

DIVISIONS OF THE SELFLESS

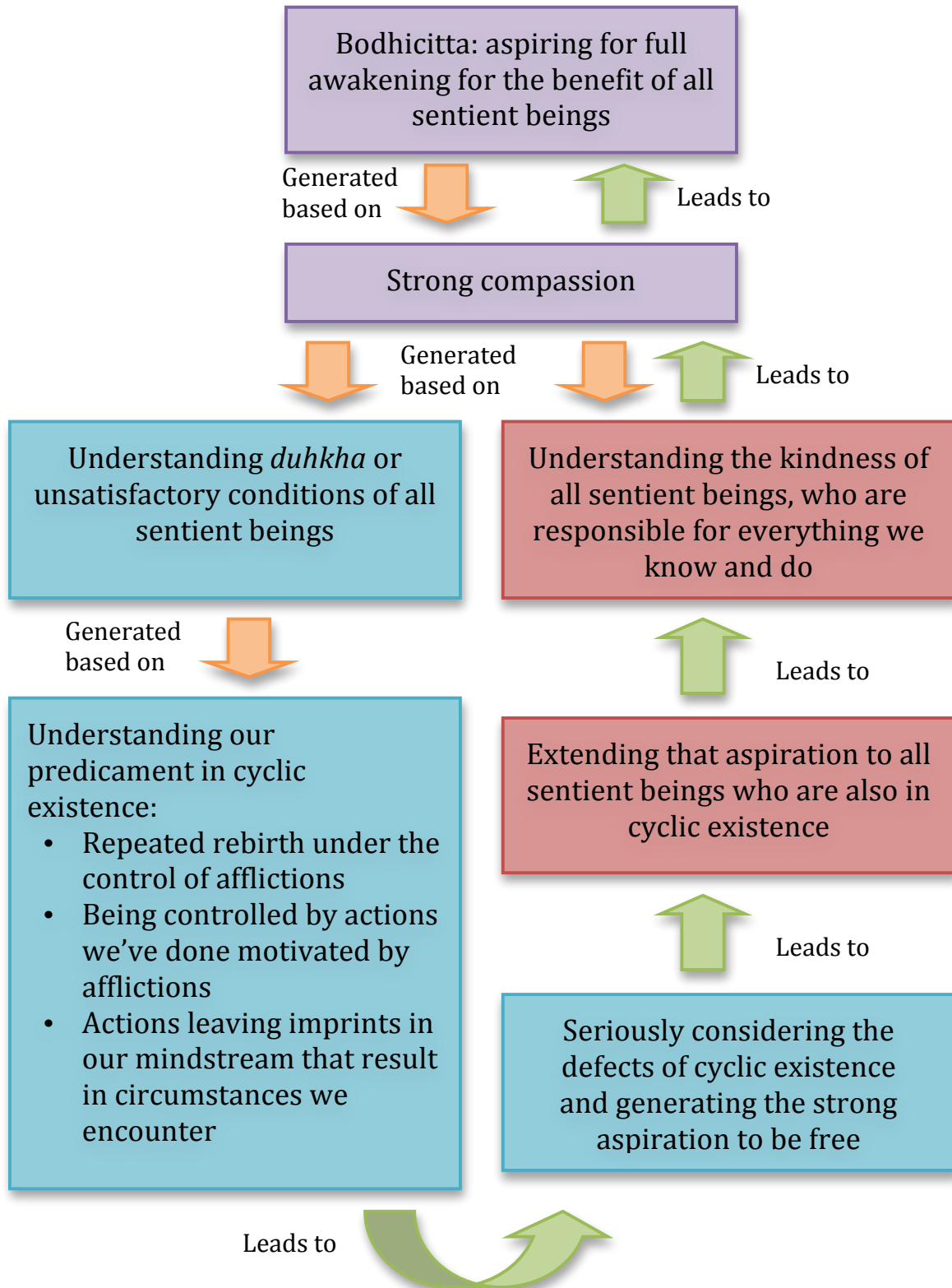
A graphic organizer based on teachings
by Venerable Thubten Chodron

“A Presentation of Mind and Awareness” 2012
“The Course in Buddhist Reasoning and Debate” 2018

Additional material drawn from
Meditation on Emptiness by Jeffrey Hopkins
*Basic Buddhist Terms and Concepts: A Student's Guide For the Study of
Tibetan Buddhism* compiled and edited by Paul G. Hackett

