

Sandoku

The Three Poisons

The Three poisons are the hub of the wheel of delusory life, they are:

Ton - Greed, represented by the cock and the color red;

Jin - Anger/resentment, represented by the snake and the color black;

Chi - Stupidity/ignorance, represented by the pig and the color green

In the wheel of life the three poisons are depicted by the cock biting the tail of the snake, who is biting the tail of the pig, who is in turn biting the tail of the cock. These three poisons mate the world of delusion, from the 18 hells up to and including the many heavens, go round and round in endless cycle of birth, decay, and death. The Three Poisons are the hub of the Wheel of Samsaric Life, from the 18 hells up to and including the many heavenly realms. By age 18, almost all of us have experienced birth in these six realms of self-centered existence: the hells of intense suffering, anxieties, and loneliness, the Hungry Ghost realm of insatiable hunger for things; the animal realm of instinctive existence; the calculating, objective world of human beings; the competitive, win at all costs, control freak world of the Ashura, and the elegant, artistic, aesthetic. And self-righteous world of the gods. On first contact, these realms offer all the enticements and excitement of one's first visit to Disneyland. With time however, they are profoundly unsatisfying, and for all our affirmation of the worlds of Samsara there remains a fundamental dissatisfaction - a sigh that will not go away.

We Americans muster all our most positive forces to combat this ennui. We are the richest, most powerful, most generous, most educated, most democratic, and most free people on the face of the earth - none of which is true except for our being the most powerful. In spite of our always looking on the brighter side of any issue, we are not a particularly happy people. For all the negative language of Jodoshinshu Buddhism, its insistent emphasis on seeing our calculating ego. its egocentric this, egocentric that emphasis - it has produced a deeply content if not joyously happy people. If the Three Poisons is what creates and sustains the 6 realms of painful existence, it is essential to encounter the Three Poisons in me in my daily life, for without this

awareness, the source of all suffering seems to come from outside of myself and not from the Three Poisons within.

If exterior people and events are the cause of my suffering, **they** are the problem and **they** need to be corrected. **They** is the objective, outward looking, logical way of problem solving. **Me** is the Buddhist, non-dualist, experiential way of awakening and becoming and not just believing. Buddhist awakenmg is about **me**, and after that, about **we**, **We** does not lead to **me**. I am the Wheel of Life, and my unaware self is seated in Greed, Anger, and Stupidity. Yama, the King of Death, who holds up the wheel of Life diagram is in fact holding up a mirro for me to see my Samsara self - so that I may one day see my Nirvana self - the Namo self seeing the Amida Buddha self.

Namanda, Namanda Namanda,

Gassho,
Rev Mas