightly slack

THE FOUR BUDDHIST TENET SYSTEMS

Source: *Presentation of Tenets* – Jetsun Chögyi Gyeltsen

SCHOOL	SUB-SCHOOLS	PROONENT	ILLUSTRATION OF PERSON
VAIBHASIKA (Great Exposition)	18 sub-schools ¹	A person propounding Hinayana tenets who does not accept self-cognition but does accept truly existent external objects	Most Vaibhasikas: Mere collection of the aggregates Aparantikas: Mental consciousness Kashmiris: Continuum of the aggregates
SAUTRANTIKA (Sutra)	FOLLOWERS OF SCRIPTURE Followers of Vasubandhu's <i>Abhidharmakosa</i>	A person propounding Hinayana tenets who asserts both self-cognition ² and truly existent external objects	Continuum of the aggregates
	FOLLOWERS OF REASONING Followers of Dharmakirti's <i>Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition</i>		Mental consciousness
CITTAMATRA (Mind Only)	FOLLOWERS OF SCRIPTURE Followers of Asanga's <i>Five Treatises on the Grounds</i>	A person propounding Mahayana tenets who does not assert external objects but does accept truly existent self-cognition	Mind-basis-of-all
	FOLLOWERS OF REASONING Followers of Dharmakirti's <i>Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition</i>		Mental consciousness
MADHYAMAKA (Middle Way)	SVATANTRIKA (Autonomy)	A person propounding Mahayana tenets who does not accept true existence even conventionally	Mind-basis-of-all
	YOGACARA SVATANTRIKA (Yogic Autonomy)		Mental consciousness
	SAUTRANTIKA SVATANTRIKA (Sutra Autonomy)		Mere 'I'
	PRASANGIKA (Consequence)		

¹The division into 18 sub-schools: Majority Community, One Convention, Proponents of World-Transcendence, Much Hearing, Proponents of Imputation, Monument Ones, Eastern Mountain Ones, Western Mountain Ones, Abiding Firmly, Proponents of the Existence of All, Vatsiputra Followers, Dharmottara Followers, Bhadrarayana Followers, Mahasammata Followers, Great Teaching, Dharmagupta Followers, Kashyapa Followers and Uttara Followers. [*Maps of the Profound* (Hopkins) pages 210-217]

²The definition of valid self-cognizing perception is: a new and non-deceptive cognition that is free from conceptuality, is only inwardly directed and bears the aspect of an apprehending-subject.

THE THREE VEHICLES

VEHICLE	ASPIRATION	GOAL	PRACTICES	VIPASHYANA
THERAVADA (Pali)	Renunciation (<i>nihisarana</i>) (Renunciate)	<i>Nirvana</i> (<i>Arhat</i>)	<u>8-fold path</u> right speech right action right livelihood right effort right mindfulness right concentration right view right thought <u>3 higher trainings</u> 1. ethics (<i>shila</i>) 2. concentration (<i>samadhi</i>) 3. wisdom (<i>prajna</i>)	3 marks of existence 1. impermanence (<i>aninya</i>) 2. suffering (<i>dukkha</i>) 3. no self (<i>anatman</i>)
MAHAYANA (Sanskrit)	<i>Bodhicitta</i> (<i>Bodhisattva</i>)	Enlightenment (<i>bodhi</i>) (<i>Buddha</i>)	<u>6 perfections</u> 1. generosity (<i>dana</i>) 2. ethics (<i>shila</i>) 3. patience (<i>kshanti</i>) 4. joyous effort (<i>virya</i>) 5. concentration (<i>dhyana</i>) <i>shamatha</i> 6. wisdom (<i>prajna</i>) <i>vipashyana</i>	Emptiness (<i>shunyata</i>)
VAJRAYANA (tantra)	<i>Bodhicitta</i> (<i>Bodhisattva</i>)	Enlightenment (<i>bodhi</i>) (<i>Buddha</i>)	<u>2 stages</u> 1. generation stage (<i>utpatitikrama</i>) 2. completion stage (<i>sampannakrama</i>)	Emptiness (<i>shunyata</i>)

Renunciation – the mind intent on liberation from samsara

Bodhicitta – the aspiration for complete enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings

Nirvana – freedom from the afflictive obscurations

Enlightenment – freedom from the afflictive & cognitive obscurations

Afflictive obscurations – ignorance & seeds of ignorance

Cognitive obscurations – latencies (stains) of ignorance & mistaken dualistic appearance arising due to those stains

