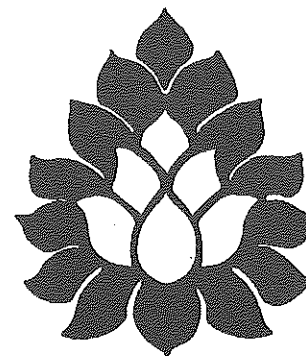


MIND AND LIFE III



DIALOGUES BETWEEN
BUDDHISM AND
THE SCIENCES

WITH
HIS HOLINESS
THE XIVTH DALAI LAMA

DHARAMSALA, INDIA
NOVEMBER 5-9, 1990

MIND AND LIFE III

EMOTIONS AND HEALTH

THIS is the third in an ongoing series of meetings of Western scientists and scholars with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan scholars. These dialogues are inspired by a shared interest in constructive comparisons between Buddhist and Western scientific insights into the human condition. The dialogues are undertaken in the spirit of cross-fertilization, exploring how these two ways of knowing — an inner science and an outer one — might complement each other and so enrich our understanding of mind and life.

THE overall theme of these conferences is the comparative examination of the relationship of the mind and body in Tibetan Buddhist and modern Western knowledge. The topic of this meeting is the role of emotional states in physical health.

OVER the past 2500 years Buddhists have explored this topic through contemplative practices and logical analysis. Their research has been conducted within the context of spiritual disciplines aimed at the release from physical and mental suffering. The principal means for pursuing this end are the identification and dispelling of mental afflictions — such as delusion, hatred and greed — which are regarded as instrumental in producing suffering. Contemplative practices are the traditional vehicle for countering afflictive mind states.

OVER the past decade Western scientific attention to the relationship between emotions and health has increased dramatically. A burgeoning body of scientific data has established strong links between the central nervous system and the immune system, long thought to be independent systems in medical science. Psychological states, the evidence shows, affect physical states. Certain emotions and attitudes — such as pessimism, aggression and anxiety — are being identified as detrimental to sustaining good health and to recovery from illness. Others, such as optimism and emotional closeness to others, have been found to be conducive to physical well-being.

THERE is much common ground between the Buddhist tradition and modern science, though their modes of exploration are quite different. The sharing of their respective findings holds much promise for enriching both disciplines and enhancing cross-cultural dialogue between Tibet and the West.

IN order to derive maximum benefit from this meeting, all discussions will be videotaped and transcribed. Copies of the tapes and transcripts will be presented to the Tibetan government in exile for use in Tibetan schools and monasteries to improve cross-cultural understanding. Edited versions may be prepared for books or articles, more abbreviated viewing, and perhaps for broadcast.

PARTICIPANTS

Tenzin Gyatso, His Holiness, the XIVth Dalai Lama of Tibet.

Daniel Brown, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology, Harvard Medical School.

Richard Davidson, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Daniel Goleman, Ph.D., Contributing Writer on Behavioral Science and Health, New York Times.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, Ph.D., Founder and Director of the Stress Reduction Clinic, University of Massachusetts Medical Center.

Francisco J. Varela, Ph.D., Professor of Cognitive Science and Epistemology, Ecole Polytechnique and Institute of Neuroscience, Paris.

Lee Yearly, Ph.D., Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies, Stanford University

DISCUSSANT

Sharon Salzberg, Resident Teacher, Insight Meditation Society, Barre, Massachusetts.

INTERPRETERS

Geshe Thubten Jinpa, Kings College, Cambridge University

B. Alan Wallace, B.A., Doctoral student, Department of Religious Studies, Stanford University.

PROGRAM

Monday, November 5

Morning Session

Overview: Emotions and Health
Daniel Goleman, Ph. D.

Presentation on: Psychoneuroimmunology
Francisco Varela, Ph.D.

The immune system is the body's first line of defense against viruses, bacteria, and cancer, keeping us healthy by recognizing these threats and destroying them. Within the past decade, new discoveries of cross-connections between the immune system and the brain have led to a new field, "psychoneuroimmunology," ("psycho," mind; "neuro," brain; "immunology," immune system) which studies how the mind, the brain and immune system affect each other. A new view of the immune system sees it as a "mind" in itself, a second great cognitive mechanism that acts as a "body brain." Capable of learning, the immune system shows enormous adaptability. The immune network acts as a boundary, offering a coherence and common identity to the diverse cells of the body. In marking this boundary, it also defends the body from infection and disease.

Afternoon Session

Discussion theme: What is "mind?" Can the body have a "mind of its own," apart from the brain's mind? What is the link between emotion and this "body mind?"

Tuesday, November 6

Morning Session

Philosophical Orientation: Virtues and Vices
Lee Yearly, Ph. D.