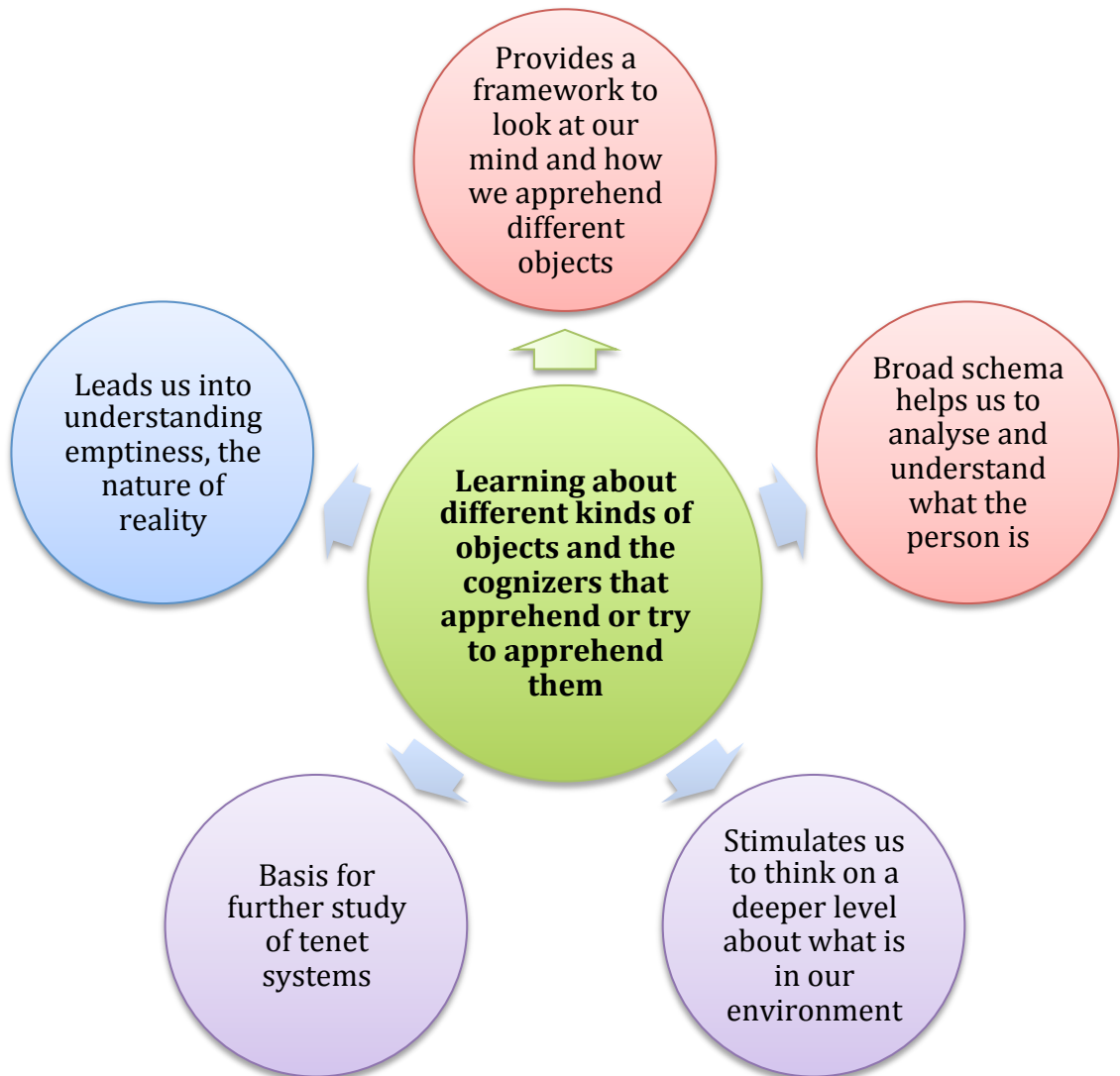
Compiled by Thubten Damcho – all errors are my own

Our motivation for studying



Practice tip: when setting your motivation, begin with what you want to achieve, work backwards to trace its causes, and then go forwards to trace what each cause produces.

What are we learning about, and why?



How to Listen to Teachings

Avoid being:

