

Discovering Buddhism: Death, Impermanence and Rebirth
Class Two Homework
June 25, 2007

1. Meditate daily on topics covered in class. Read pp. 79-181 in His Holiness' text.
2. Let's imagine there is a meteor heading toward earth and when it hits in the next 24 hours, we'll all be killed. With that awareness in mind, how would a Buddhist perspective on death, impermanence and rebirth affect the time you have left – what would you do, say, etc?
3. Same scenario - if you had a "terminal living" view (this is it, at death I am extinct, no ultimate consequences), would your actions be the same – what are the theoretical possibilities?

4. Death Awareness Meditation – Three Roots, Nine Reasons, Three Decisions

First root: Contemplation that death is definite

- 1) because death will definitely come and therefore cannot be avoided
- 2) because our lifespan cannot be extended and diminishes unceasingly
- 3) because even when we are alive there is little time to practice

First decision: I must practice (dharma)

Second root: Contemplation that the time of death is indefinite

- 1) because our lifespan in this world is indefinite
- 2) because the causes of death are very many and the causes of life are few
- 3) because the time of death is uncertain due to the fragility of the body

Second decision: I must practice (dharma) now.

Third root: Contemplation that at the time of death nothing helps except practice

- 1) because at the time of death our friends are of no help
- 2) because at the time of death our wealth is of no help
- 3) because at the time of death our body is of no help

Third decision: I will practice non-attachment to any of the wonderful things of this life (practice dharma purely).