Shamatha – calm abiding

Vipashyana – special insight

SUFFERING AND ITS CAUSES

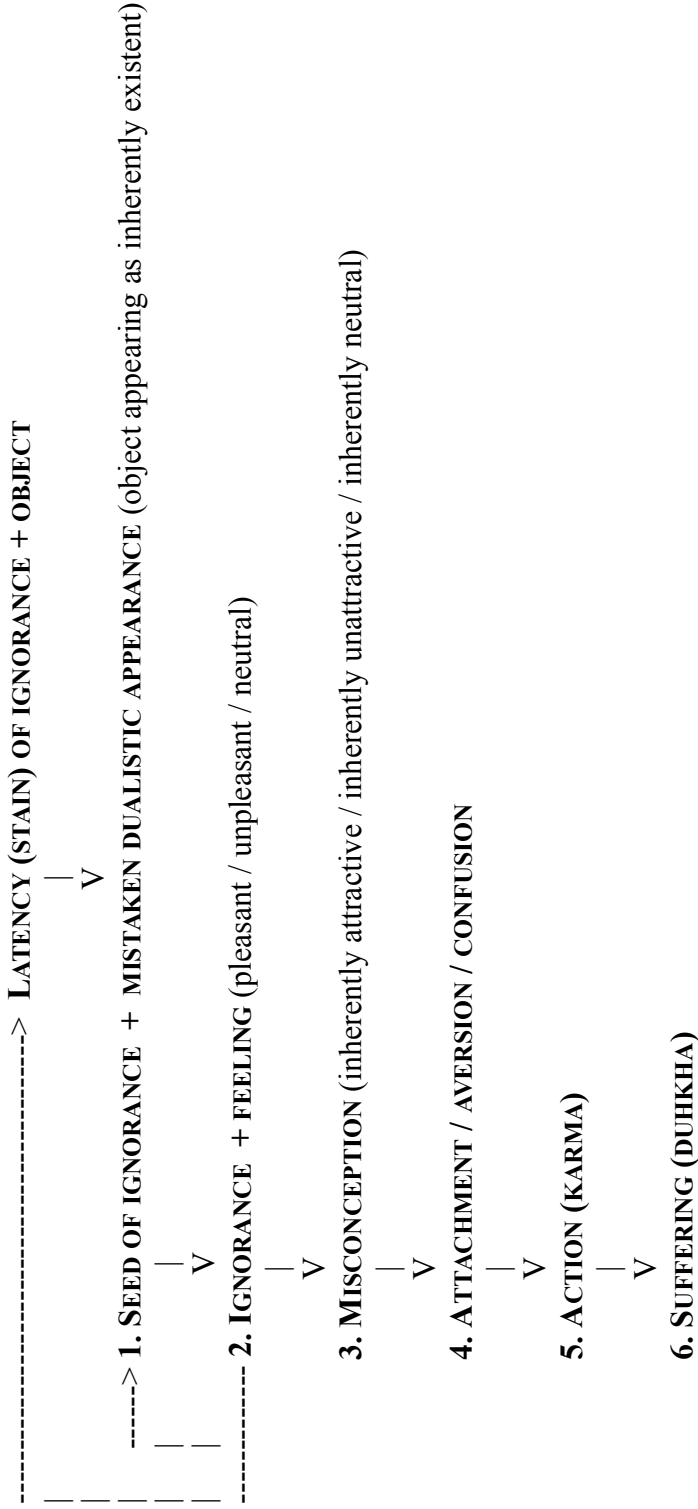
As said in Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*

By extinguishing actions and mental afflictions, there is liberation.

Actions and mental afflictions arise from misconceptions.

And misconceptions arise from elaborations.

Elaborations will cease through cultivating emptiness. [18.5]



Ignorance – conception of inherent existence; Confusion – grasping as inherently existent

TWO OBSCURATIONS

1. Afflictive obscurations – conception of inherent existence along with its seeds
2. Cognitive obscurations – latencies of the conception of inherent existence and all factors of mistaken dualistic appearance that arise due to the force of those

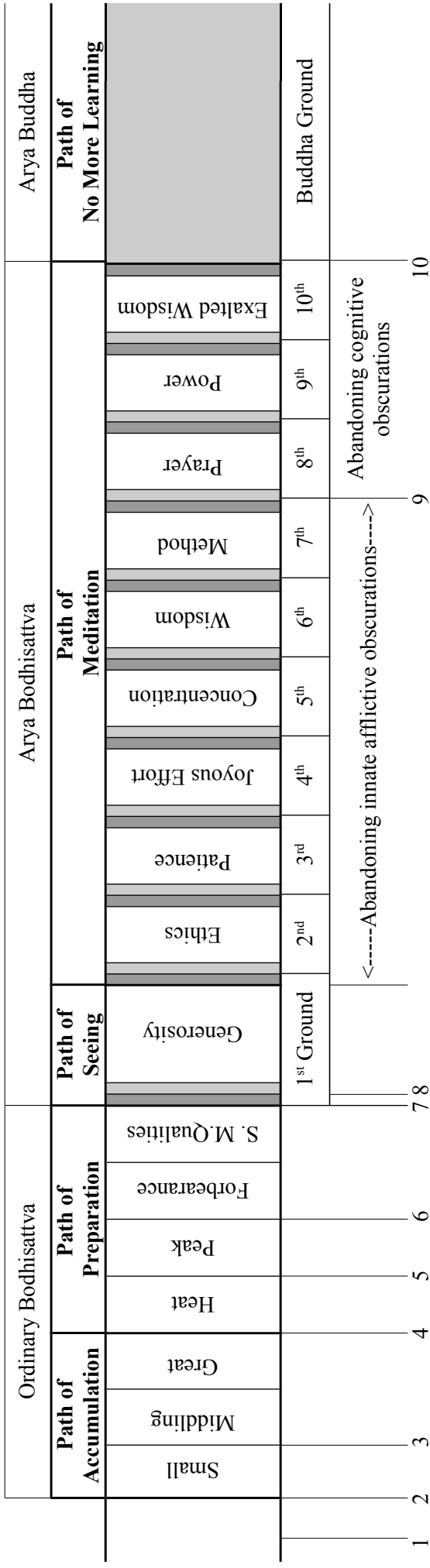
AVOIDING THE TWO EXTREMES

Source: Extracted from *Study of Svatantrika* (Lopez)

