

COLLECTED ESSAYS ON
BUDDHISM



The Annual Publication of
Cambodian Buddhist Student Monks
The International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University
Yangon, Myanmar

Collected Essays On Buddhism

Prepared by
Cambodian Buddhist Student Monks

The First Edition

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THE ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF CAMBODIAN BUDDHIST
MONKS' GROUP

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Preface

Cambodia is a Theravadin country among other Buddhist nations in the world. Around 95% of the people have embraced Buddhism. The constitutional law has also stipulated that Buddhism is the religion of the nation. From the past up to the present day, Buddhism has received patronage from the kings and their subjects.

In 1979, *Samdech Ghosananda* was one of great religious leaders in unification, restoration, and rehabilitation of the nation, establisher the educational religious studies after the great losses during the Khmer rouge. Today, Buddhism in Cambodia has flourished and many documents are kept and published, but they still have a hole to fill.

In globalized age, documents are one of the tools for research and further study. They are very necessary for this modern world for the better understanding, the development of knowledge, etc. Documents are also necessary for all institutions around the world. They are the light for better understanding and the way to show the right track for the next generation.

Due to the lack of documents in both our own language and English version, we, the Cambodian Buddhist Student Monks

of International Theravāvada Buddhist Missionary University (ITBMU) located in Yangon, Myanmar, have unanimously collected the documents based on Buddhism and published a book annually, for the benefits of the next generation and keep these documents as the property of Buddhism for all the people that can approach Buddhism in either Khmer language or English language.

Up to this day our group has produced fourteen volumes including this year both in Khmer and English versions. All these books are very much focused on the theme of Buddhism, and they cover almost all aspects of Buddhism. They also provide how to be a good Buddhist, a good method for the daily practices, how to be good citizens, and how to find peace for mind. We have tried hard to find the documents and research for the betterment of understanding more about Buddhism even though we are very immersed with our study.

Mistakes are bound to happen. We all would like to seek for forgiveness for any mistake that arises unintentionally or due to the technical mistakes. We are looking forward for the feedback from readers, and the constructive critics are welcome for improvement for the next publication.

By this effort, we, the Cambodian Buddhist Student Monks of ITBMU, fervently hope that this book will provide usefulness to one who is a pursuer of knowledge on Buddhism, and it gives much inspiration to the readers who find the practical approach for their daily practices and apply it into society.

Even it is a small book; somehow, it has a great value if one reads it.

Cambodian Buddhist Student monks,
ITBMU, Yangon, Myanmar

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May all our sponsors and readers follow the Path of the Buddha in order to realize Nibbāna.

Abbreviations

B.E.	Buddhist Era (<i>Buddhasakarāja</i>)
C.E.	Christ Era
Dhp	<i>Dhammapada</i>
Dhp-a.	<i>Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā</i>
M-a.	<i>Majjhimanikāya Aṭṭhakathā</i>
Vin-ṭ.	<i>Vinaya ṭikā (Sāratthadīpanī)</i>

Introduction

Today is the age of global advancement. Some religions are not welcome by the different perspectives of scientists, intellectuals, and free thinkers. However, Buddhism is one of unique religions in the world, that many people accept it. Among the four kinds of religions – the revealed religion, organized religion, institutional religion, and natural religion – Buddhism is not included in these religious faiths. Buddhism is not revealed by any God or depends upon God. Buddhism teaches its disciples not to depend on external forces rather than to depend on themselves as their refuge for mental serenity. Buddhism teaches us how to understand the problems, the origination of the problems, the extinction of problems, and the path leading to the extinction of problems. These Four Noble Truths are the central teachings of the Buddha. These truths will transcend the God, superstitious beliefs, fruitless pray, useless sacrifices. They will lead to understanding of dogmatism, egoism, as an unreal perception. All the teachings of the Buddha will undergo under the category of impermanence, suffering, and non-substantiality. By realizing these three salient characteristics of phenomena precisely, one will release oneself from the cycle of rebirths and finally attain *Nibbāna*, the place where there is only peace.

Today Buddhism has spread to many parts of the world, and it plays a key role in stabilizing society, provides both bodily and mental refuges for many people, gives techniques for dealing with the problems, offers clear methods for practicing meditation, brings the world to be dwelt in loving-kindness and compassion, brings the world not to be harbored any hatred towards one another, brings the world to be respected reciprocally, and brings the world to peace.

