

# CURRICULUM CONTENT & STAGES



YIMING PURE LAND BODHICITTA ACADEMY

易明净土实修菩提讲堂



**WeChat Official Account**



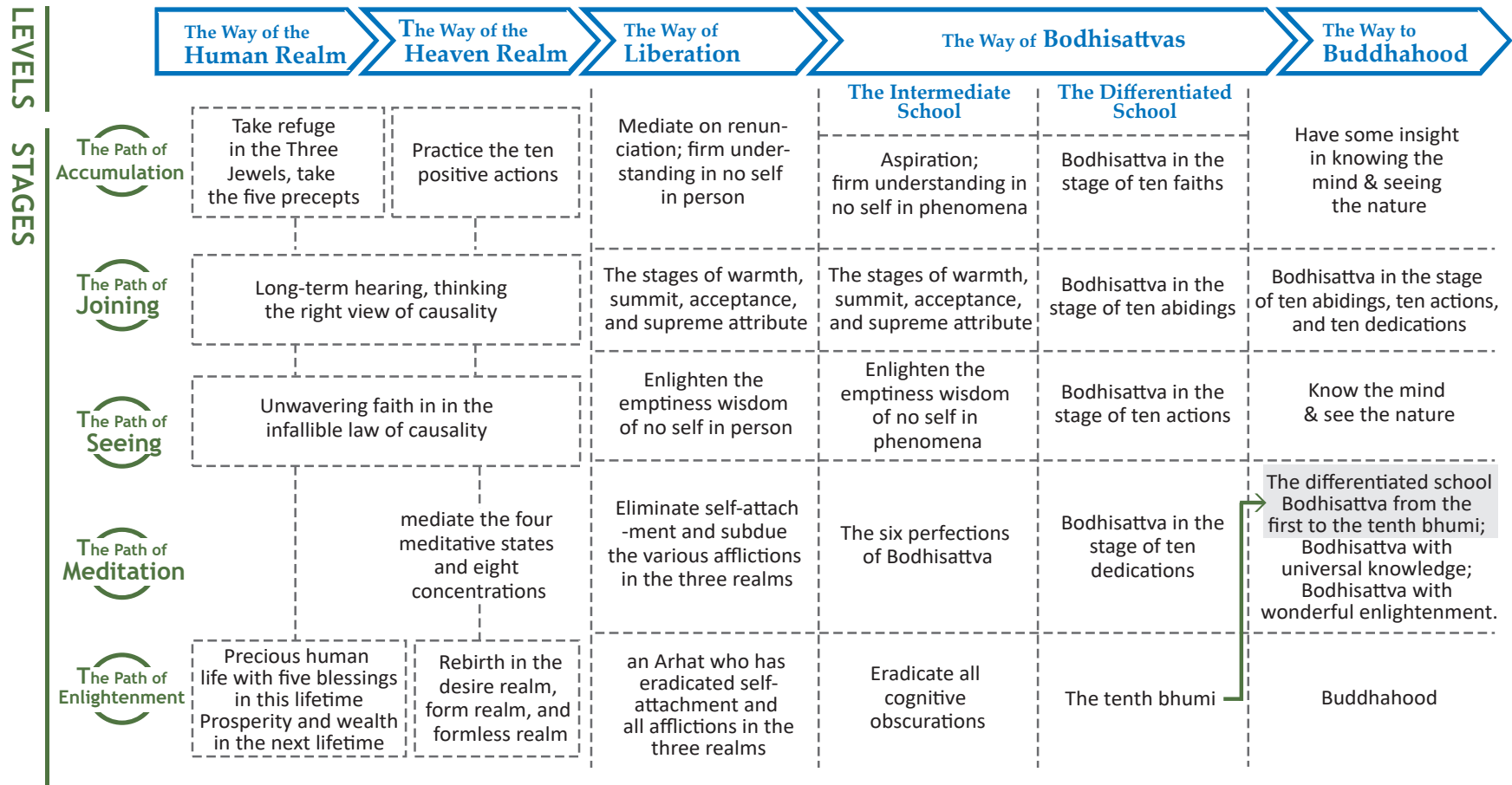
**YouTube Channel**

- ◆ Establish right understanding & view
- ◆ Understanding & Practice go hand in hand

- ◆ The Stages & The Three Principal Aspects of the Path
  - ◆ Focus on Dharma without differentiating schools

