WORKSHEET 3

HOW STRONG IS A KARMIC IMPRINT?

One constantly collects impressions in the mind, even if one is not conscious of one's actions.
The more consciously you experience something, the stronger the impression in your mind. Buddha explained that when these four factors come together, an impression in one's mind is strong:

a. One grasps the situation clearly.
b. One whishes to change something.
c. One does it or has it done by others.
d. Afterwards, one is satisfied with the result.

A complete positive impression would be, for example:
a. The old lady on the 4th floor can walk only with great difficulty.
b. You decide to help her.
c. You go shopping for her.
d. Afterwards, everyone is satisfied.

A complete negative impression would be, for example:
a. A classmate doesn't act the way you like.
b. You decides to annoy him.
c. You post something embarrassing and half-true about him on the Internet.
d. You are satisfied when he is embarrassed.

EXERCISE 1

Discuss the following situations in the group.
- talking badly about a classmate
- being happy when a classmate get a surprisingly good grade on an exam
- first pretending to be in love and then dropping him/her without a second thought

1. How strong do you think the karmic impression is in the minds of the people involved?
2. What are the effects and consequences for the environment?
3. Explain how the karmic impression is particularly strong or only weakened, including the above four factors.
4. Consider how a negative karmic impression can be changed into a positive one.

EXERCISE 2

As a group, create a chart that conveys to a non-Buddhist how karma (the law of cause and effect) works.