

Karma part 2

Tonight we begin our study of Karma.

Karma is a word in Sanskrit - the acceptable meaning is action. In our Buddhist tradition it is used in with the meaning of cause and effect.

So in our Buddhist tradition Karma the topic dealing with causality or in other words why do things happen to me.

Now there are a lot of things to be said about karma. It is important to understand from the start that the exact connection between causes and effect only Buddha can see. This translate into the Buddhist speak - the exact connection between a specific action and a specific experience can only be seen by a fully enlightened being.

So Karma is about causality. Within causality we talk about causes and conditions Causes refer to substantial cause - which is the thing that is being transformed into the effect. Conditions refer to the necessary conditions without which the cause cannot become an effect

Within causality we can also talk about production. What is a product? How is something produced? What is a cause? What is an effect?

The above questions are very important for a number of reason. Especially later on when we study emptiness. The question of cause and effect, dependent related, and production are all fantastically interesting to contemplate in the context of what is reality and from where do things come from.

On the question of where do things come from - by means of a the most simple introduction I can introduce to the profound topic of production by encouraging you to think about the following question:

“ Where do things come from

And the Buddhist answer is that there can be only four alternatives

1. from themselves
2. from others
3. from both themselves and from others
4. from without a cause

Buddhist accept the 2nd option but, and I will not expand on it now, not in the way you think about it... :-)

You may wonder what is the reason for all this introduction? Well - the topic of karma is the topic in Buddha's teachings that where do my experiences come from? In Buddhist terminology 'experience' and 'feeling' means the same. So when you say 'I feel' you are simply say 'my experience' and in the buddhist presentation there are only three types of feelings/experiences pleasant unpleasant and neutral

So maybe you begin to understand how important the question of Karma is for Buddhist - because Buddhist want to know what is the true source of my experiences.

When you begin to think about this there are only two answers

1. from something out side of me
2. from something inside of me

So the big points to understand is

- Where do my experiences come from?
 - are they produced or are they permanent?
- What is the substantial cause of my experiences/feelings?
- What are the circumstantial causes

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