

# ROBINA'S BLOG

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## **We're the boss!**

According to Buddha we're not the handiwork of anyone else, either a creator or our parents (sure, they give us a body, how kind; but they don't give us our mind). Instead, we're the product of our own past. This is the general meaning of the law of karma, the law of cause and effect.

The thing to get our heads around, the thing we need to get used to, is the idea that our mind is our own — that whatever I say, do and think leaves a seed in my mind that will ripen in the future, and that whatever I experience now is the fruit of my own past.

Everything we think, do and say leaves imprints or seeds in our minds, our consciousness — which, for Buddha, is necessarily not physical — that just naturally ripen in the future in that continuity of consciousness as our experiences. His Holiness the Dalai Lama says it's like self-creation.

Our life is like our garden: what's in it is what we put in it. We don't say, "Who put weeds in my garden? I don't deserve weeds!" because we know it's our garden, we created it. And, for sure, same with the flowers.

Broadly speaking there are four ways that our past actions ripen in the present and, indeed, our present actions will ripen in the future. 1. A type of rebirth. 2. A tendency to keep doing the action. 3. An experience of that action happening to me. 4. An environmental result.

For example, the first result of non-killing would be a human rebirth; the second would be the tendency not to kill; the third would be the experience of not getting killed or dying young; the fourth would be that we'd be healthy and the environment itself, such as the food and water and air, would nourish us, not harm us.

Every positive and negative action would bring its own four results, and not always all four together. You could have a human life but have the tendency to kill — look at the human race: most people kill. So sad! Or you might never kill but would always get sick, etc.

Karma is a natural law: no one runs it, it's not punishment and it's not reward — how can it be? There is no punisher and no rewarder! It runs itself — the universe runs within this natural law. It's just the way it is.

Clearly, then, if I realize I'm in charge of who I become I'll need to be familiar with what seeds not to plant and which ones to plant: we need to learn what not to do and what to do. Very practical. This is entry level, junior school practice and continues until enlightenment.

When we plant the right seeds in our garden we can confidently predict what fruits will come. We're not surprised by that. It's logic. The very wanting of those fruits determines the choice of our seeds. It's exactly the same here. There is not a fraction of difference. The same principle applies.

By using the law of karma as the basis of our lives, driven by the bare minimum wish to be happy and not suffer, we gradually develop a strong confidence that we are the producer of our own happiness and suffering. Often we think that reincarnation as hit and miss: you just cross your fingers and hope for the best. But we don't think of our garden like that! It would be very superstitious, wouldn't it?

Living according to this view hugely changes the way we experience our life. It lessens attachment — the assumption that I deserve only the flowers — and lessens anger — the assumption that I don't deserve the weeds. We become more stable, less fearful, less depressed, more content, more in charge of our life.

Who wouldn't *love* the idea that they're the boss!