

**CCI TSK Online Programs**

**Winter 2009**

**Thoughts, Stories, Self**

**Guidance for Week 9**

**The World of the Self (LOK cg. 18, 147-152)**

First, to correct a mistake. The reading for this week is pp. 147-152 in LOK, but that is chapter 18, not chapter 22.

Now, the focus for last week was how the self gets set up as a kind of second-class citizen. And there is strange sort of paradox there, because in a sense it is true (from a TSK perspective) that the self is a construct, is not real. So when science condemns the subjective realm as being ‘only’ subjective, it is speaking a language not so different from TSK.

The difference is this: what science calls ‘subjective’ includes everything that gives meaning and value to our lives, including love and joy, intentionality and commitment. Whereas in TSK, the whole point is to restore a reality, a way of being, in which these *most* meaningful aspects of our being can again come to the center, can shape our lives in positive ways.

In this reading, we lay the groundwork for making that move. The starting point is a discussion in LOK that we have skipped. The approach in LOK, starting with chapter 13 (Part Two) is to begin with an atomistic view, similar to the view that science would impose, and also a view that is taken as the starting point in Buddhist psychology. This view says that we should start investigation from the present moment in time and space, ‘here’ and ‘now’, and it tries to understand experience on the basis of a simple act of perception.. But LOK points out that this approach leaves out of account meaning, value, etc.: all the things we have been exploring. For these, it becomes necessary to investigate in terms of self and world. And that is where we go in this chapter.

From this perspective, the starting point is the position that the self takes, the situation it finds itself in, and the meanings it imposes (see the first paragraph of the chapter). It would be helpful to explore this perspective as you continue to look at stories. What positions are you taking; what meanings are you imposing? How do you characterize the situation? You could try this with a difficult situation, an emotional one. Don’t try to shift to some other position. Just get clear on what you are ‘putting’ into the situation (the word ‘put’ here is from the same root as three key words used in the first paragraph, all of which can be verbs: position, posit, and impose.

Our exploration of stories earlier in this program presupposes the notion of ‘self-across-time’ that this chapter explores. So the discussion here can illuminate some of the inquiry we have already been doing, perhaps shedding new light on the explorations we have been doing.