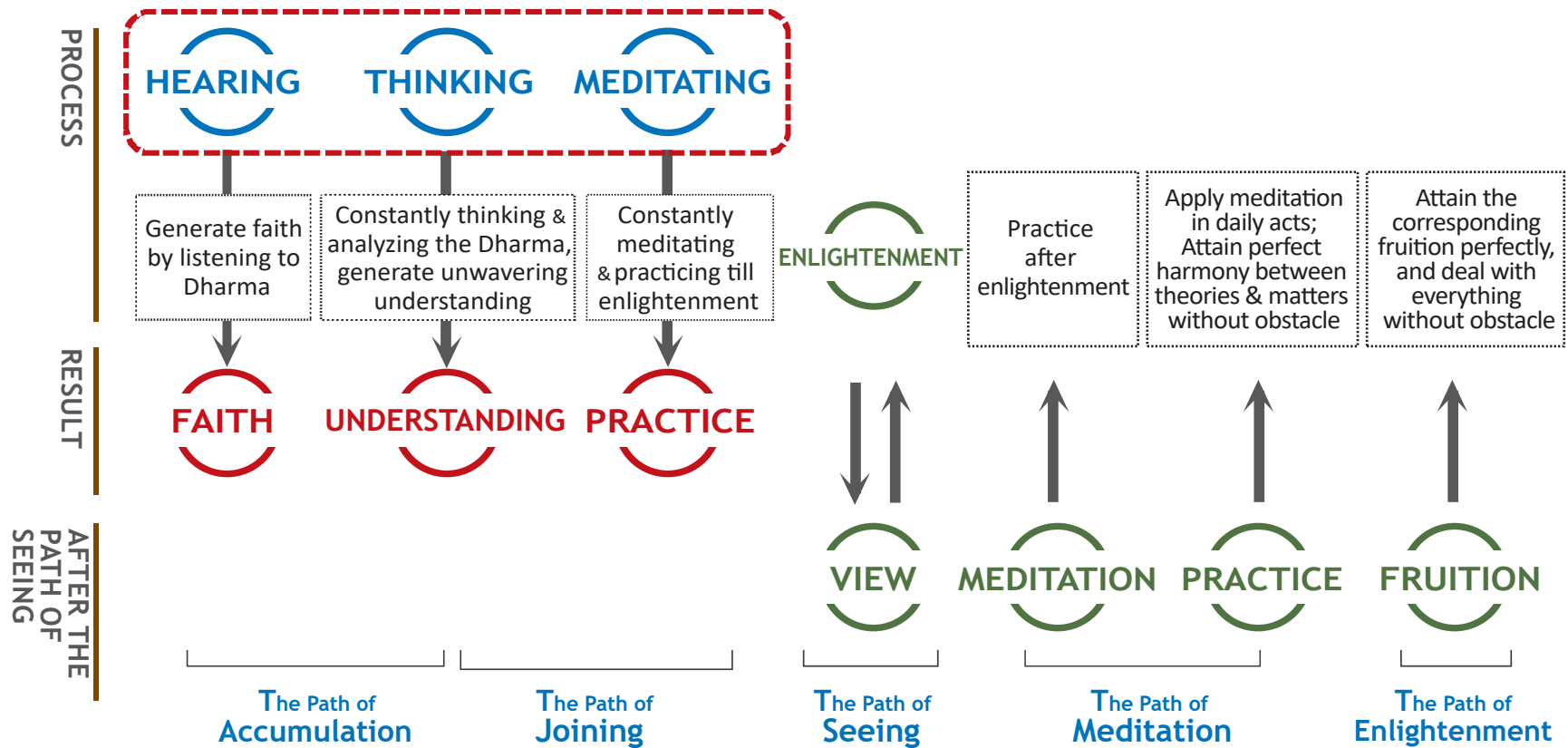
# LEVELS & STAGES OF PRACTICE

Unaware of methods, one is practicing blindly.  
Unaware of stages, one is arrogant and unrealistic.



