



Chapter 9 Mindfulness of Death

b. The actual way to take full advantage of a life with leisure and endowments

1) Training the mind in the stages of the path shared with persons of small scope

a) The actual training to develop the attitude of the person of small spiritual scope

i) Developing an attitude of concern for future lives

a' Recollecting death: the awareness that this life will not endure for long

1' The faults of not cultivating mindfulness of death

Four common misconceptions

Viewing impermanent as permanent

Viewing suffering as pleasure

Viewing impure as pure

Viewing the self as having an inherent self

- Very damaging to Dharma
- Leads to focus on achieving short term goals
- All efforts geared toward life's achievement
- Neglects the importance of death
- Allows harmful attitudes and actions to infiltrate one's practice

Most actions are driven by these concerns, striving for fleeting goals.

Regarding the impermanent as permanent

subtle impermanence = continuous, unnoticed change

gross impermanence, more apparent changes that we often fail to recognise, such as our own mortality

We inherently feel as though we will always exist, which influences our actions and plans, focusing them on achieving happiness in this life. This deception leads to a preoccupation with the 'eight worldly concerns'

- Attachment
 - Gain
 - Pleasure
 - Praise
 - Fame
- Aversion
 - Loss
 - Pain
 - Scorn
 - Disgrace

Constant focus on these gives no room for focus on great goals

Gives laziness and procrastination

Vital time for spiritual practice squandered

- Focus on worldly pursuits
 - Feelings of anger and jealousy
 - Cascade of negative consequences (karma)
 - Propel one to committing harmful actions
 - Ten negative actions of body, speech and mind

True Dharma Practice

Goal-oriented nature aiming for achievements beyond this life

- Good rebirth
- Emancipation/enlightenment
- Assisting other beings

What will be most beneficial for future lives

- Depends on karma
- Recognition of opportunity current human life offers
- Preparation for the journey that follows

- Constant awareness of death
- Life's impermanence
- Remove focus on worldly concerns
- Certainty of Life after death
- Primary goal = benefiting future lives

Death - What you experience

Every moment will be filled with this motivation, keeping you ready for death

Everything you've strived for must be abandoned - relationships, possessions, even your body

Seeing all worldly goals as hollow, your strong ambition for usual attachments turns toward seeking the highest religious objectives

Determination shifts to virtuous actions for your future benefit

Commitment to Dharma study remains steady

accumulating virtuous karma in your current life

guiding others, caught in samsara just like yourself, onto the path

Focus on Dharma practice

Regularly meditate on death with firm resolve

2' The benefits of cultivating mindfulness of impermanence and death

Soon separated from friends, possessions, body

Can't take anything with you

Focus on life to be born into

Haste - Death might come before you are prepared

Daily Meditation on impermanence

Virtuous action avoid non-virtuous

Improve karma, accumulate merit

High rebirth in next life

3' The kind of mindfulness of death you should develop

Karma that gave present life is used up

Virtuous and non-virtuous karma always follow you

Ahead are the karmic results of your current life

No one will share it. It is yours alone

Karma

I definitely must practice the Dharma

Conclusion and Karma

Immediately

Dharma is the only helpful thing at time of death

Practice Dharma

Immediate effort is needed

Nothing else is more important

Effort to detach from present life

Lose interest in small senseless things

Meditation on death helps

Deepen concern for what happens after

Have something to rely on after death

Not easy

Work on creating only virtuous karma and negating negative karma

4' How to cultivate mindfulness of death

a" The contemplation that death is certain

1" The contemplation that the Lord of Death is definitely coming and nothing can prevent it

Death is certain

Prepare for death now while have time

Life is always shortening and cannot be extended

Life's duration is fixed by past karma

Thinking "Death is right in front of me" drives Dharma practice.

Eliminate negative thoughts, more virtuous activity and merit

2" The contemplation that our lifetime cannot be extended and constantly diminishes

specific practices lead to goals achievable with time and effort

time is limited; much is wasted and remaining time is occupied by other activities

With age, capacity for Dharma practice weakens

"Since death is definite, I must practice the Dharma."

"If I die tomorrow, what should I do today?"

b" The contemplation that the time of death is uncertain

1" The contemplation that the lifespan in this world is uncertain

Death is certain but time of death is uncertain

Doubt and idleness are illogical

Practice Constant preparation is necessary and urgent

Meditation

2" The contemplation that the causes of death are many and the causes of life few

Death waits for none - ready or not

Vigilance and Dharma practice

The causes of death are many

Those for staying alive are few even they can become causes of death

Always practice the Dharma

Non-virtuous karma spreads

Virtuous attitudes are rare

Creating good karma challenging

3" The contemplation that the time of death is uncertain because the body is very fragile

Think on this topic in detail often

Shift belief from long life to death at any moment

Reduce attachment to present life

Prepare for death

Death's timing is uncertain, so I'll start Dharma practice immediately.

c" The contemplation that at the time of death nothing helps except religious practice

1" Friends will not help

2" Resources will not help

3" Your body will not help

Practice Dharma

Nothing else is more important

Lose interest in small senseless things

Deepen concern for what happens after

Have something to rely on after death

Work on creating only virtuous karma and negating negative karma