

Illuminating Tara's Clear Light – A Commentary
Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind to the Teachings

A. The Four Thoughts

of stress, interdependence, impermanence, and our precious opportunity

The first half
of our concise opening chant
is the “Four thoughts
that Turn the Mind to the Teachings.”

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This Incremental Path tradition
(*or Lam Rim if you prefer Tibetan*)
came to us from the Ka-dam tradition

founded by Shi Jha-na Di-pam-ka-ra
(*or A-ti-sha if you prefer Tibetan*)

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who came to the land of snows
from Bangladesh
where he was born a prince

before becoming
a Tantrika and then a scholar.

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This concise quatrain
places the Buddha's path
of mindfulness, meditation,
love, and letting-go

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within the context
of stress, interdependence,
impermanence,
and our precious opportunity.

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Patriarchy's
domineering duality of dread and desire
uses these subjects
as an armature

upon which to mold and sculpt
a mighty Colossus of fear,

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that, like the Golem of Jewish lore,
grows too big to control
and inadvertently harms its creator.

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Conversely matriarchy's
flexible flow of love and letting-go
approaches these same ideas

*(of stress, interdependence,
impermanence, and preciousness)*

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from the perspective
of freedom, joy, and peace.

And it is from
the latter's world view
that we now consider stress.