

Outline

1. First Seal: All compounded things are impermanent.
Impermanence is the nature of reality, a fact of life.
2. Second Seal: All kleshas are suffering.
Hoping to get what we want, fearful of losing what we have or getting what we don't want, our experience is clouded and confused by the veil of kleshas.
Kleshas are bits of our life energy which have been captured by the story of self and other and the complexity of the relation between these two. This is called dualistic thinking.
3. Third Seal: All things are without a self.
Underlying the veil of kleshas is the deeper obscuration of primitive belief. We have made the mistake of taking the five skandas to be a self. Although we work first on seeing the nature of the klesha veil, uprooting it entirely requires that we dig deeper and understand that the very self that is being protected and expanded by the kleshas has no genuine existence.
4. Fourth Seal: Nirvana is peace beyond concepts.
Freedom from the twofold veils is liberation. Life energy, no longer captured by the illusory self and its drama, is no longer interpreted as suffering.

Expansion of point 3 above:

Meditation on non-self as explained in Chapter One of *Progressive Stages of Meditation on Emptiness*, by Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso:

Point One: The definition of a *self* has three attributes:

- Lasting, permanent
- Single
- Independent

Question: Is this a useful definition of a self?

Point Two: The Five Skandas:

- Form
- Feeling
- Perception (Discrimination)
- Formation (Mental Construction)
- Consciousness

Question: What is the purpose, usefulness or intent of this list of categories?

Point Three: Can we find a self?

- Is any one skanda a self?
- Is the combination or integration of the skandas a self?
- Is there a self that owns or possesses the skandas?
- Do the skandas own a self?