Upside-down pot

- Nothing goes in
- Not listening

Pot with a hole in the bottom

- Nothing stays in
- Listening but nothing retained

Pot with dirt in it

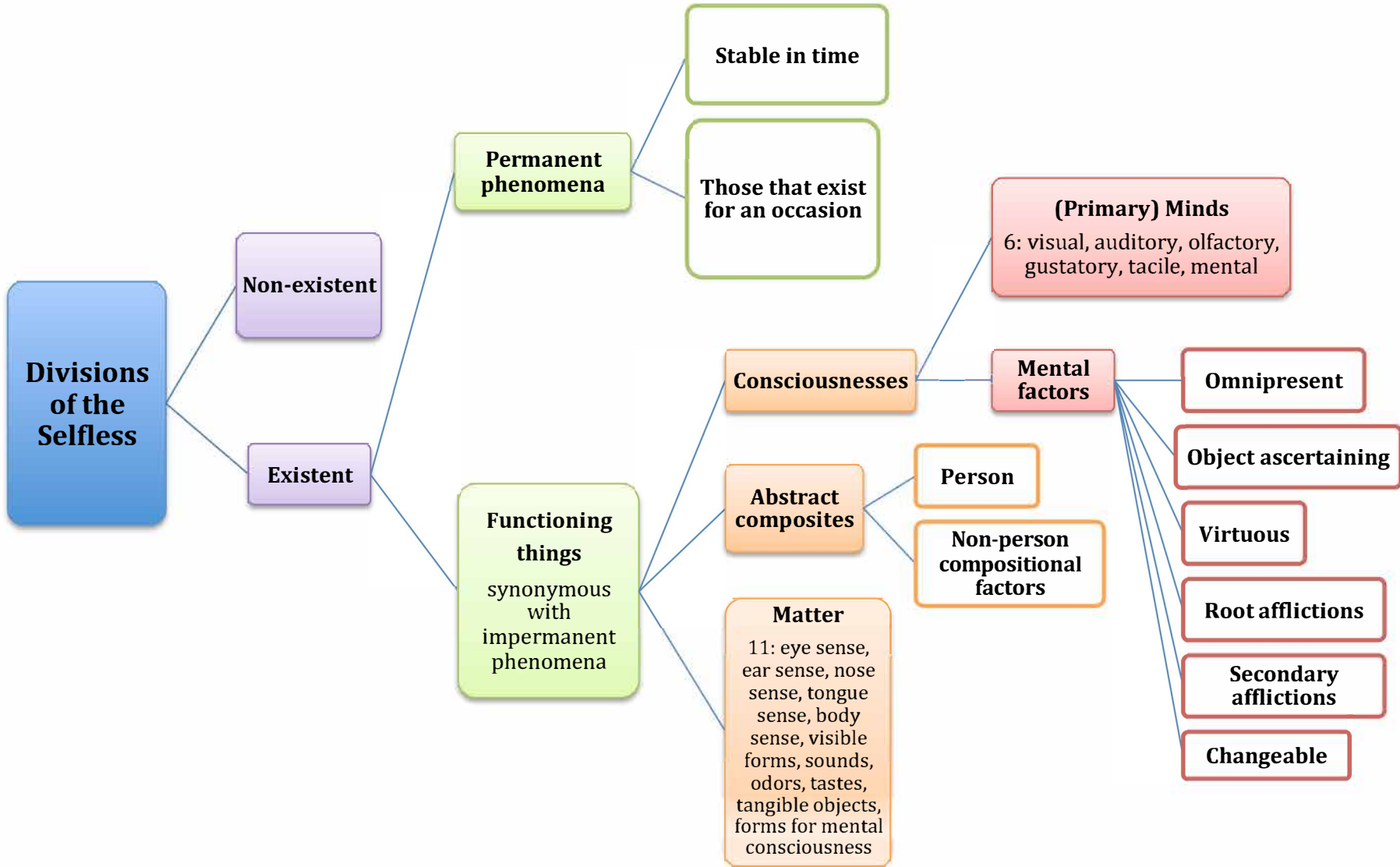
- Dirt gets mixed with whatever goes in
- Listening with wrong motivation

Pot with popcorn popping out of it

- Everything gets pushed out
- Asking one question after another without thinking about what you have heard

Divisions of the Selfless

- What are the things we apprehend and deal with in our internal and external environment?
- The presentation on the following page is given according to the **Sautrāntika school**
- This tenet system defines what is **selfless** (*bdag med* བདག་མེད།) as “anything that is not a substantial person or the property of a substantial person.”
- In the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamaka school, the selfless means “that which does not inherently exist.”



Non-existent (*med pa*)

མེད་པ

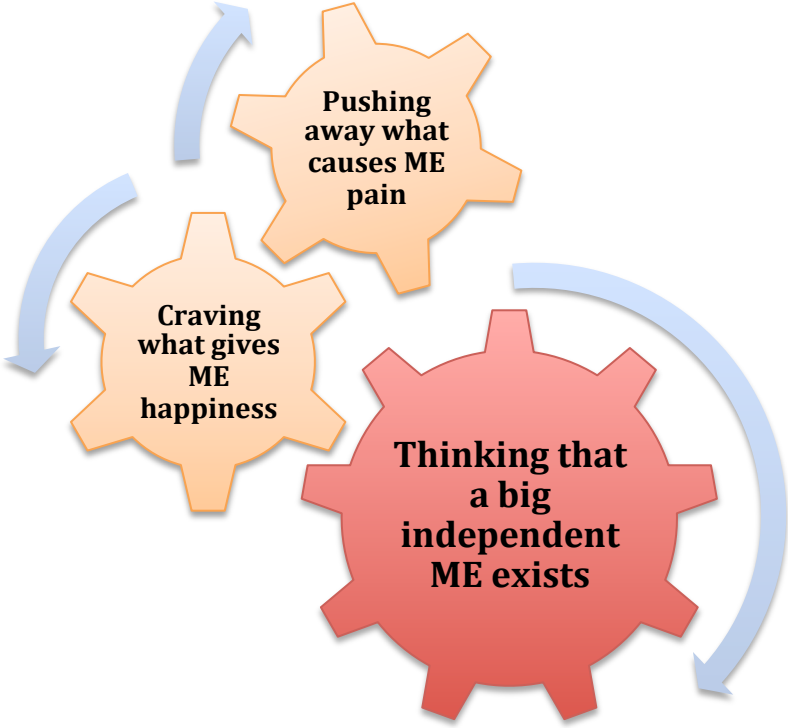
Commonly used examples

- Sky flower
- Turtle's mustache
- Rabbit's horn
- Son of a barren woman

What we wrongly cling to as existent

- Creator God
- Self of persons (and phenomena)
- Objects we are attached or averse to

The root of our problem: thinking what is non-existent exists!



Practice tip: In the meditation on emptiness, the object of negation, the "I" that we grasp at as inherently existent, is a non-existent.