# HEARING, THINKING, MEDITATING, ENLIGHTENMENT & STAGES OF PRACTICE

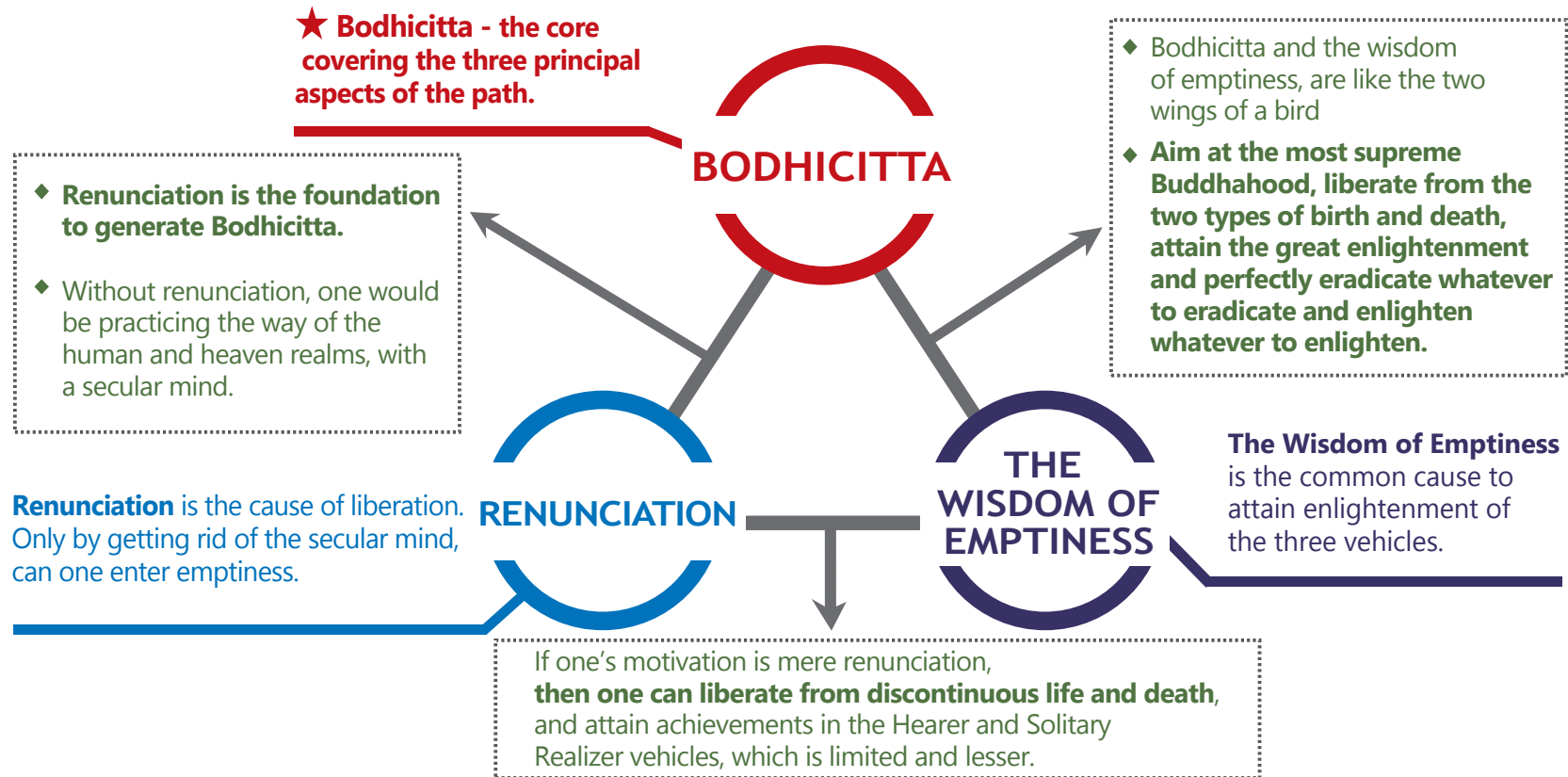
Any Dharma taught by Buddha is composed of hearing, thinking, meditating, and enlightenment.



# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE THREE PRINCIPAL ASPECTS OF THE PATH

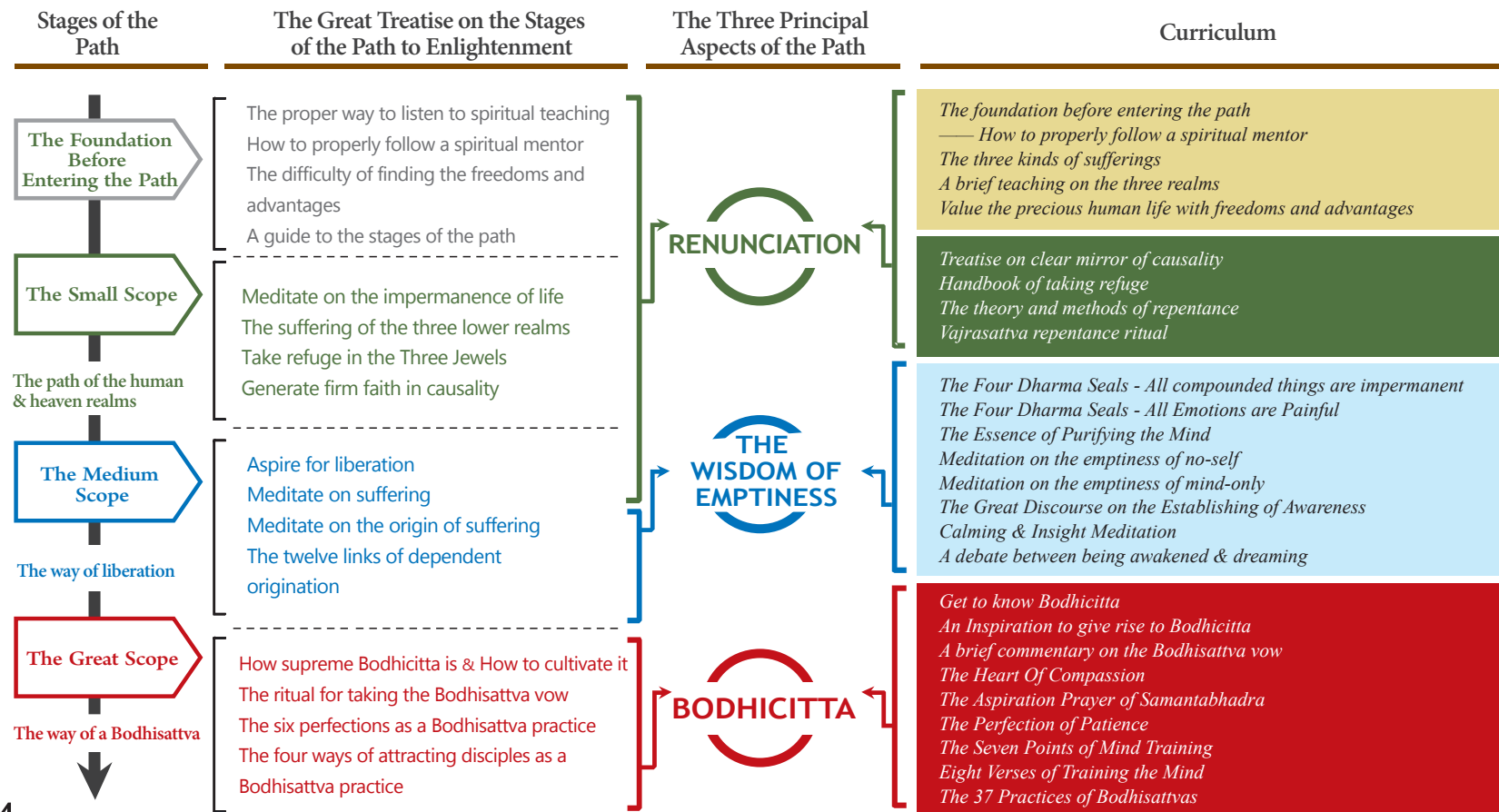
## The Three Principal Aspects of the Path: Renunciation, Bodhicitta, and the View of Emptiness.

—— Are a Shortcut for Newbie Practitioners, Even to Buddhahood.



# THE STAGES OF THE PATH, THE THREE PRINCIPAL ASPECTS OF THE PATH, AND CURRICULUM

With the stages of the path (the three scopes) as the main part,  
and the three principal aspects of the path (renunciation, Bodhicitta, and the wisdom of emptiness)  
as the core, we emphasize both understanding and practicing.



# THE MAJOR MISTAKES THAT MODERN PRACTITIONERS TEND TO MAKE - PART 1

We haven't attained enlightenment, because we haven't followed the stages.

