

Chapter Fourteen

Neither the Addiction, nor the Person Who is Addicted Are Real

Addictions can be pacified by using Nagarjuna's analytical meditations. All addictions are conceptual delusions. The reason people want to give up their addictions is simple. Yes, addictions bring pleasure. Why else would people be addicted to them?

But when the addiction causes pain, there is a tug of war. The ego says, "Let's get the pleasure." But intelligent thinking says, "Time to give it up!" But when the person tries to give up their addictions, they find they can't. Ultimately, they give into the pleasure. It may not be too much pleasure, but still he or she consents to doing it again. And again! And again!

Overeating is a common addiction, but few seem to want to do anything about it. The point is, overweight is inconvenient. But it's not as bad as the restlessness, irritability, and discontentment of the ego when control is applied. So most people just give into the demands of the ego. And if we do this, naturally, there's no such thing as free will.

Well, there's good news. This is because this method of ending addictions is simple, painless, and doesn't involve the usual side effects of causing restlessness, irritability and discontentment. Naturally, there is pain when we stand up to the ego, throw down the gauntlet, and declare war. But with this method, there's no war.

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The Western World is especially notorious every New Year for making resolutions—to quit all of our addictions. But within the month of January alone, most of these strong resolutions are gone. And we whimper back to our addictions, feeling weak and defeated.

The Christian concept of the Devil is unique. According to Bible scholars, the only actual power the Devil has is the power of deception! He is a liar. And so are our addictions.

There's no real power there at all. But what about the failure of all those people? There must be power! If the addictions were real and existed as they appear, they would have power. But fortunately for us, addictions do not exist as they appear. So it's necessary to analyze them to get a better understanding.

If addictions were real, they would have to conform to our rules of reality.

- 1. If something is real, it must exist from its own side.*
- 2. If something is real, we must be able to find it as something tangible.*
- 3. If something is real, it must stand on its own, from its own side, and not depend on anything else for its existence.*
- 4. If something is real, it must exist according to common sense and reason.*

When working with addictions, it's best to take them on one at a time. But once we end any particular addiction, we learn how to end them all. They're all caused by the same deception.

Three Parts to Every Addiction:

1. The Object of Desire

2. The desire itself

3. The desirous person

Without these three (3) components, there can be no addiction.

First, the object of desire is an illusion. It's not possible to find the object of desire in the outside world. We find only the parts. The object of desire is imputed on the mind based on the sum of its parts. But these parts don't exist in the outside world either. The parts are also imputed on the sum of their parts. Therefore, the object of desire is an illusion. Although the object of our addiction looks real, it's only an illusion. It's in our mind—not the outside world.

This, of course, must be realized in meditation on the Second Path, the Path of Preparation. Otherwise, our gross mind may find some interest, but there's no way we will be convinced of this logic.

Next, we discover that the desire itself and the desirous one don't exist at all. They are conceptual delusions. It's important to distinguish between conceptual illusions and conceptual delusions. The things everyone experiences are illusions. But addictions are delusions. This is because only some people experience them.

Conceptual illusions are experienced by everyone in the normal waking state of consciousness. If we are addicted to tobacco, that's the object of our addiction. And so everyone—not just tobacco addicts—see tobacco. Illusions do exist and continue to exist,

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even after we realize them. But once these delusions are routed from the mind, they do not exist at all. And of course, they do not exist at all in the minds of people who are not addicted to anything, which is very rare.

Conceptual delusions involve two things only: first, it involves the desire itself. And second, it involves the desirous person. Both of these are conceptual delusions. They do not exist at all in the minds of those who are not addicted. Only Nash saw those people. Therefore they were delusions and did not exist at all.

But how can addictions be delusions? They seem so real to the addicted. If they're real, they have to stand the test for reality.

Gold, for example, stands on its own. It doesn't depend on anything else to be real gold. And the same is true of the desirous person. If the desirous person were real, this person would exist all the time—not just some of the time. And the same is true of desire. The desire would be there all of the time—not just some of the time.

And if either of these were real, we would have had them from birth. Most addictions appear later in life.