Existent (yod pa)

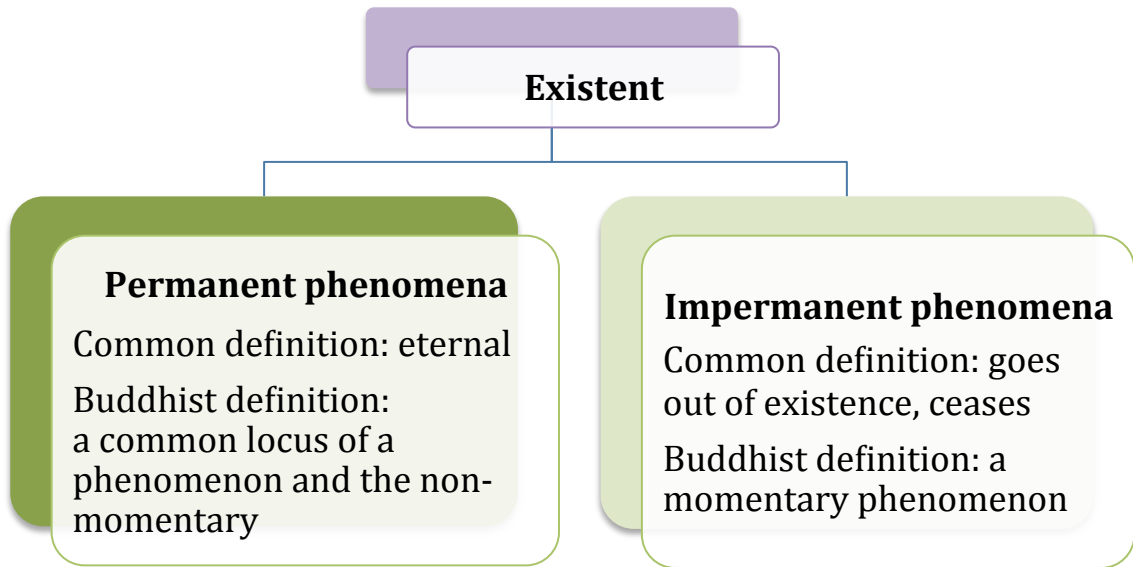
ཡོད་པ།

Eight characterizations of what exists

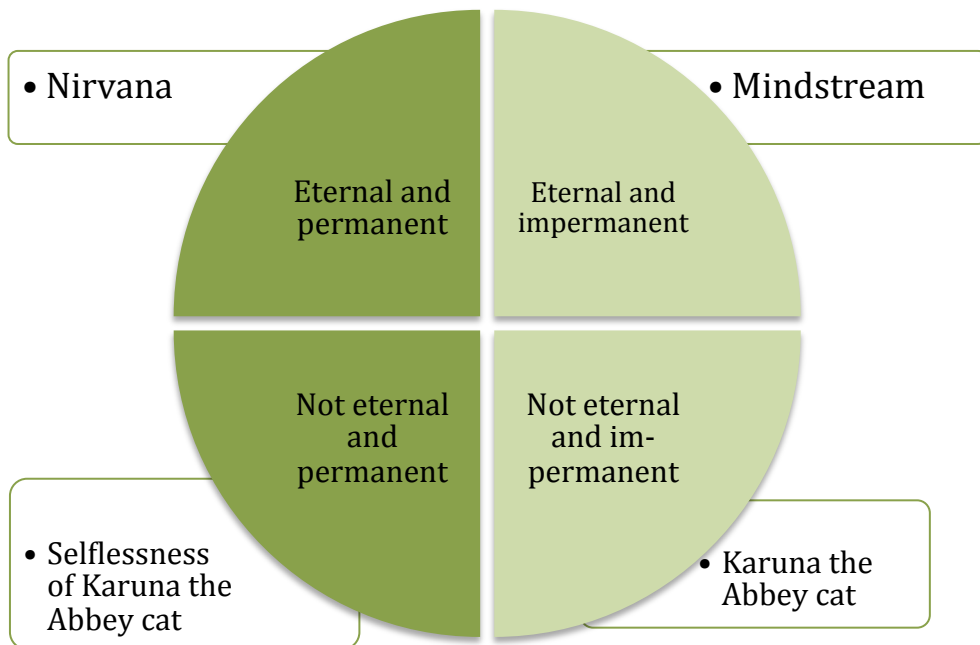
Definition	That which is observed by a reliable cognizer (<i>tshad mas dmigs pa</i>)	ཚད་མས་དམིགས་པ།
Mutually inclusive with	established base (<i>gzhi grub</i>)	གཞི་གྲུབ།
	object of comprehension (<i>gzhal bya</i>)	གཞལ་བྱ།
	object (<i>yul</i>)	ཡུལ།
	object of knowledge (<i>shes bya</i>)	ཤེས་བྱ།
	object of comprehension of an omniscient consciousness (<i>rnam mkhyen gyi gzhal bya</i>)	རྣམ་མཁྲིན་གྱི་གཞལ་བྱ།
	hidden phenomenon (<i>lkog gyur</i>)	སྐོག་གྲུབ།
	phenomenon (<i>chos</i>)	ཚོས།

Seven Divisions of Existents

Impermanent phenomena	Permanent phenomena
Functioning things	Phenomena that are nonthings
Products Causes Effects	Nonproduced phenomena
Composed phenomena	Uncomposed phenomena
Ultimate truths	Conventional truths
Specifically characterized phenomena	Generally characterized phenomena
Manifest phenomena	Hidden phenomena



