

Illuminating Tara's Clear Light – A Commentary
4 – Stress

Come, let us consider
the first half
of the four noble truths,

taught in the Buddha's first lesson
and the basis of his path.

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From a certain point of view
*(this is a reference to “Return of the Jedi”
and as a geek it is my duty to recite it
often and even sometimes appropriately)*

the FIRST noble truth is that there is stress
and plenty of it.

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There are so many stressors
some circumstantial,

some physical,
some interpersonal,
and others mental.

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So it could be helpful
to explore
how each stressor

could be placed
into one or more
of the following categories:

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- A – the stress of failing to receive
that which we crave
when we crave it;

- B – the stress of failing to cling
to that which we enjoy
for as long as we would like to, and

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**C – the stress of enduring
that which we hate.**

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We live in a vast,
interdependent universe
where everything
effects everything

and everything
is effected by everything:

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if NOT immediately then eventually,
if NOT directly then circuitously,
if NOT overtly then subtly, and
if NOT actually then potentially.

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Thus the **SECOND** noble truth teaches
that if although
we might not be the author
of each of our stresses

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we certainly have the uncanny ability
to exacerbate and worsen them

like a snowball, in a cartoon,
rolling down a mountain
until it becomes an avalanche.

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How could we exacerbate our stress?
By involuntarily reacting to it
from a place of dread or desire.

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Dread triggers
our controlling tendencies
inducing our
will, communication, and behavior

to strive
to push some things away.

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Desire stimulates our impulse
to dominate
our minds, bodies, circumstances
(as well as those who populate them)

striving to pull other things
toward us.

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This is the domineering duality
of dread and desire
that exacerbates our stress.

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It is sometimes known as yang,
or toxic masculinity,
or patriarchy,

or the handy work
of our predatory, reptilian brain stem.

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And this is why we chant:

“Dréad and desire exacerbate all stress.”.

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