And if they were both real, they would have to be different. That is, the desire acts upon the desirous person. If desire were real, it would have to be separate from the desirous person. The acid that etches the glass must be separate from the glass. And the acid and the glass can exist separately from each other.

But once we analyze, we find that the desire and the desirous person never appear separately. They always appear simultaneously. One is never present without the other.

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Let's analyze. Which comes first: the desire or the desirous person? Well, the desire appears to come first, but when we try to find the desire that triggered the desirous person, we can't find it. This is the same analogy as which comes first, the father or the son? When compared, the desire can't be the desire that created the desirous person. This is because the desire won't be responsible until the desirous person actually appears. And since this is ridiculous, both the desire and the desirous person are pure delusion. They can't be real.

Again, unless we meditate on Nagarjuna's reasoning and we get promoted to the Second Path, the Path of Preparation, we will not be convinced. Our gross mind may find this idea interesting. But until we are able to dissolve the desire and the desirous person into the space-like vacuity between the eyebrows, we will not really accept the idea.

If we use this method, we will not be fighting our ego at all. We will be using logic and reason to understand that the addiction has no power over us or anybody else. It tells us that the desire for the addiction is pure delusion! And it tells us that the desirous one is total fantasy, too.

When it comes to those addictions that are immediately harmful to ourselves or others, like alcoholism or drug addiction, we should seek conventional help at once. But for the rest of us who have been limping along with our addictions for years, we have already given up the fight. And this is good, because few can actually win the battle without paying a heavy price of emotional pain.

We can avoid all of this by applying logic. As we continue with our addiction, we

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should begin analyzing it. What is the object of my addiction? What is the desire for the addiction? And who is the person who is addicted? Once we dissolve these into the space-like vacuity at the point between the eyes in meditation, there will be a deeper understanding of our foolishness to continue with the insanity.

It's like falling for a magician's trick—believing it is real. But once we learn the trick ourselves, we see through the illusion immediately. Once we know how the trick is done, we're no longer duped by the illusion. In the same way, once we understand what causes the conceptual delusion, we understand it's like the magician's trick. And we're not duped by the addiction delusion any more.

It's true, the same delusion returns and we must apply the same logic again and again. But we get around this difficulty the same way we got around our doubts when we learned basic arithmetic. In the beginning we were forever counting on our fingers. Finally we accepted all the rules on blind faith. And when we applied this faith, we no longer counted on our fingers. In the same way, it's necessary to go back to Nagarjuna's logic. And we analyze again and again. But once we have a few deep experiences of the delusion, dissolving it into the space like vacuity, we can accept it on blind faith. The delusion isn't real!

So when the delusion comes back, we can talk to it with the same scientific conviction that we presently have with basic math. That is, no matter how many times we analyze, we will always get the same answer. Addiction equals delusion! Therefore, we can stop analyzing. And when our addiction returns, we may say something like the following:

Architect (the ego), finally we understand you.

You will not fool me with your conceptual delusion again!

You are pure illusion!

You do not really exist!

And the delusion will shrink into nothingness—sometimes quickly, sometimes not so quickly.

In the movie, John Nash figures it out. His friends are pure delusions. Based on the logic that they never age, he realizes they can't be real. But they keep coming back. The movie shows John Nash fighting with his imaginary friends, telling them again and again, "Go away!" And because of this he became the laughing stock on campus. Therefore, if we talk to our delusions, it's good to remember John Nash's story and avoid any negative notoriety.

Why do the conceptual delusions keep coming back? The ancient Aryans claimed it's because conceptual delusion gets reinforced through use—over eons of time through reincarnation. It's not necessary to believe in reincarnation. So if a person is a Christian, for example, it's not necessary to go beyond the confines of his or her religion to believe this. Nagarjuna's logic stands on its own. It doesn't need reincarnation to support it.

In fact, Christians have a distinct advantage in using this logic. It blends nicely with their concept of the Devil, who tempts us with lies! The ego tempts us with lies also in the form of conceptual delusion. Based on this similarity, the Christian might talk to

their addiction in the following manner:

Devil, you are a liar!

