

# The Nine-Point Meditation (cont.)

The last three points are from the perspective of **ultimate truth**:

7. If friends, enemies, and strangers existed from their own side, the buddhas would see this, but they do not.
8. If there were permanent, truly existing friends, enemies, and strangers, such relationships would never change, but they *do* change.
9. “Self” and “other” are dependent designations, like “this side” and “that side” of a valley. Such labels change, depending on our viewpoint.

# Disadvantages of Self-centeredness

- Shantideva said: “Whatever suffering there is in this world, all comes from desiring myself to be happy.”
- All samsaric problems are the result of nonvirtuous actions, which are done out of self-centeredness.
- Practising Dharma mainly for one’s own benefit is an obstacle to attaining Buddhahood.
- It’s the root of guilt, anxiety, fear, and other painful emotions.
- It can cause problems in relationships, at work, etc.

# Benefits of Cherishing Others

- Shantideva said: “Whatever joy there is in this world, all comes from desiring others to be happy.”
- Happiness and good experiences are the result of virtuous karma, created out of cherishing others.
- It enables us to create the causes of fortunate rebirths, liberation, and enlightenment.
- The Dalai Lama says: “Even if you want to selfishly care about yourself, the best way to achieve your own happiness is to take care of others.”

# Exchanging Oneself with Others

- Recognizing the faults of self-centeredness and benefits of cherishing others, we decide to switch those two attitudes.
- This is possible through familiarization, and by understanding there's no inherently existent I or mine in our body, feelings, etc.
- We need to overcome two obstacles:
  - Thinking self and others are inherently separate
  - Thinking we don't need to remove others' suffering because it doesn't harm us.