

# ~ *The Four Liberations* ~

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For meditation, another important thing is what we call "the four liberations."

The first is "primordial liberation." Primordial liberation means we are already liberated from the beginning. We do not need to be liberated again. So, for example, for meditation, the most important thing is awareness, and awareness is with us all the time, no matter who you are or where you are. Awareness is more than thoughts, emotions, and feelings. Awareness is like the sky and thoughts, emotions, perceptions, and memories — all these are like clouds. No matter what kind of cloud comes, it does not change the essence of the sky. Whether there is a beautiful cloud or an ugly cloud, a blue sky with the sun shining or dark sky with a hurricane in the night, it does not change the nature of the sky. The sky is always free from the beginning. So, that is the primordial liberation — we are already free.

And the second is what we call "self-liberation." Self-liberation, in the context of when you meditate — the awareness practice — first, you have to recognize awareness when you meditate, that is the view. You already understand, right? Awareness means *knowing*. You know what you are thinking, feeling, doing, seeing, experiencing — all of this is awareness. When we meditate, at first it is quite difficult to connect with awareness itself without using a support, so we can use a support like the breath. The breath reminds us to connect with awareness — breathing in and breathing out. Eventually, not only has the breath become a support for you, actually, what you see, hear, sounds, visual objects, smells, tastes, sensations, thoughts, and even emotions — everything becomes a help to recognize awareness, a support for your meditation. So that is what we call, "self-liberation". There is no need to get rid of thoughts or emotions - not even negative emotions, strong emotions, or even the crazy monkey mind. The crazy

monkey mind also becomes a support for your meditation. This is self-liberation.

The third is what we call "direct liberation." Direct liberation has more to do with the present and especially with open awareness. When we meditate, our mind is just *being* with awareness itself. You do not need to use any object. Of course, at first, you need to use an object, but eventually, you are not using any objects. Awareness is like the light, here, in this room. In the space, there is light right now. There is space between you and me. Or between this video and you, there is space. And this space has light. How do you see light? You cannot see light in space easily. You need to see light on something. Maybe you see light on the screen now, or you see light on my face. Or you see light on the wall, ceiling, floor — or something like that. At first, we practice awareness connected with an object. But eventually, awareness is with itself. That is open awareness — to directly connect with awareness, to directly connect with space, to see the light directly. There is no need to reflect the light onto something. That is direct liberation. This can be applied in your everyday life. The essence of thoughts, emotions — everything has this fundamental awareness.

The fourth is "complete liberation." The meaning is that, actually, everything — all phenomena — is liberated. We all have this fundamental great quality, so you do not need to look for liberation out there. It is in you, out there, up there, down there — it is everywhere. It is liberated from the inside, outside, and in between — that is what we call "pure perception." Once you know this point, everything is liberated for you — easy, right? Therefore it is called "complete liberation."