Four possibilities between eternal and permanent phenomena

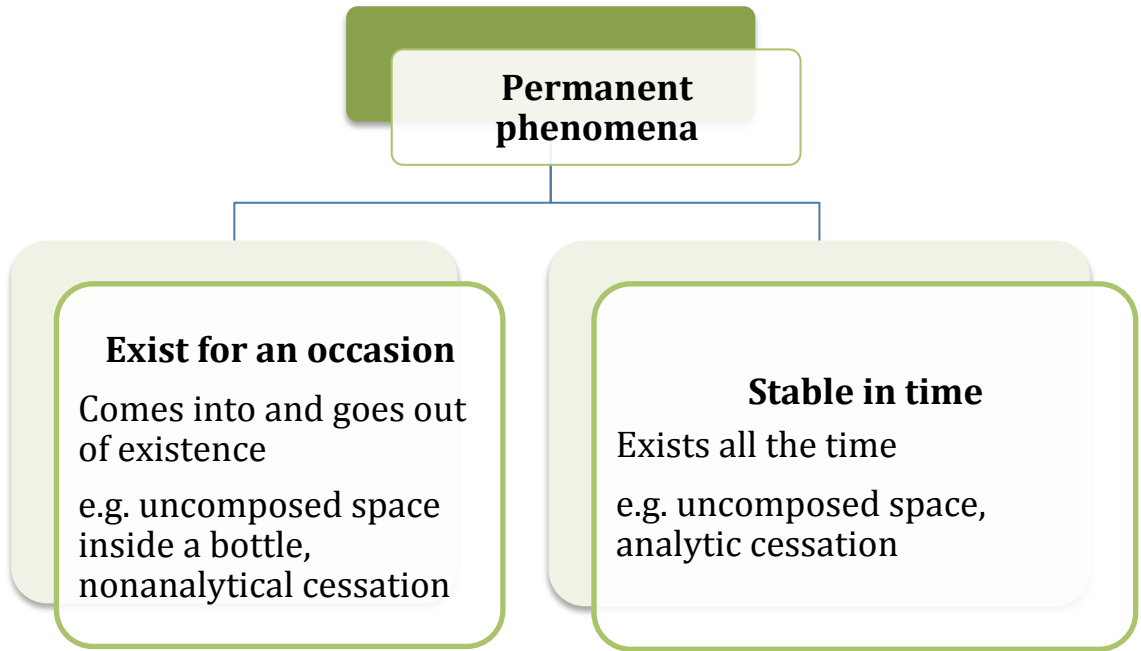


Note: In “A Presentation of Mind and Awareness,” the examples given are according to the Prasangika School. The Sautrantika school does not assert emptiness of phenomena.

Permanent phenomena (*rtag pa*)

རྟག་པ།

Definition	A common locus of a phenomenon and the nonmomentary.
Mutually inclusive with	Phenomena that are nonthings, nonproduced phenomena, uncomposed phenomena, conventional truths, generally characterized phenomena

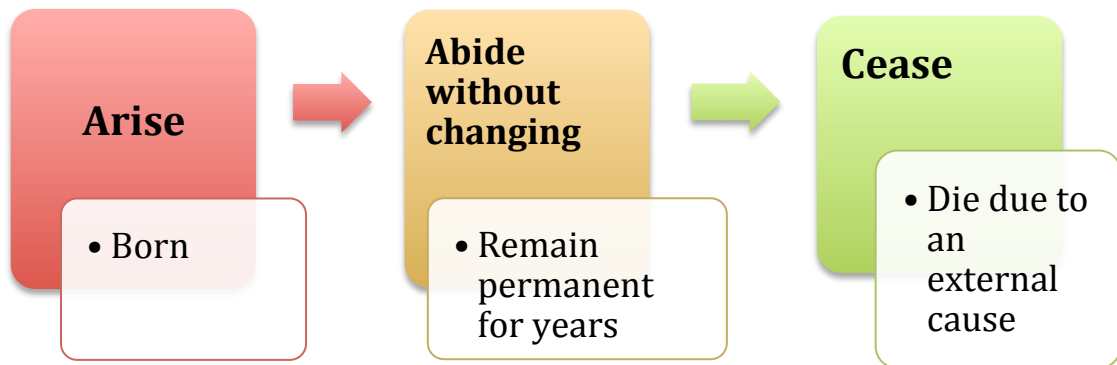


Example	Definition	Tibetan Script
Uncomposed space (<i>'dus ma byas kyi nam mkha'</i>)	A mere absence of obstructive contact	འདུས་མ་བྱས་ཀྱི་ནམ་མཐའ།
Analytical cessation (<i>sor brtags 'gog</i>)	Final states of cessation of afflictions	སོར་བརྟགས་འཕོགས།
Nonanalytical cessation (<i>brtags min gyi gog pa</i>)	Temporary cessation of afflictions	བརྟགས་མིན་གྱི་ཕོགས་པ།

