



Name: _____

Date: _____

Grade: _____

THE YOGA OF ACTION

ANSWER KEY FOR CLASS SIX

1. Lord Krishna says that “Everyone in this world is bound by actions unless they are done as sacrifices.” Cite the relevant verse from the Tibetan Buddhist text entitled “Eight Verses for Developing the Good Heart” by the Diamond Lion, Dorje Senge, that reiterates this concept of sacrificial action.

“May I accept any loss from such unfair treatment as being attacked and belittled by those who are jealous of me, and may I give every gain to others.”

2. What is meant by the phrase “karmic suicide” or “pushing one’s karmic envelop” and how does these phrases relate to the concept of sacrificial action?

“Karmic suicide” refers to the practice of sacrificing one’s own immediate advantage in order to re-invest that karma in order to obtain a greater result in the future. When, for example, we have the karma to obtain something we like, but to enjoy it now would mean that someone else who wanted that item would be deprived of it, we choose not to “push our karmic envelop” but rather “sacrifice” the desirable item (i.e., give to the other) in order to create the karma to have abundance in the future.

3. Where is karma stored? How can understanding the process of how karma is perpetuated help us explain how it might be possible to escape from (or as the text says, “completely dissolve”) our karma?

Karma is stored in our ever-changing present conceptualization of ourselves, the “simple me.” If we could collect the karma to thoroughly reconceptualize ourselves as, for example, an Enlightened Being, the karma that was collected and carried by the suffering being we were once identified with would instantly and completely evaporate.

4. What is one way of understanding what is meant by the “sacrifice of ultimate reality”?

When one has the direct perception of and communion with ultimate reality, during that time one is completely unable to think of an “I” who is having that experience.



DIAMOND MOUNTAIN UNIVERSITY

There is, in other words, a feeling that the subject-object distinction has broken down; one has the feeling of transcending the self and merging with ultimate reality. In this sense one has “sacrificed” one’s sense of personal identity and subjectivity as one realizes ultimate reality.

5. Describe the relationship between karma and ultimate reality.

The way things and beings truly exist is their ultimate reality – things and beings are ultimately empty of having any self-nature of their own. Karma explains why and how things and beings appear to exist the way they do. Things do exist (as projections forced upon us by our karma), but they do not exist the way they appear to exist (as having some kind of self-nature or independent existence).

6. Name and briefly describe the practices Lord Krishna lists as the various kinds of “sacrifices.”

The Gita lists the sacrifices of ultimate reality, to the deities, of the senses or the objects of the senses, of the action of the senses and of the breath, of material possessions, of yoga, of study and wisdom, of the breath (*pranayama*), and the sacrifice of one’s life force or energy (*prana*).

7. Lord Krishna says that “Even those devotees of other deities who worship them filled with faith are really worshipping Me,” but that “because they do not recognize me for who I truly am they fall into continual rebirth.” Discuss the role of wisdom when it comes to maximizing good karma.

The karma of actions done with wisdom – that is, knowing *how* things really work – is stronger and ripens more quickly than karma done without such wisdom.

8. What are the two senses of “reach” when we say one will “reach” the gods, the ancestors, the ghosts. . . or an Enlightened Being like Krishna”?

One “reaches” the beings one devotes oneself to first of all in the sense of being able to perceive them. Secondly, one “reaches” them in the sense of becoming them.

9. List several ways we could be engaged in sacrificial action all day long.

Every action could potentially be an opportunity for sacrifice. We could offer our food before we eat it, the beauty of a sunset, the time we spend engaged in virtuous activity, the pleasure we feel when we are with loved ones, etc.