

Knots: a glossary of Buddhist Sanskrit terms

Abhinivesa: insistence; automatic perceptual and conceptual belief in the apparent existence of self and objects; the way things appear due to conditioned patterning of perception and thought.

Prapanca: conceptual fabrication, the stream directed by imprinted preconceptions, including the internal flow of thought constructs and the self and the environment they create. Conceptual elaboration... clinging to words or concepts... the web of words and concepts in which one gets entangled when clinging... the root of all contentions.

Samsara: the world of habitual patterns; from *sam*, together, intensive; and *sara*, to go, run, flow, hasten. So *samsara* means going about -- endless migration, unceasing commotion and unrest. *Samsara* is the created experience of dissatisfaction and struggle.

Samskara: conditioned mental formations, all constructs, good, bad, or indifferent: dispositions, tendencies, volitions, impulses, emotions, strivings, and reactions. The process by which reactive emotional patterns are formed by, and then continue to form, our experience of the world. The volitional factor in samskaras is motivated by desire, which gives rise to karma.

Samyojana: internal formations; knots; agglomerations; binding together; fetters. In the Theravada tradition the fetters are the five lower (belief in a self, doubt and uncertainty, attachment to rites and rituals, sensual desire, and ill will) and the five higher (lust for material existence, lust for immaterial existence, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance). In the Mahayana tradition there are five dull knots (confusion, desire, anger, pride, doubt) and five sharp knots (viewing the body as self, extreme views, wrong views, perverted views, and superstitious views).

Upadana: compulsive automatic patterning of perceptions, thoughts, and emotional reactions according to the conditioning of past experience.

Vasana: tendencies and inclinations; literally, fragrance, from *vas*: dwelling, residue, remainder. Subliminal inclinations and patterns, traces of past experience and action, residues of thoughts and actions, particularly the residue of ignorance. The driving forces that color and motivate attitudes and future actions; habit energies giving rise to *samsara*.

Vikalpa: patterning; the structuring of cognition due to past experience and the traces they have left. *Vikalpa* gives rise to the apparent world of self and environment and all our emotional reactions to such appearances.