MATERIAL 2

A SHORT EXPLANATION ABOUT KARMA – CAUSE AND EFFECT

Karma translates as deed, activity or action (with body, speech and mind).

Karma is the doctrine of cause and effect. From a Buddhist perspective, everything we think, say or do leaves an impression on our mind. These impressions give rise to the world we experience. Negative deeds, words and thoughts lead to difficult or unpleasant situations; positive thoughts, words and actions, on the other hand, lead to pleasant experiences.

These impressions are like seeds stored in the consciousness which, when the conditions are right, produce a corresponding fruit.

No one would expect to sow cacti, for example, and then harvest sunflowers in that field. A wise gardener selects the seeds carefully and tends the plants until he can harvest the fruit. He ensures good growing conditions.

This example from the plant world shows that it can take a long time for a seed to develop into fruit. The same applies to impressions in the mind. Sometimes it takes even longer than a lifetime for an impression in the mind to unfold its effect. For this reason, we do not always recognise the causes of what we experience. So we sometimes ask ourselves: "Why me?" We are not aware that we ourselves have laid the causes for these experiences through our own actions, words and thoughts in earlier times.

When confronted with unpleasant situations, Buddhists accept the challenge in order to improve the situation as much as possible. This can also be done through inner attitude if nothing can be changed externally. They take responsibility because they understand that they are now sowing the seeds for the future.



The fundamental attitude and motivation are very important; goodwill and compassion are the basis of action. In order to experience happiness and bring it into the world, one consciously decides to act positively and avoid harm. In Buddhism, one is very mindful of one's words, deeds and thoughts, because every moment is a conscious shaping of future experiences.

As a Buddhist, one also uses the effective tool of meditation to specifically remove negative impressions from the mind and build up positive ones, just as a gardener weeds out unwanted plants and thus promotes the growth of the desired ones. The resulting peace of mind gives one the necessary distance from disturbing feelings and brings greater clarity. You become increasingly conscious and can decide to let go of what causes suffering and behave in a way that brings happiness. You no longer take things personally and, thanks to the freedom this brings, you are able to act meaningfully and powerfully for the benefit of all beings. You behave like a Buddha until you become a Buddha.