This sacred teaching should not be hidden in one place; it should be spread and opened to the world and to the people, and it should be brought to our home, radio stations, to be published, as *Dhamma* books or to be uploaded to the internet, so that all people over the world have the opportunity to study, hear, and practice as well as experience the taste of these teachings.

By understanding the benefits of Buddhism, we, the Cambodian Buddhist Student Monks, while studying here, and having availed ourselves of the opportunity from studying, have wholeheartedly collected the essays on various topics to be published in order to share the world, to preserve the teaching as the world treasure, and to spread the sacred teaching of the Buddha that has been practiced for more than two-thousand five hundred years. Even though our works are very small, they also help share the word of the Buddha, and spread it to the world.

This year, the fourteenth publication, ten articles are collected

and written by our group. These articles are discussed about charity, leading life in today world, to be a good child, communication with friends and the society, leading life morally, realizing our mentality-corporality precisely, to be vigilant and mindful all the time, and unleashing from the tangle of the unbroken cycle of rebirth and death.

All these written articles are consistent with the teachings of the Buddha. Therefore, we do hope that this book will draw the attention of many readers who long for knowing Buddhism and apply it to society and daily life. It can act as a partner in solving the problems both physically and mentally, most of us in the present as well as in the future and as a counselor to give proper practice of the *Dhamma* and thus gain real peace and happiness in this very life.

Cambodian Buddhist Student Monks
ITBMU, Yangon, Myanmar December
02, 2014

MUSĀVĀDA AND SACCAVĀCĀ



M*usāvāda* means a “false speech,” or “telling lie.” It is a false statement which is uttered in order to persuade someone to believe in things that are unreal to be real. It covers the acts of telling the untruth, concealing the truth, exaggerating the truth; on the whole, it implies all senses of telling lie. It can occur in various forms and reasons in order to survive or to gain success in things that one aspires for and it can be at different degrees according to the secular law and religious perspectives. Thus, lie can appear both physical expressions and vibrantly verbal actions with intentional propensity. Contradictorily, if one avoids conveying the untruth words, one is said to have morality of keeping the real words.

Sacca means a “truthful word,” or a “true word.” And it is the opponent *dhamma* to the *musāvāda*. The Buddha is the specimen of all his perfections touching with the truthfulness. If one has the truthful-word keeping, a society will encounter and stabilize in happiness and peacefulness.

According to the topical explanation, lying is the act of telling the untruth, concealing the truth, exaggerating the information, so to speak, and lie can occur in wide ranges of forms and reasons. Lie can be in form of bare-faced, contextuality, economic, exaggeration the information, fabrication, forked tongue, and so on. These forms of lie, if we say wholly, can be dichotomized into the physical and verbal doors. Even one uses his face to deliberately tell lie, which means, he uses his body door to activate to fulfill his desire. According to Buddhist standpoint, lie is a serious form of mistakes that can lead one to unhappy states, unsuccessful life, loss of properties, appearance deformities, lack of confidence, less good-looking physicality, etc.,. Egerton C. Baptist said, "In fact, this is more serious than the breaking of the first precept, for one who tells lie can kill and even get another killed. He can even get a whole country ruined, by setting one against others."¹ If we analyze deeply with reference to the factors of telling lie, there are three factors before it can assume the completeness of a *Full Course of Action (kamma patha)*. Firstly, there must be intention to conceal the truth, the secondly is to make others believe that one is uttering the truth, and lastly, the other persons believe that what is said is truth. According to the *Aṭṭhasālinī* commentary, there are four modes of telling the untruth. The first one is unreal thing (*atatham vatthu*), the second is the intention to speak (*visaṃvādanacittam*), the third is the effort to speak (*tajjo vāyāmo*), and the last one is making others understand to what is spoken (*parassa tadatthavijānanam*). If these four modes are completed, there

must be the *Full Course of unwholesome actions*. During the course of his countless former lives, *Bodhisatta*, the Buddha-to-be, guarded his life with determined mind to speak only what is beneficial and truth. He acts as he utters, he utters as he acts (*yathāvādī tathākārī, yathākārī tathāvādī*).