## CATEGORIES OF PRACTITIONERS

THE  
PURELAND  
SCHOOL



### MISTAKES

**"Chant a Buddha name  
till death"**

### SYMPTOMS

- ☹ Don't learn and contemplate the Dharma;
- ☹ Lack of renunciation;
- ☹ Attached to the eight worldly concerns.

Crave to go  
to the pureland  
without effort

THE ZEN  
SCHOOL



***Shurangama Sutra*  
& "Who is chanting the  
Buddha name"**

- ☹ Full of greed, hatred and ignorance,  
but don't apply any remedy;
- ☹ Lack foundation in the way of liberation,  
due to not following the stages of practice

Crave to attain  
enlightenment  
without effort

THE  
ESOTERIC  
SCHOOL



**Crave for spiritual powers;  
Meditate with a blank mind;  
Attached to spiritual states.**

- ☹ Improper motivation;
- ☹ Habitual pattern of being a non-Buddhist  
practitioner;
- ☹ Crave for fame and profits.

Crave for  
spiritual  
powers

**The key to study and practice Buddhism:**  
have the right motivation, establish the right understanding and view,  
and learn, contemplate, and practice according to the stages.

# THE MAJOR MISTAKES THAT MODERN PRACTITIONERS TEND TO MAKE - PART 2

Even if you practice the Pureland School, you should know the stages of the path as well.



# THE MEANING & STANDARD OF RENUNCIATION

## Master Renze's Teachings on Renunciation

When you like to be recognized by others, it shows you crave for fame! Is that hidden in your mind? You wish to be recognized by others, which means you haven't let go of fame. Some people have let go of wealth (actually not completely), but wish to be recognized, admired, and praised by others. You consider it as good, and you feel great. **This shows that you haven't cultivated renunciation well.**

**If no action or word from ordinary beings works for you, it shows you've cultivated renunciation well.**

If you get annoyed upon someone says or does something, then is your renunciation genuine? It shows that your mind is still attached to this world. So once someone says or does something to you, you get annoyed and your karmic obstacle appears. It shows that you haven't cultivated good renunciation yet. If you do, whatever anyone says anything to you, your mind would be tranquil. Just like when you see cicadas crying, will your mind fluctuate? So why does your mind fluctuate when someone says something to you? This shows your mind is still trapped in this world. **If you can let go of any worldly thing, your renunciation is true.**

### The Prerequisite to Generate Renunciation:

**Comprehend the truth of suffering - the three kinds of sufferings, and truly renounce the suffering of change and the all-pervasive suffering.**

### The Standard Characteristic of Renunciation:

**A strong aspiration to renounce this life, stay away from the eight worldly concerns, and liberate from samsara.**

### Secular Mind-The Eight Worldly Concerns

**Gain & loss:** feel happy when gain something, and unhappy when lose something.

**Suffering & happiness:** want happiness, comfort, and security, but no suffering.

**Praise & blame:** want to be praised, approved, but not criticized.

**Insignificance & fame:** want to be famous, not unknown, ignored or even slandered.

# GET TO KNOW BODHICITTA

Only Bodhicitta is the extraordinary cause of Buddhahood

## THE PREMISE TO GENERATE BODHICITTA

1. True renunciation.
2. Firm understanding in the emptiness of no self in person.
3. Faith in the emptiness wisdom of no self in phenomena.

Bodhicitta generated in this way can be considered true relative Bodhicitta.

## THE MEANING OF BODHICITTA

- ◆ Widely benefit sentient beings - aspire to benefit others and give all the benefits and happiness, whether short-term or ultimate.
- ◆ Pursue the most supreme Buddhahood - aspire to attain Buddhahood which has perfectly eradicated whatever to eradicate and enlightened whatever to enlighten.

## THE TYPES OF BODHICITTA

MERIT

WISDOM

The Relative  
Bodhicitta

By practicing the relative Bodhicitta,  
can one eventually enlighten the ultimate Bodhicitta

The Ultimate  
Bodhicitta

**Bodhicitta in Aspiration:** the Four Universal Vows, aspire to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all beings

**Bodhicitta in Application:** the six perfections, the four ways of attracting disciples

**Enlighten the emptiness of no self in phenomena**  
-> enlighten the middle-way reality  
(Know the mind & see the nature)

## TEACHINGS ON BODHICITTA BY MASTER RENZE

### **Without renunciation, the so-called Bodhisattva practice is mere positive actions in the human and heaven realms**

Renunciation, the most fundamental of all, is required for any Dharma practice and must be practiced step by step. True renunciation is the determination to forsake this life without considering any of the eight worldly concerns, and to completely let go. Without determination to forsake this life, the so-called Bodhisattva practice is just the ten positive actions mixed with the eight worldly concerns.