The traditional virtues and vices, such as benevolence or envy, are described in most religious traditions, and have been translated into the ideals of modern times. A case in point is William James' examination of the modern value of saintliness and the need to use both humanistic and scientific methods to understand states of virtue and vice.

Presentation on: Emotion, Brain Activity, Immune Function
Richard Davidson, Ph.D.

From the viewpoint of brain activity, emotions can be categorized in several ways. One of the more useful is in terms of broad categories of positive, or "approach" states like happiness and surprise; and negative, or "avoidance" states like sadness, anger, and fear. People tend to favor positive or negative emotions from birth on, as a trait of personality. Each of these basic emotional stances is tied to a distinct underlying pattern of brain activity. These same patterns of brain activity are linked to immune function. The brain patterns typical of positive emotions enhance immune activity, while those for negative emotions change it for the worse.

Afternoon Session

Discussion theme: Are the brain patterns associated with positive emotional states cultivated in Buddhist practice? Are there parallels to the notion of emotional styles in Buddhist psychology? What is the function of emotion in Buddhist psychology?

Wednesday, November 7

Morning Session

Presentation on: Emotional States and Health
Daniel Goleman, Ph.D.

A growing body of data ties negative and positive emotional states to wellness or ill health. The negative emotions have a toxic effect on the immune system and on health in general; this has been found true for depression, hostility and anger, and for anxiety, as well as for negative outlooks including pessimism and cynicism, guilt, hopelessness and helplessness. Repression, the denial of negative feeling, is also unhealthy. The adverse effects on health range from raising blood pressure and increasing the risk of heart disease, cancer, and viruses. On the other hand, positive emotions strengthen immune function and bring good health. This has been shown for states of happiness, calm and relaxation, compassion, as well as attitudes such as hope, optimism, trust, and being in control.

Afternoon Session

Discussion theme: Is the virtuous life also a healthy one? How do the positive and negative emotions studied in Western psychology compare with the beneficial and "afflictive" emotions in Buddhist psychology? Is one goal of Dharma practice the minimizing of negative states and maximizing positive ones?

Thursday, November 8

Morning Session

Presentation on: Stress Disorders and Behavioral Medicine
Daniel Brown, Ph.D.

Over many months or years, negative emotional reactions to continuing stress contribute to psychophysiological disorders — illnesses due to the body's reactions to that stress. Common examples of such stress-based problems include headache, hypertension, asthma, irritable bowel syndrome, and chronic pain. Each of these problems is worsened by a specific stress reaction: e.g., heightened muscle tension leads to headaches or chronic back pain. Behavioral medicine uses a variety of methods to counter the emotional reactions to stress, including helping people learn to self-regulate the physiological systems that cause their problems. The main techniques used resemble the practice of mindfulness, calming-meditation and insight meditation. The applications of these techniques will be shown in a detailed case example.

Afternoon Session

Discussion theme: Commonalities between Buddhism and behavior medicine in treating stress-based disorders. Have similar health effects due to various emotional states been noted in Buddhist practice or Tibetan medicine? How are they dealt with?

Friday, November 9

Morning Session

Presentation on: Emotional Status and Physical Disease
Jon Kabat-Zinn, Ph.D.

There is a role for cultivating beneficial emotions in treating diseases such as cancer, which are less related to stress in origin. The main technique used in this way is based on mindfulness meditation. It is used with medical patients suffering a wide range of illness, from kidney disease and AIDS to diabetes and lung disease. In patients with chronic and serious disease, mindfulness offers a way for patients to develop an awareness that is less prone to being swayed by emotionality. As a medical intervention, it has proven effective in helping alleviate symptoms and facilitate healing. Cultivating calmness and mindfulness helps relieve the suffering of people with chronic disease.

Afternoon Session

Discussion theme: Adapting Buddhist practice for medical healing. Are there methods in Tibetan Buddhism for transforming emotion which, like mindfulness, might be adapted for use with medical disorders? How are these relationships between emotions and health understood in Tibetan medicine?

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

His Holiness the XIVTH Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people. He was born on July 6, 1935 in a small village called Taktser in northeastern Tibet. Born to a peasant family, His Holiness was recognized at the age of two, in accordance with Tibetan tradition, as the reincarnation of his predecessor, the XIIIITH Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lamas are manifestations of the Buddha of Compassion, who chose to incarnate for the purpose of serving human beings. His Holiness has traveled extensively, speaking on subjects including universal responsibility, love, compassion and kindness. In 1989, His Holiness received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Daniel Brown

Daniel Brown is assistant professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School, and director of Behavioral Medicine at Cambridge City Hospital. He received his bachelors degree from the University of Massachusetts and his Ph.D. in comparative religion from the University of Chicago, where his dissertation compared Tibetan, Theravadan and Yogic contemplative paths. He is co-author of "Transformations of Consciousness: Conventional and Contemplative Perspectives on Development," and teaches extensively on hypnosis and behavioral medicine.

