Chapter 9 Mindfulness of Death

b. The actual way to take full advantage of a life with leisures 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

Very damaging to Dharma

Leads to focus on achieving short term goals

All efforts geared towards life's achievements

Neglects the importance of death

Allows harmful attunes and actions to infiltrate one's practice

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

Viewing suffering as pleasure

Viewing impure as pure

Viewing the self as having an inherent self

Regarding the impermanent as permanent

subtle impermanence = continuous, unnoticed change

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

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

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

2' The benefits of cultivating mindfulness of impermanence and 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

3' The kind of mindfulness of death you should develop

Soon separated from friends, possessions, body

Can't take anything with you

Focus on life to be born into

High rebirth in next life

Haste - Death might come before you are prepared

Daily Meditation on impermanence

Virtuous action avoid non-virtuous

Improve karma, accumulate merit

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

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

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

3" The contemplation of the certainty of death with the recognition that even while you are alive there is little time for religious practice

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

b" Itself 'Contemplation etc'

Death is certain but time of death is uncertain

Doubt and idleness are illogical

Constant preparation is necessary and urgent

Practice

Meditation

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

Death waits for none— ready or not

Vigilance and Dharma practice

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

The causes of death are many

Those for staying alive are few

even they can become causes of death

Always practice the Dharma

Virtuous attitudes are rare

Non-virtuous karma spreads

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

Conclusion and Karma

Karma

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

I definitely must practice the Dharma

Immediately

Dharma is the only helpful thing at time of death

Not easy

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

Work on creating only virtuous karma and negating negative karma