



May 2023 Graduate Program Lesson **Exploring Lesson 2– Cause and effect**

Introduction

In some ways, this lesson can take the longest to assimilate intellectually. Paradoxically. We do not need to understand it before we start to see it working in our lives and making things better for us. Simply to expose ourselves to the wisdom in lesson 2 again and then to apply it the best that we can is enough. Understanding will come on its own. Think about your response if I said to you “You can either apply this lesson and stop suffering OR you can understand it and keep suffering. Which will you choose?” In fact, it is a trick question because you will come to understand lesson 2 in time anyway. All of this is to say it is normal if we feel confused by lesson 2.

Let’s look at the fundamental essence of lesson 2 and keep it simple. Our mind believes in cause and effect, that one thing can cause another to happen. Whether we realise it or not, most of our thought process is working in cause and effect thinking and this keeps us in duality and so we suffer. We are not separate to anything and although we may come to see that in our meditation, self-inquiry or through some spontaneous seeing, we still go back to separation in our thinking process. 99% of our thoughts are in separation and the way that we unknowingly sustain this is by thinking in terms of cause and effect. As we come to see this cause and effect thinking in our mind, we will automatically be stopping the mind in its tracks and it can come to peace by itself.

The Essence of Lesson 2

Our usual thinking is that one thing can cause another thing to happen. We could also say that one thing missing in our life is the cause of another thing missing. One object is the cause and the other is the effect. Lesson 2 simply says that the cause and the effect are the same thing. Here are 4 ways to say the same thing:

- 1-The cause and the effect are the same thing
- 2-The cause and the effect are not separate from each other
- 3-The cause and the effect do not exist, only the Self exists.
- 4-The Self is appearing as the cause and the effect.

Examples of cause and effect thinking

1-This lack of money makes me feel angry.

Cause=Lack of money

Effect=Anger

2-I'm scared because of the diagnosis the doctor gave me.

Cause=Diagnosis/condition in the body

Effect=Fear

3-Everytime I try to dress in something nice I hate the way my body looks and get angry at myself.

Cause=The way my body looks

Effect=Anger Effect=Self-hatred

4-I've tried really hard to awaken to the Truth and it never happens and I just feel so ashamed and embarrassed.

Cause=lack of progress in awakening

Effect=Shame and embarrassment

5-I lost my beautiful pet last month and I can't seem to feel joy anymore.

Cause=death of beloved pet

Effect=Lack of joy

6-I'm worried that I may get covid and get really ill.

Cause=Covid

Effect=fear or worry

7-I get so frustrated because I can't seem to understand lesson 2.

Cause=lack of understanding/confusion

Effect=Frustration

8-I'm so jealous of my friend because she has found an amazing person to be with and I just seem to attract the wrong people.

Cause=my friend's love life/lack of my own

Effect=jealousy

9-I can't do self-inquiry and it makes me feel like a failure.

Cause=Lack of ability to do self-inquiry

Effect=Feelings of failure

10-If I could just lose the weight I want to then I would feel more confident, I'm sure.

Cause=Being overweight

Effect=Lack of confidence

It is enough to know that the cause and the effect are the same thing. To keep seeing this will quiet down the mind and begin to change the issue for the better. Just keep seeing this and everything will change for you.

Points to contemplate

- If one thing is not causing another to happen-then what is really going on?
- What does it mean if cause and effect are both the Self?
- Is there any cause for anything then?

Exercises for this month:

I suggest doing these exercises together as a group and/or with your GP buddy/buddies or in the GP Sanghas. Discuss your doubts, challenges and insights with each other.

- 1- Take some time to notice which one of these 4 statements (from the “Essence of Lesson 2”) feels easier for you to work with. Listen to your body as you read these four statements in your mind. It may be easier to feel which one is better for you if you read them aloud. The one that feels least negative, make the body relax somewhere or let go of some tension is the best. You may also notice that one of the feels the most uplifting, exciting or positive is the best one for you right now. You can ask your buddy to read them aloud whilst you listen deeply in your body.
- 2- Look at the list of 10 examples of cause and effect thinking and see if you can understand why one is labelled the cause and one the effect. Discussing this with your GP buddy will help.
- 3- Thinking about your own life, see if you can recognise some patterns going on for you right now and what you think the cause and the effect is. Again, your GP buddy can help you see this.
- 4- Apply whichever statement from “Essence of lesson 2” that feels best to the pattern you just identified in number 3 above.
- 5- Spend some time when you can discussing the points to contemplate with your buddy or in a GP Sangha