Richard Davidson

Richard Davidson is a professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He received his bachelors degree *summa cum laude* from New York University, and his Ph.D. from Harvard University. He has taught at the State University of New York at Purchase and Columbia University, and was a consulting scientist in the Laboratory of Neuroscience at the National Institute of Aging. A member of the editorial board of several journals, he is Senior Editor of the series "Consciousness and Self-Regulation: Advances in

Research." In 1990 he received a prestigious five-year Research Scientist Award from the National Institute of Mental Health. His current research focus is on the psychobiology of emotion and immune response.

Daniel Goleman

Daniel Goleman covers behavioral science and health for the New York Times. He received his bachelors degree *magna cum laude* from Amherst College, where he was an Independent Scholar, and his Ph.D. in psychology from Harvard University. For two years he traveled in India studying Buddhist and other spiritual systems of psychology, the first year as a Harvard Travelling Fellow, the second as a Research Fellow of the Social Science Research Council. He taught at Harvard University before becoming an editor and journalist. He is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and was twice nominated for the Pulitzer Prize for his writing in the New York Times.

Jon Kabat-Zinn

Jon Kabat-Zinn is the founder and director of the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center and Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Preventive and Behavioral Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, Mass. His bachelors degree is from Haverford College, and his Ph.D. in microbiology is from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he worked with Nobel Laureate Salvador Luria. He is a pioneer in the use of mindfulness meditation to help medical patients with the symptoms of their illness. His book "Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness," was published this year.

Francisco J. Varela

Born in Chile in 1946, Dr. Varela received his doctoral degree in biological sciences from Harvard University in 1970. His interests have centered on neurobiological and cybernetic mechanisms of cognitive phenomena, especially perception, and the related epistemological issues. He has contributed more than 70 articles to

scientific journals on these matters, as well as four books. His most recent book, *The Tree of Knowledge: The Biological Roots of Human Understanding* (with H. Maturana) has been published in six languages. Dr. Varela has been a Guggenheim and von Humboldt Fellow and the recipient of the Interamerican Science Prize in Biological Sciences for 1986. Currently he holds a chair of Cognitive Science and Epistemology at the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris, and directs a research laboratory at the Institute of Neuroscience.

Lee Yearly

Lee Yearly is Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies at Stanford University, where he has taught for twenty years. His specialty is comparative religious ethics, especially varying conceptions of the self and the good life, as they appear in the classical Greek, Christian, Confucian, and Taoist traditions. He received his bachelors degree from Haverford College and his Ph.D. from the divinity school at the University of Chicago. Dr. Yearly was the Henry Luce Professor of Comparative Religious Ethics at Amherst College in 1987-88 and will be a Luce Fellow at the Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion at the University of Chicago in 1990-91. His most recent book is *Aquinas and Mencius: Theories of Virtue and Conception of Courage*.

DISCUSSANT

Sharon Salzberg

Sharon Salzberg is a teacher of vipassana meditation in the Theravada tradition. A Resident Teacher at the Insight Meditation Society in Barre Massachusetts, she has taught throughout the world, including in the Soviet Union. Her training is in the Burmese lineage of Mahasi Sayadaw and U Pandita Sayadaw.

INTERPRETERS

Thubten Jinpa

Born in Zonghar, Tibet in 1959, Thubten Jinpa received his initial monastic training at Zonghar Chode Monastery, India. In 1978, he joined Shartse College of Ganden University where he engaged in intensive study of Buddhist Philosophy, Epistemology and Logic. He received his Geshe degree in 1989, and is presently studying at Kings College, Cambridge University in England. He has taught logic and philosophy and is one of the principal interpreters for His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

B. Alan Wallace

Born in California in 1950, Alan Wallace began his studies of Tibetan Buddhism and the Tibetan language at the University of Göttingen, West Germany in 1970. He continued his studies for three years at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives and the Buddhist School of Dialects in Dharamsala, India. For a period of four years, he studied, taught and interpreted for numerous Tibetan lamas at the Tibet Institute and the Centre for Higher Tibetan Studies, both in Switzerland. After a thirteen year absence from western academia, he earned his bachelors degree from Amherst College, *summa cum laude*, where, as an Independent Scholar, he researched the philosophical foundation of modern physics in light of Buddhist philosophy. This research resulted in his book, *Choosing Reality: a Contemplative View of Physics and the Mind*, published in 1989. He has translated and published several other books on Tibetan Buddhism, language and medicine and is currently the Spiritual Director of Dharma Friendship Foundation in Seattle, Washington, and a graduate student of Religious Studies at Stanford University.

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Sincerely Yours, Boulder Creek