



4 Listening to and Teaching Dharma



How do we listen to Dharma?

4 Listening to Dharma has three parts.



- Considering the benefits of listening to Dharma (See 4.1)**
- Developing respect for Dharma and its Teacher (See 4.2)**
- The actual way of listening to Dharma (See 4.3)**



4.1 What are the benefits of Listening to Dharma?.

4.1 Benefits of Listening to Dharma



In collection of many Special Verses by Buddha Shakyamuni, it says that by listening you will:-

- Know all Dharmas
- Cease all non-virtuous actions
- Abandon all that is meaningless
- Attain liberation

4.1.1 Benefits of Listening to Dharma.



In Stories of Rebirth, Aryasura mentioned the following benefits of listening:

Listening is....

- a) A lamp that dispels the darkness of ignorance
- b) The best wealth that cannot be stolen by thieves
- c) A weapon that destroys our enemy of confusion
- d) Our best friend from whom we receive our best advice
- e) A relative and friend who remain loyal even when we are impoverished

4.1.1A Benefits of Listening to Dharma.



Listening is:

- f) Harmless medicine that cures disease of delusion
- g) Supreme opponent that destroys great faults
- h) Best treasure becos it is the foundation of all fame and resources
- i) Best gift that we can offer to our friends
- g) Best means of pleasing many people

4.2 Developing respect for Dharma and its teachers.



In Sutra on the Essence of Grounds, Buddha says:

“Listen to Dharma with exceptional faith and respect, not seeing the Teacher as faulty or being displeased with him.

When you listen to Dharma, you should view the Teacher as Buddha”

4.2A Developing respect for Dharma and its teachers.



In Five sets on the Spiritual Grounds, Arya Asanga advises us to practise five inattentivenesses whenever we listen to Dharma:-

- a) Do not fault or judge your Teacher even he has broken his or her moral discipline
- b) Pay no attention to Teacher's lower social class
- c) Pay no attention to Teacher's physical appearances (ugliness or physical unattractiveness)

4.2B Developing respect for Dharma and its teachers.



In Five sets on the Spiritual Grounds, Arya Asanga advises us to practise five inattentivenesses whenever we listen to Dharma:-

- d) Pay no attention to Teacher's style of speech but only on meanings our Teacher conveys
- e) Do not fault our Teacher even if he says things which are unpleasant, words of blame or criticism

If we respect our Teacher, we are regarding his instructions as actual Dharma Jewel....the supreme method of gaining temporary and ultimate happiness.



4.3 The actual / correct way of
Listening to Dharma are.....

4.3 The actual way of Listening to Dharma



The correct way to listen is discussed under 2 parts:

- a) Abandoning three faults *(See 4.3.1)*
- b) Cultivating six recognitions *(See 4.3.2)*

4.3.1 Abandoning three faults



Whenever we listen to or read Dharma, we need to abandon three faults that prevent us from receiving the benefits of listening or reading.

The fault of being like:

- a) A pot turned upside-down *(See 4.3.1A)*
- b) A bad-smelling pot *(See 4.3.1B)*
- c) A leaky pot *(See 4.3.1C)*

4.3.1A A pot turned upside-down



The fault of being like:

a) A pot turned upside-down

Physically present at a discourse or reading a book, but lack attentiveness and easily distracted....

No Dharma actually enters the vessel of our mind

4.3.1B Bad-smelling pot



The fault of being like:

b) Bad-smelling pot

We listen or read attentively, without our letting our mind wander but, our motivation is incorrect.

4.3.1C Leaky pot



The fault of being like:

b) Leaky pot

We listen or read attentively and with good motivation, but we quickly forget what we have been taught.

4.3.1D Two methods to remember Dharma



Two methods to improve our ability to remember Dharma:

- a) Recall what we have learnt (several times at intervals) and follow up by meditation (contemplation).
- b) Discuss Dharma with friends, asking them questions and explaining what we have understood.

Method “b” – excellent way to increase our understanding, remove doubts and place Dharma firmly within our minds.

4.3.2 Cultivating six recognitions



Whenever we listen or read Dharma, we should cultivate six recognitions:

- a) Regarding ourself as a sick person because we suffer from desirous attachment, hatred and ignorance
- b) Regarding Dharma as supreme medicine for our mental sickness
- c) Regarding our Dharma Teacher as a supreme doctor

4.3.2A Cultivating six recognitions



Whenever we listen or read Dharma, we should cultivate six recognitions:

- d) Regarding putting Dharma into practice – to cure our mental disease
- e) Developing conviction in Buddha Shakyamuni as a holy being who is completely reliable
- f) Developing a strong wish that Dharma will flourish and remain for a long time

With these Six recognitions, no moment is wasted while we listen or read Dharma. Our subsequent contemplations and meditations will become powerful.



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further clarification or
explanation**