Your addiction isn't real!

It's pure conceptual delusion!

It doesn't really exist. It has no power at all.

One reason that might explain why conceptual delusions return is their size. There may be thousands and thousands of ideas behind one delusion. For example, the delusion of using tobacco may include thousands of ideas, like a way to stay warm at night, health, vitality, long life, romance, manliness, female finesse, as well as thousands of other ideas. Together, all of these come against us with one overpowering and united force. This allows us to understand what we are up against.

This also explains why we suffer restlessness, irritability, and discontentment if we stand against the urge to practice the addiction with will power alone. While we have one or two good ideas for quitting our addiction, these are struggling against the emotional onslaught of millions of others—conceptualized over eons of time. None of them make any sense. But they are still there!

One or two reasons for quitting tobacco on New Year's Day is hardly sufficient to overpower the millions of thoughts causing our addiction. So naturally, when we succeed, this explains the emotional upheaval that ensues. “Yes,” our friends tell us, we went insane! But we did it—we gave up coffee.

And since we are only routing out a few of these delusional thoughts each time

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with logic and reason, there is still a long way to go. So the addiction comes back, but just as easily, we can cure it again and again with logic and reason. And this also works to pacify the emotional stress. It nullifies it. If we are also restless, irritable, and discontented, we can be rest assured that we are not practicing correctly.

One experience in Bucke's cosmic consciousness will destroy ninety percent (90%) of all conceptual delusions in one easy shot. But in the normal waking state, we weaken only a few. So they do return for some time afterward. But eventually we succeed, and in order to do this, it's not necessary to actually experience Bucke's Cosmic Consciousness. Repeatedly dissolving the craving into the space like vacuity, we get rid of the delusion totally, but it takes a much longer time.

Aversions

In addition to addictions, this logic is also pacifies aversions. These are exactly like addictions. There is only one slight difference: as we all know, addictions involve something we desire and must have. But aversions deal with things we can't stand and will not tolerate. Fear of heights, fear of travel—all kinds of phobias. All of them involve three things.

(1) The thing we can't stand

(2) Our annoyance

(3) The person who is annoyed

Noise Anxiety Syndrome

This is the number one, most outstanding aversion, suffered by practically all who meditate. And because of this, noise-muffler earphones and earplugs are sold at all spiritual bookstores.

The thing most people try to do is avoid the noise. This is a mistake. People tells us, they've been trying to do this for 20 years or more. So this may work for some, but mostly avoiding the noise is not a good way to pacify this disorder.

Again, Nagarjuna's logic saves the day. Instead of trying to ignore the noise, we listen directly to it. Then we analyze, noticing three things: There is (1) the noise, (2) the irritating aspect, and (3) the one who is annoyed.

The noise is an illusion. What we actually hear is not the sound itself, it's the identifying characteristics of the noise. And as we described in a previous chapter, this makes the actual sound an illusion. An illusion is just an illusion. Otherwise, it doesn't hurt us. And so sound is just sound. Normally the sounds around us won't cause physical harm: that is, ear damage. If it's that kind of noise, it's best to move out of the way.

But these are not the kinds of noises that cause our noise anxiety syndrome. For whatever reason, there's an irritating aspect to the noise. And this is separate from the sound itself. It may be the sound of a dog barking. We just can't stand to hear dogs barking. Or we may not like the sound of the TV coming from our neighbor. Or it could be just the simple sound of anyone moving around during meditation.

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By analyzing we finally understand. The sound is not the problem. The irritating aspect of the sound is the culprit. So it's finally the irritating part of the sound that joins up with the person who is annoyed. And this is what actually causes our noise anxiety syndrome. This forms the delusion. And by using the same method as with addictions, we can pacify all aversions—especially phobias.

Briefly our noise anxiety syndrome is not real. First, the annoying noise and the person annoyed are not real. They both depend on themselves to be real. And for this single reason alone, the noise anxiety syndrome dissolves easily into the space like vacuity. We understand why it's a conceptual delusion. Our mind rests into it's natural state and we no longer need our earplugs and muffler earphones any more. This is because sound no longer bothers us.