SCHOOL	AVOIDING EXTREME OF PERMANENCE	AVOIDING EXTREME OF ANNIHILATION
VAIBHASIKA (Great Exposition)	All conditioned phenomena are impermanent	All phenomena are substantially established
SAUTRANTHIKA (Sutra)	Permanent phenomena are not substantially existent	Objects are natural bases for names and conception
CITTAMATRA (Mind Only)	Objects are not natural bases for names and conception	Other-powered and thoroughly established phenomena are truly existent
MADHYAMA (Middle Way)	SVATANTRIKA (Autonomy)	All phenomena exist from their own side
	PRASANGIKA (Consequence)	All phenomena are merely imputed by conception

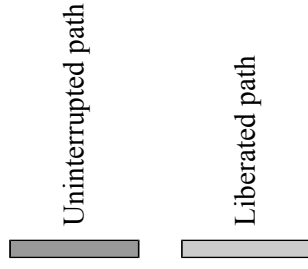
MAHAYANA PATH

According to Madhyamaka Prasangika (Middle Way Consequence school)



Milestones

- 1 – Inferential realization of emptiness (sharp faculty trainees)
- 2 – Uncontrived renunciation and bodhicitta
- 3 – Will never fall to a lower vehicle
- 4 – Union of shamatha and vipashyana observing emptiness
- 5 – Roots of virtue cannot be severed
- 6 – No more rebirths in lower realms
- 7 – Initial direct realization of emptiness (Arya)
- 8 – Abandoned intellectually acquired afflictive obscurations
- 9 – Nirvana (Arhat)
- 10 – Enlightenment (Buddha)



Afflictive Obscurations	Conception of inherent existence along with its seeds
Cognitive Obscurations	Latencies of the conception of inherent existence and all factors of mistaken dualistic appearance that arise due to the force of those

THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES

Source: *The Four Immeasurables* – B. Alan Wallace

THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES	DEFINITIONS	PROXIMATE CAUSE	FALSE FACSIMILE OR NEAR ENEMY	THAT WHICH IS DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED OR DISTANT ENEMY	SIGN OF SUCCESS	REMEDY (BODYGUARD OR GUARDIAN)
LOVING KINDNESS	Heartfelt yearning and vision for oneself and others to experience happiness and the causes of happiness	Seeing the loveable qualities of another person and oneself	Self-centered attachment	Ill-will (Intention to harm and taking joy in another's misfortune)	Less ill –will as well as an increase in friendliness and warm heartedness	Equanimity
COMPASSION	Heartfelt yearning that all be free of suffering and it's causes Asking what can I do?	Recognizing that others wish to be free of suffering; the helplessness of their suffering and you're poised to do something or that something can be done	Despair and depression	Contempt and cruelty – taking pleasure in someone else's suffering	Our capacity for cruelty and delight in other people's misfortunes subsides	Empathetic Joy
EMPATHETIC JOY	Delight in other people's virtues, successes and joys	Attending to the virtues, successes, and joys of others and oneself	Frivolous joy [Attachment to hedonic pleasure]	Envy and cynicism	Reduction of envy and cynicism	Loving Kindness
EQUANIMITY	Even-heartedness, even-mindedness and impartiality Attending without attachment or aversion	Taking responsibility for our own conduct and actions	Cold or aloof indifference	Craving or attachment to those who are like us/an aversion to those who are different	Less craving, attachment and hostility	Compassion

DEDICATION PRAYER

From Master Shantideva's *Bodhicharyavatara*

May all beings everywhere
Plagued by sufferings of body and mind,
Obtain an ocean of happiness and joy
By virtue of my merits.

May no living creature suffer,
Commit evil or ever fall ill.
May no one be afraid or belittled,
With a mind weighed down by depression.

May the blind see forms
And the deaf hear sounds.
May those whose bodies are worn with toil
Be restored on finding repose.

May the naked find clothing
The hungry find food;
May the thirsty find water
And delicious drinks.

May the poor find wealth,
Those weak with sorrow find joy;
May the forlorn find hope,
Constant happiness and prosperity.

May there be timely rains
And bountiful harvests;
May all medicines be effective
And wholesome prayers bear fruit.

May all who are sick and ill
Quickly be freed from their ailments.
Whatever diseases there are in the world,
May they never occur again.

May the frightened cease to be afraid
And those bound be freed;
May the powerless find power
And may people think of benefiting each other.

For as long as space remains,
For as long as sentient beings remain,
Until then may I too remain
To dispel the miseries of the world.