

## **What are The Ten Worlds?**

Our life condition determines how we face and handle each situation in life and the environments we create. It is a basic tendency to act in a particular way, make causes to stay healthy, acquire things, and enjoy life. Buddhism calls these life conditions “worlds,” and they number ten: hell, hunger, animality, anger, tranquillity or humanity, rapture, learning, realization, bodhisattva (compassion, service to others), and Buddhahood.

The causes we make are conceived in our minds. Our bodies move to give these ideas a form, such as our homes, human relationships, our communities, cities, nations, states, and the world. Just as our body and mind are inseparable, people and their environments are also inseparable. We can only create a reflection of the life tendency or “world” that we are in. For example, people who have a basic life condition of hell will create an environment that reflects this condition. What do you see as you look at your own environment or at the world we have collectively created?

Regardless of our basic life condition, or of what “world” we are in, our emotions and experiences do not remain stable. Everyone will experience anger, joy, calmness, and learning something new. A person in hell can experience rapture when his pain is temporarily relieved. People who are in the world of Bodhisattva feel rapture when they are able to help someone, but might be plunged into anger when they see someone mistreat others and be plunged into hell because they can do nothing about it. Each of the ten life conditions contains the potential for all ten within itself. It is a person’s interaction with his or her environment that determines which of the ten worlds will manifest in life at any given time.

The important point to remember is that just as we all possess the potential to manifest the worlds of anger, rapture, and learning, we also possess the potential to manifest the world of Buddhahood when we fuse our lives with the Gohonzon through strong and steady faith and practice.