If one intentionally tells lie or unavoidably tells lie, one will incur various ways of grave offences in the current time and future time. For a normal lay person, he will incur guilty of speaking untruth in the court, in deformation, in falsifying the information, he is probably sent to jail, or is even undergone the capital punishment, and he is confiscated the privileges, etc. For a moral keeper, he, if telling lie, commits the offence of cutting from the triple gem. In the next existence, both the normal lay person and the moral keeper will go to the unhappy states. For a novice, if he speaks false word, his triple gem is lost. In the future, he has to bear his own accumulated offences to unhappy realms. As a monk's life, it is said that monk, with regard to Buddhism, is the highest life among other human beings, if he tells lie, he will commit graver offences than others. According to the *Musāvādavaggasikkhāpada*,² if a *bhikkhu*, who knowingly speaks the untruth, incurs a *Musāvāda suddhapācittiya* offense. The evil consequences of telling lie of a *bhikkhu* are as follows:

1. He is guilty of defeated offence if he intentionally places himself of unattained *jhāna, magga, and phala*.
2. He is guilty of *Saṅghādisesa* offence if he groundlessly accuses some monks of committing defeated offence.

3. He is guilty of *Pācittiya* offence if he groundlessly accuses some monks of committing *Saṅghādisesa* offence.
4. He is guilty of *Dukkaṭa* offence if he groundlessly accuses some monks of committing any five grave offenses such as *Thullaccaya*.
5. He is guilty of *Thullaccaya* offence if he says indirectly in term of having an *arahant* in such and such a monastery but to mean himself and
6. He is guilty of *Dukkaṭa* offence if a listener does not understand the intended meaning.

The above-elaborated, we come to discern that there are degrees of offenses which are committed by individual. Generally, the offences do not depend upon the moral persons or higher persons; they are based on the strong intentions or weak intentions. The criteria of understanding the offences can be referred to the mental process or straightforwardly, the consciousness which arise and pass away very swiftly like the lightning of thunderstorm or even faster than that force. If one tells lie, he has to undergo the offences regardless of lay man, lay woman, novice, or monk. He has to take his responsibilities to his actions simply because lie is an unwholesome mental state; therefore, it has no discrimination to such lay man, lay woman, novice, or monk. As said above, telling lie is a kind of malicious intention to commit the action of falsehood. The liar will have to suffer in a state of unhappiness after his death. When he was to be reborn in the human state, he will be afflicted with the following results:

1. Poor pronunciation,
2. Uneven teeth,
3. Foul breath,
4. Unhealthy complexion,
5. Poor eyesight and poor hearing,
6. Defective appearance,
7. Lack of influence on others,
8. Harshness of speech, and
9. Restlessness of mind.³

To be more precisely, it should be worthy taking the story of a male lay-devotee who was a stream-winner.⁴ During the time of *Kassapa* Buddha, there was a stream-winner lay-man devotee who very diligently did meritorious deeds of planting the trees, building bridges, and monasteries, etc., with his five hundred followers who were of the same view. This group of lay-devotees often went to the monastery to listen to the *dhamma*, and their wives also followed frequently to the monastery. One day, there were some drunkards along the way saw those women and attracted to those women. One man tried to persuade and seduce the wife of the leader and ultimately succeeded. This event was heard, and her husband asked about her committing adultery with the drunkard whether it was true or not, but she refused not to accept the committing sexual act. She also swore to her husband that if she had committed this act, might she be eaten by black dogs. Her companions also swore that did not know, if it was true, might they become her slaves. After death, she and her companions were reborn in miserable beings in the vicinity of

the lake *Kaṇṇamuṇḍa* in the *Himavanta* forest. Because of their previous wholesome *kammas*, they enjoyed the celestial luxury in a very grand golden mansion in the day time. During the night time, she was eaten by the black dogs, and her companions became her slaves who were sworn as witness.

Falsehood is the greatest demeritorious deeds, whereas truthfulness is the most beneficial meritorious deeds. So, regarding to the above explanation, one who tells the untruth will encounter enormous problems in miserable states both in the present life and the afterlife. On the contrary, if one avoids from speaking untruth to speaking truth, one will enjoy the happiness in this life and the next life. According to the *Hāritajātaka*, a *Bodhisatta*, in the course of his life's wanderings, never utters an untruth although at times he may violate the other four precepts. Again, the *Mahāsutasomajātaka*, recounts that to fulfill a promise the *Bodhisatta* was prepared even to sacrifice his life.