### **A firm understanding in no-self is a prerequisite for generating Bodhicitta**

If you have a firm understanding of no-self, then it will be easier to generate bodhicitta. This is the quick way. Otherwise, you will go astray. Your self-attachment is strong and your right view of no-self is absent, so you can hardly generate bodhicitta.

### **Have you really generated bodhicitta?**

To generate bodhicitta, you must follow the stages, starting with being mindful of our parents' deep kindness. Some people are unable to be mindful of their parents' kindness from deep inside. If you don't have firm understanding from deep inside that all sentient beings have been your parents in the past lives, then you won't be able to practice the first step, let alone the steps thereafter. Therefore, it is useless just to chant the vows. We must start with seeing sentient beings as our mothers. Once the true feeling is generated, the practice of recognizing their kindness and wishing to repay it will be true, and every step will be true. If the first step is not true, all the subsequent steps are not true. Now ask yourself, have you really completed the first step?

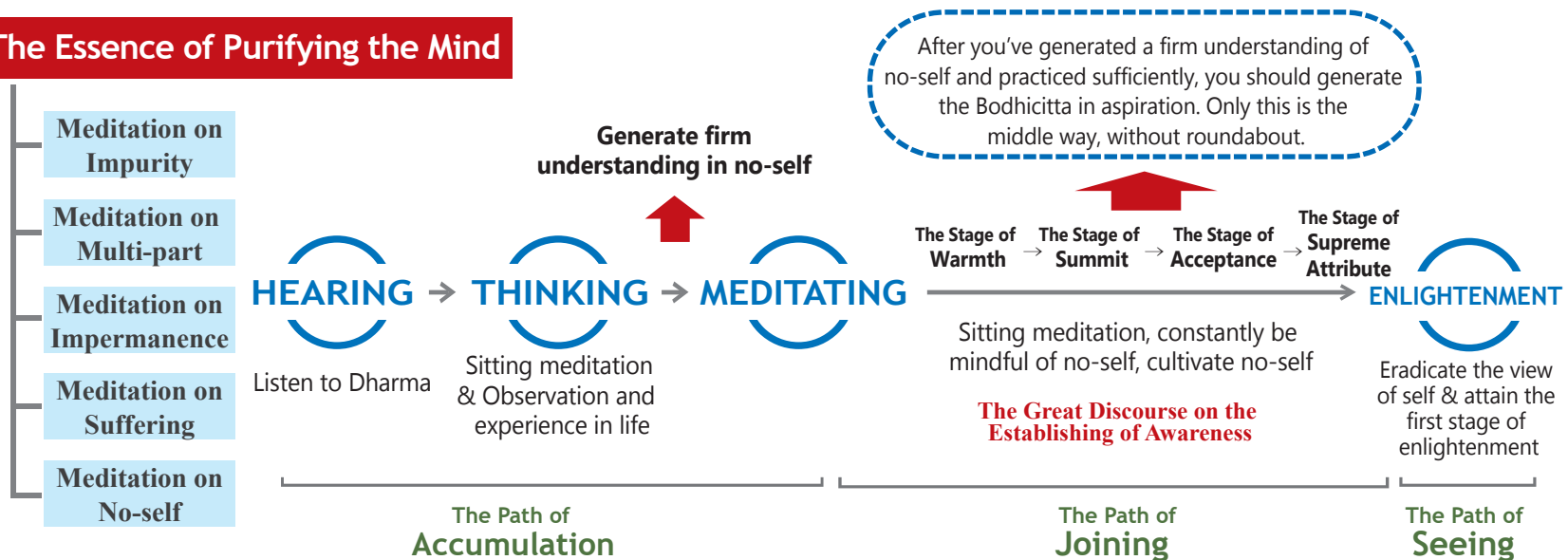
### **The fastest way to attain achievements**

For sentient beings in the Dharma ending age, the two-pronged approach of generating Bodhicitta and meditating on no self in person leads to the fastest progress. Gradually after practicing the emptiness of no self in person well, you can then practice the emptiness of no self in phenomena. After practicing the emptiness of no self in phenomena well, you can then go further to know the mind and see the nature. Generating Bodhicitta and meditating on no self in person are the quickest ways to apply remedy to all of our afflictions. Thus, if you begin with these two methods, your practice will progress the fastest. Of course, if you are a practitioner with sharp faculty who has already attained enlightenment in your previous life, then I have nothing to say.