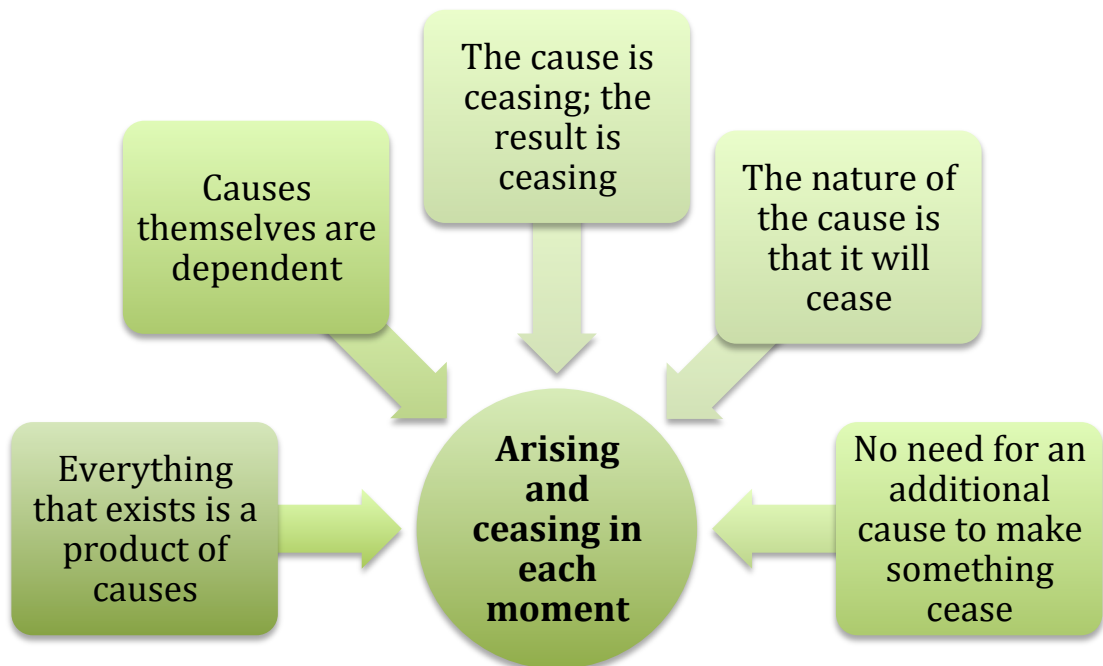
Impermanent phenomena (*mi rtag pa*) མི་རྟག་པ།

Intellectually, we understand gross impermanence, which is that the continuity of things ceases. However, we do not understand subtle impermanence, which is that things arise and cease in every moment.

Our wrong view of impermanence



What we strive to see in meditation

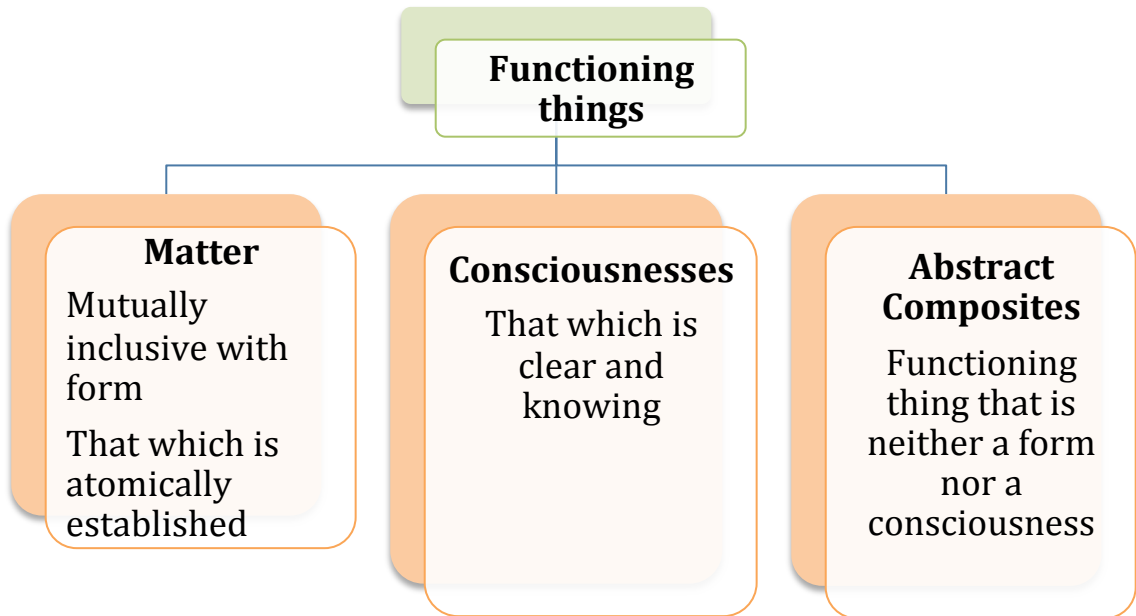


Practice tip: Take your body as an example and meditate on how it is impermanent because it is produced by causes and conditions. How does this affect the way you view your body and yourself?