“Just as the morning star on high
In balanced course doth ever keep,
And through all seasons, times, and years,
Doth never from its pathway swerve,
So likewise he in all wise speech
Swerves never from the Path of truth.”⁵

According to the *Khuddakapāṭha* commentary, fourteen kinds of results from keeping the truth are described. These fourteen types of results are as follows:⁶

1. Having the transparent five faculties
(*vippasannindriyatā*);
2. Having a beautiful speech
(*vissaṭṭhamadhurabhāṇitā*);
3. Having even teeth (*samasitasuddhadantatā*);
4. Having an appropriate fit (*nātithūlatā*);
5. Having medium body (*nātikisatā*);
6. Having a normal height, not too short (*nātirassatā*);
7. Having an appropriate height (*nātidīghatā*);
8. Having pleasant touching (*sukhasamphassatā*);
9. Having fragrant smell from mouth like *uppala-jāti*
(*uppalagandhamukhatā*);
10. Having the disciples who are earnest
(*sussūsakaparijanatā*);
11. Having a confidential speech (*ādeyyavacanatā*);
12. Having red thin tongue like lotus petals
(*kamaluppalasadisamudulohitatanujīvhatā*);
13. Having fixed mind (*anuddhatatā*);
14. Not a dishonest person (*acapalatā*).

In conclusion, *Musāvāda* plays a key role in leading to the miserable states and any kind of unhappiness. One who practices telling lie is bound to encounter huge problems, and causes severe suffering for this world and the next world. Instead, *Sacca* plays an important role in keeping the world to be happy and full of honest society. Not only that, this *Sacca* can bring about eternal or unchangeable peace to the world and the individuals who are diligent to practice it during their course of their life. May we all practice the truthfulness instead

of taking false speech as a pattern of life! Lie brings about destruction to us and our society. All are affected. But, truth brings about solidarity, unification, stability, happiness, and peace to us and our society.

FIRST TRAINERS



There are many trainers in the world. Among the trainers, parents are the first trainers in our life. They not only give us life, but also many priceless lessons for life. Here, some lessons given by our parents are expressed.

MY BELOVED CHILDREN,

Now you have grown up, we hope you have some understanding about life. Moreover, we hope you have come to realize how much we, as your parents, love you. You are our pupils or our most important internal living organs. You also know that we, parents, do not work hard just for our own sakes, but mainly for your wellbeing. We say this, not because we want your gratitude, but because we wish you to become good people.

In fact, we really need your help, but we cannot spell it out. Please understand that although we have everything we really need, we still wish to receive gifts from you, even though those gifts may not be as expensive or good as they should be. Still, we are extremely joyful once we know that the gifts we receive are from our beloved son or daughter.

In fact, no matter how fully we have been fed, we are always genuinely pleased to taste any food you offer us. Also, no matter how plain the clothes you offer are, we always want to wear them to please you. Even when nothing has been received as gift from you, we are always joyful in your presence and your joined-hands kneeling salute.

The main blessing that all parents want from their beloved sons and daughters is to see each one develops good hearts and reasoning, good deeds, and righteous speech. Their children must know how to distinguish between merit and demerit according to the truth. We cannot tell you to kneel and greet us or to buy us good fruits, and for this reason, some parents, even up to their last breath have never received a salute from their children.⁷

Sometimes, we, parents, do or say things that upset you but you have to understand that in whichever the conditions, we always love and think about you so much. You remain the pupils of our eyes and hearts. We are hurt so much when you stare at us with anger and consider us as strangers. Other people look down on us or misunderstand us, yet this is not as hurtful for us as being misunderstood or being looked down upon by our own beloved children that we love so much. We can bear your anger, your unhappiness or your indignation as a consequence of our wrongdoing to you. However, we will feel enormously hurtful if you are angry with us as the result of your misunderstanding of the real feelings of your parents.⁸

Honesty can be compared to water that nourishes plants to keep them alive. Similarly, your life will prosper as a result of your own

honesty. When we stay or work with someone, it is better to be loyal to him, be honest in your work and also be frank and sincere in your speech. Honesty is the confidence of your mind. It means you speak truthfully and people are fond in listening to you. You should be honest in your words and mind, as well as in your profession.

Beloved children, you should keep firmly to your honesty and make it a foundation for your actions. Never abandon this noble principle no matter how tiny the return you will get. For those people who think that being crooked or trying to gain the upper hand by dirty means is a clever way, let them behave as they wish. They may say you are stupid and ignorant but you remain our clever children who can always help yourselves out of unwholesome actions. If you are not honest to yourself and you do wrong things and get caught; those people who said that you were stupid because you were honest, and those who urged you to commit wrong-doings; they never come to rescue you. You are solely responsible for your own actions. If you persevere on taking honesty as your best policy, at first, you may experience some hardship but you will be happy, and in the long run you will have continuing happiness.⁹

