

MIRROR

- 110.** Buddhism considers the mind not as a container which can be filled, but as a clarity which reveals. The traditional example used to illustrate this is the mirror and its reflections. The more we see how all phenomena are arising and passing, we can see that the immediacy of presentation and the immediacy of self-liberation are simultaneous. The open emptiness of the mirror is inseparable from the rich appearance of complex reflections.

If you go to a hairdresser they will hold a mirror behind your head. When you look in the mirror in front of you, you see the reflection of the mirror behind you and in that way you can see how they have cut your hair at the back. Without the mirror you couldn't see that. A mirror helps you to see things you couldn't see otherwise. The teaching and the teacher in the state of transmission is like a mirror and by looking in this moment we can see something more of ourselves. It's not that the teacher is teaching you about yourself, but rather the clarity of the situation lets you see yourself as you actually are and not as you think you are.

If you hold a mirror in your hand and move it around, it will show many different impressions. As you turn it, it will be open to whatever is in front of it. It doesn't accumulate images; rather it reveals them and then releases them. Reveals and releases... Because something has already been shown in the mirror that does not mean something similar cannot be shown again. Each time a reflection is revealed, it has the immediacy of its direct showing; it becomes present to us.

- 111.** Dust will form on a mirror. When we talk of the mind as being like a mirror this is only a simile. The space-like unborn nature of the mind offers no basis or surface for dust to adhere to. This presents the question, when you sit in meditation and a thought seems to stick to you, what is it sticking to? When the mind's unchanging openness is obscured what is it obscured by? How does the unsubstantial appear substantial to us? These questions will take us deeper into the practice if we stay with direct enquiry free of conceptual elaboration.
- 112.** We say the mind is like a mirror and that it is the emptiness of the mirror that allows everything to be revealed. 'I, me, myself' is like the doppelgänger of the mirror. It's like the mirror's public relations department. Instead of just being relaxed and fully present moment by moment, it feels the need to issue a press release: *"This is to announce, I am happy!"* All day long these little statements are being issued. Who is the one who is issuing the statements? This is the empty nature of the mind itself. The ego is the hustling middle-man, creating a function for himself by linking aspects that are always already inseparable.