Functioning thing (*dgnos po*)

དངོས་པོ།

Definition	That which is able to perform a function (<i>don byed nus pa</i>)	དོན་བྱེད་རྒྱས་པ།
Synonymous with	Impermanent phenomena, products, causes, effects, composed phenomena, ultimate truths, specifically characterized phenomena, manifest phenomena	



Matter (*bem po*)

བམ་པོ།

Internal Matter (<i>nang gi bem po</i>)	ནང་གི་བམ་པོ།	External Matter (<i>phy'i gi bem po</i>)	ཕྱིའི་བམ་པོ།
Eye sense power (<i>mig gi dbang po</i>)	མིག་གི་དབང་པོ།	Color (<i>kha dog</i>)	ལ་དོག་།
		Shape (<i>dbyibs</i>)	དབྱིབས་།
Ear sense power (<i>rnam ba'i dbang po</i>)	ན་བའི་དབང་པོ།	Sound (<i>sgra</i>)	སྒྲ།
Nose sense power (<i>sna'i dbang po</i>)	སྒྲིའི་དབང་པོ།	Odor (<i>dri</i>)	དྲི།
Tongue sense power (<i>lce'i dbang po</i>)	ལྗེའི་དབང་པོ།	Taste (<i>ro</i>)	རོ།
Body sense power (<i>lus kyi dbang po</i>)	ལུས་ཀྱི་དབང་པོ།	Tangible object (<i>reg bya</i>)	རྟེན་གྲུ།

Forms for the mental consciousness

The final category of forms comprises forms for the mental consciousness, which are undemonstrable and non-obstructive. They are defined as form aggregates, which are objects only of the mental consciousness and thus are classed not as form-sources (*rupayatana, gzugs kyi skye mched*) but as phenomena-sources (*dharmdyatana, chos kyi skye mched*). See *Meditation on Emptiness* by Jeffrey Hopkins for more information.

Practice tip: Pay close attention to the experience of watching a movie. Why do we consider violence in a movie entertainment, whereas violence actually happening is not entertainment?

Consciousnesses (*shes pa*)

ཤེས་པ།

Definition That which is clear and knowing
(*gsel zhing rig pa*)

གསལ་ཞིང་རིག་པ།

Primary minds

Correspond to the six senses and their specific objects

Eye consciousness (<i>mig shes</i>)	མིག་ཤེས།
Ear consciousness (<i>rna shes</i>)	རྒྱ་ཤེས།
Nose consciousness (<i>sna shes</i>)	སྒྲ་ཤེས།
Tongue consciousness (<i>lce shes</i>)	ལྗེ་ཤེས།
Body consciousness (<i>lus shes</i>)	ལུས་ཤེས།
Mental consciousness (<i>yid shes</i>)	ཡིད་ཤེས།

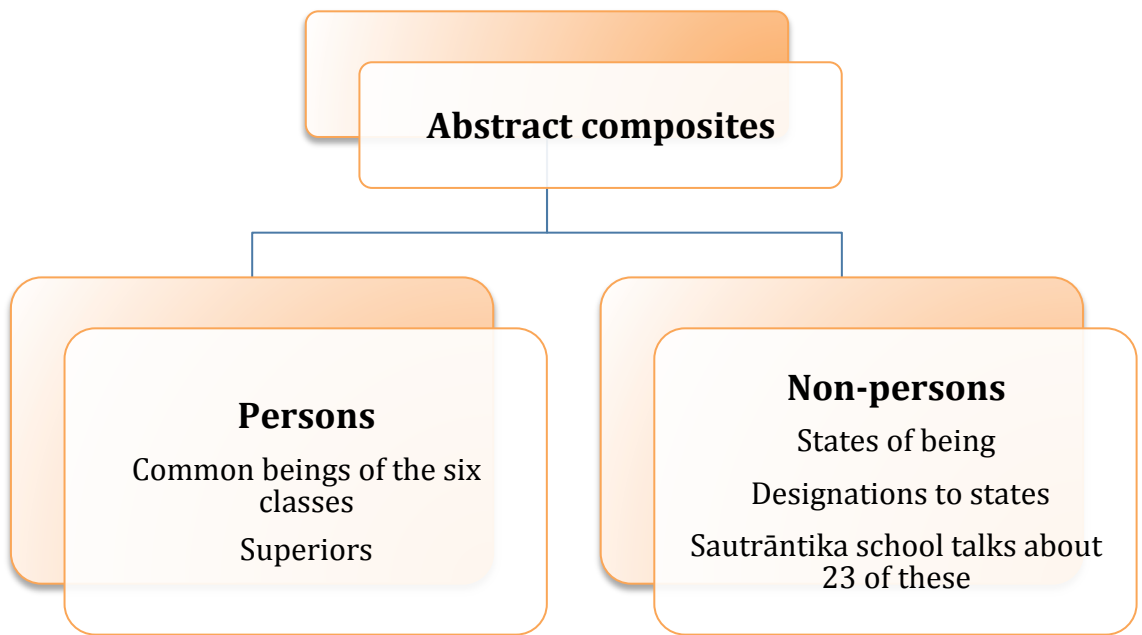
Mental factors (*sems byung*)