## STAGES OF PRACTICING THE EMPTINESS OF NO-SELF

It's very important to meditate on no-self. Once you've enlightened no-self, the very foundation of samsara will be shaken. The mountains of afflictions will collapse, and the endless river of desire will dry up. Therefore, **meditation on no-self is the foundation of the way of liberation**. If you can attain sufficient realizations, you would completely liberate from samsara.

### The Essence of Purifying the Mind



## TEACHINGS ON NO-SELF FROM MASTER RENZE

### **It needs constant practice to eliminate self-attachment.**

We used to constantly cultivate self-attachment. And now, we have to do it the other way around: constantly cultivate no-self wisdom so that we can get rid of self-attachment. Therefore, we need to constantly listen to and contemplate *the Essence of Purifying the Mind*. If you don't listen to it, it seems you've understand all the theories, but you forget about it when you encounter a problem. If you are not mindful in your daily life and in meditation, you can't make progress. It sounds simple but needs long-term practice, so that your self-attachment can be slowly diminished. If you want to succeed faster, you must constantly practice like this, both day and night, in order to quickly make achievements. If you relax after cultivating for a short while, your karmic habits will still come back. Like boiling water, if you pause it at 20 or 30 degrees, it will cool down. Tomorrow if you pause it after a while, it will cool down again. This is all in vain. In such a way, It won't be boiled even after 100 years.

### **Why we cannot quickly make achievements? Because we lack constant mindfulness.**

Why is constant mindfulness so important? If you keep contemplating no-self all day long for a week, then after a while, you will be mindful spontaneously and constantly without effort. Just like food cravings: when the time comes, we naturally want to eat something. Therefore, you need to listen to this Dharma every day, and gradually accumulate and practice. If you keep on doing so, you can attain achievement in 7 days at the fastest, 21 days or 49 days at a slower pace. It doesn't take three years.

### **Mistakes of meditating on no-self.**

If you are truly selfless, you can immediately enter the selfless state. Ordinary beings cannot make it. When an ordinary being close his eyes, he might believe that his sixth consciousness stops working and daydreams no more, He has entered a non-Buddhist concentration, but considers himself as enlightened. It's wrong. Many people like this actually entered a non-Buddhist concentration, especially the fourth meditative state. When they entered the fourth meditative state, they thought they have reached nirvana. Since their mind is tranquil and has abandoned all kinds of joys from the desire realm and form realm, they believe they have attained nirvana. It is completely irrelevant and far away from enlightenment.

Guarding the kindness and good deeds of others is of prime importance in doing things, while the objective right or wrong is less important. When working, pay attention to the accumulation of merits, rather than pursuing perfection in the matters.

Afflictions do not automatically terminate. In the beginning, they will make you exhausted, and become more intense and relentless over the next few days to completely burn you out. It's constantly growing until you end up in hell. So we must learn to pacify afflictions upon they arise.

When afflictions arise, you must have a great sense of shame, repent deeply, and pray to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas wholeheartedly, otherwise you cannot make progress in practice. Especially when hatred arises, you should bow down to repent right away, and use all the practice methods, until you regenerate true bodhi mind and compassion to the other side. Otherwise, you should neither sleep nor eat.

We study the Dharma for practice better, instead of accumulating knowledge or getting a diploma. After learning, we should practice immediately, and unify our knowledge and action. Learning without practicing is in vain, which only breeds arrogance.

Before doing anything, calm down and raise your mindfulness. Even if it is only three minutes or half a minute, it is OK. By doing so, you will gradually bring your meditation experience into your daily life. That is, raise your mindfulness before working.

Without empathy, one cannot have compassion. While interacting with others, put ourselves in their place. While walking or being alone, practice empathy. Only by practicing empathy, can we cultivate the Four Immeasurables.

DHARMA QUOTES FROM MASTER RENZE