



Diamond Mountain University
Setting Fire to Your Meditation, Part IX

Homework Class Seven: What Comes First?

1) Explain what the other guy (Mr. Kachik) is saying to Arya Nagarjuna between chapter eight and chapter nine. Who is this opponent?

Kachik , representing a lower Buddhist school (Abhidharma), says the experiencer must exist before they experience something.

Arya Nagarjuna says just so and turns the logic around. In the same way that the object must be there before you can experience it.

2) What are the mental modes that Arya Nagarjuna talks about in verse one of chapter 9?

The mental modes are mental feelings and other things like attention, focus, all those other mental modes.

They are like sense powers in that the lower Abhidharma schools say the object causes them.

3) Explain what a “mik kyen” is, and how it relates to the presentation of perceptual theory found in the abhidharma:

mik kyen: means Object Condition.

That is the object that triggers your sense perception.

- **According to the Abhidharma, the object is there, it triggers the eye power to see it. Then a moment later you're consciousness is aware that the eye has seen it.**

4) What is wrong with the abhidharma presentation? What would have to be self-existent?

The Abhidharma presentation implies some kind of self-existent projector that has a quality to project.

5) What is a very basic problem with proving that the object exists before we see it?

Simple, you can never establish the object is there without the act of perceiving.

6) What is the problem then with thinking that the seer exists before its object? Where do we find this in chapter nine?

If there was nothing to see, you wouldn't be a seer. Nothing to experience, so you couldn't be an experiencer. We find it in verse 9.8

7) Explain what Arya Nagarjuna means in verse nine of chapter 9 about having to multiply himself:

If you had the quality of seer, you would have that quality. Same with hearer or feeler. You would have that quality and they would either have to be all at once (which is impossible) or separate.

8) What does going to the other extreme, falling off the cliff into nihilism, really imply? What are you seeing as self-existent?

While you are saying the objects aren't real, you think you are real and somehow separate from the objects. Therefore you can do whatever you want and nothing matters.

However, you are not separate from the object. This is another reason why it matters so much. Because when the objects change you change.

9) How does language itself reflect a complete misperception of our world?

Our language implies that the experiencer and experience are separate. It's usually subject first. Then what the subject did.

For example: "I went to the Three Jewels." Implying there was an "I" and there was a "Three Jewels" that was self-existent.