སེམས་བྱུང།

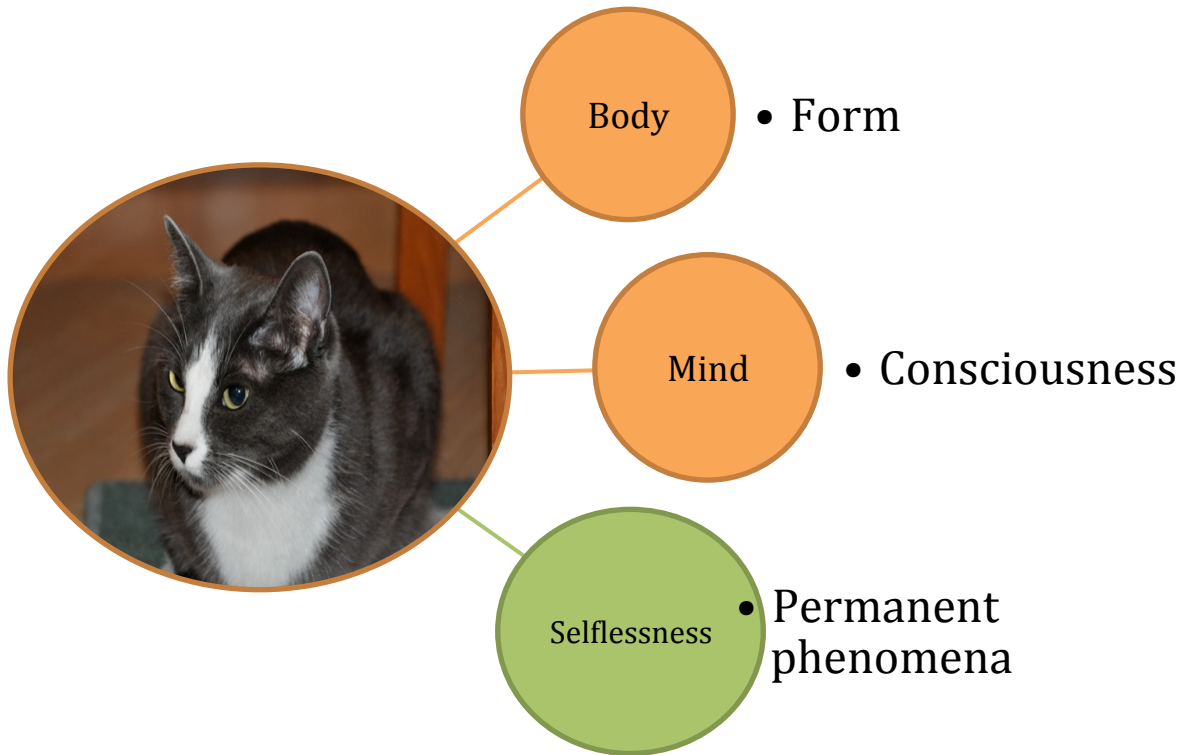
- Occur simultaneously with primary mind and fill out whole cognition
- Can have more than one occurring with a primary mind at the same time
- All have the same object and exist at the same time
- One virtuous/ non-virtuous affects all the rest
- List of 51 mental factors is non-exhaustive – these are the ones important for the attainment of liberation, in terms of what to be aware of, and what to cultivate or abandon

Abstract composites

Definition	Functioning thing that is neither a form nor a consciousness	
Synonymous with	Non-associated compositional factors (<i>ldan min 'du byed</i>)	ལྡན་མིན་འདུ་བྱེད་



Persons



Practice tip: Look around you and identify how different objects would be classified. What is the color green? What is a spider? What is the mandala that we offer to the Buddha?

Non-persons

Excerpt from *Meditation on Emptiness* by Jeffrey Hopkins

Acquisition	A state of the increase and decrease of virtues and so forth, of which there are two types: “finding acquisition,” which is a new attainment of such increase or decrease and “possessive acquisition,” which is the retention of it.
Absorption without discrimination	A state involving a lack of the coarse feelings and discriminations associated with the third concentration and below. It is produced in dependence on the fourth concentration by common beings only
Absorption of cessation	A state achieved only by Superiors in which there is a lack of the coarse feelings and discriminations associated with the Peak of Cyclic Existence (the highest formless level) and below.
One having no discrimination	The state of a person born among the gods in the condition of being without coarse feelings and discriminations.
Life faculty/ life	The state of living; the base of consciousness and warmth.
Similarity of type	The state or condition of likeness.
Birth/ production, aging, duration, and impermanence	States of the characteristics of things.
Group of stems, group of words, and group of letters	Various states of verbal conventions. Stems are bare names without case endings, etc., whereas words are stems with case endings, etc.
State of an ordinary being	One who has not attained the qualities of Superiors. (The Vaibhashikas substitute non-acquisition for this category and do not assert the remaining nine, limiting their presentation of non-associated compositional factors to 14.)
Continuity	The non-interrupted state of a continuum of causes and effects.

Distinction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinction of the particular and the general • Distinction of virtues and non-virtues and pleasures and pains • Distinction of causes and effects
Relatedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Means,” which is the collection of, for instance, an artisan’s tools • “Aggregation,” which is a collection of causes but specifically their reliance on each other within the collection • “Suitability,” which is each thing’s having its own function
Rapidity	A condition of the arising of effects immediately after their causes and to the speed caused by persons, magical emanations, and so forth
Order	A serial state of former and latter, high and low, and so forth.
Time	States of the past, present, and future
Area	The composite of a place and the persons therein
Number	A condition of measure
Collection	The state of a complete collection of causes, and specifically to that completeness.

Practice tip: When meditating on the selflessness of the person, ask yourself: am I any of these categories of phenomena? What is the relationship between the person and the aggregates? When I am in a bad mood, am I nothing more than my bad mood?