Parents are not different from other people; they do neither want to have hard times for themselves, nor for their children. No parents wish to see their own children facing hardship but in certain conditions their children cannot escape it because it is impossible for parents to prevent it from happening. In this situation, you have to bear in mind that hardship is not too bad for people to endure it. If we consider it in the field of education or in other matters, the

good side of it or the benefit of having hardship is that it turns us into tougher and most enduring people. It makes us powerful thinkers and even become leaders in the same way as forging iron and turning it into a much harder one. It is hard to teach people to be strong in helping oneself because it requires from them to be tough in overcoming the hardship first. There are many people who become good as a result of being tough in facing hardship. They are the one who abide to the Cambodian saying: "Hardship is followed by good time." It means having patience and perseverance, which are between hardship and the bright time. In contrast, there are a lot of people who know only how to enjoy their life; and do have never encountered hard times and difficulties. Whenever they have to face hardship, they hardly can help themselves, cannot do anything, cannot stick to one thing and they even cannot cope with any kind of work. They can hardly survive. Some of them cannot face the hardship and they finally die, therefore don't be afraid of hardship. You have to remember that 'hardship' is your trainer. Dear children, you have to face hardship with patience, you must benefit from hardship, gain virtues from it and take hardship as a lesson that you have to study and think that you will not return to face the hardship again.

As government employees or in private firm you have to be fully committed to your work and make yourselves well worth the money you receive. If you work harder than you really ought to, that will be even better. Do not work just for the sake of earning salary or just to have it finished, but you must work to achieve good results. Working harder than it is required means that working with good intention. Even though it seems they lose some of their valuable time, but they have performed their duty very well. These people

are happy and have satisfaction in their job. This happiness is the essence of life, and it cannot be bought by money, but it can only be the result of your good heart. People with good heart are those that are generous and their mind is free from jealousy. People without good heart do not have satisfaction in their job, and their mind is dry like a rice-field without water. Train yourselves to be people with good heart, and do not feel that you are not on equal footing or not good at all. Remember that a good will always produces a true and long-lasting working cooperation, and in the long run good heart is worth much more than any amount of money.¹⁰

What you said is very important to your life. You should pay attention to:

1. Before you speak, and
2. After you have spoken.

Before speaking you have to think carefully, and after you have spoken you should keep your word. Your words are your own master. They order you to execute them as you have received them from others. You have to do whatever you have promised even though it is very costly in terms of your money, your physical energy and even your life. Beloved children! Remember that your words are very important. If your words have no credibility, everything else is useless and meaningless. Your reputation is ruined because you have not kept your promise. An old Khmer saying stated that: "People are worth of their words like elephants their tusks." We remind you again. If you think that you will face with lots of problems in keeping your promises and you don't want to be in such situations, you should be careful before promising anything with anybody. You have to make sure that whether you can keep

your promises or not. What can people have as their own worthiness if they are not able to keep their words? People have speech as their inner wealth, and still they cannot keep their word. How can they keep any wealth, which does not belong to them? We remind you, once again, not to promise anything with anybody without careful considerations. You should be people who do not easily break your promise. People who break promises for the sake of getting out of an awkward situation will not be possible to repeat it again because people have no trust in them. Beloved children, firstly, you should not speak frivolously or even telling lies as jokes, and secondly, you should remember that your speech is of greater value for yourself. You have to keep these words in mind:

1. Pundits keep their word because speech is considered as an important business.
2. Speak less is far better than speak more empty words.
3. You cannot become a pundit for the sake of speaking more than it is required.
4. Virtues are not in words alone, but they are in your consciousness.

In this world, nobody is right or perfect in everything they do because they still have lust, which makes their heart impure. In addition, no one will be able to do things that can meet every aspect of our expectation. We are the same in that sense, although we do good deeds in every way, there will be always someone who disapproves our work. Someone does something wrong, and has shortcomings in his work or performs something unsuitable to your heart and expectation. You should be able to forgive him, do not take offence easily and do not be in conflict with him. It is better for you to keep quiet; and if you want to have something done you

should consider the appropriate time and the concern of other people too. It is important to control your temper and your speech; and if you have to act your speech must be in good balance and be based on appropriate causes and effects. You have to remember these words: Bamboo trees depend on their thorns to protect themselves. Wise men depend on laws to protect themselves against any wrong doings. Malicious people depend on nothing but the quarrel and their physical might. Once you forgive someone, the one who is happy will be you. Keeping the anger is like keeping the fire in your mind. Vengefulness by various means has nothing worth of it. Another way to forgive is not to cause any trouble to other people. It means that you are not harmful to them. You do not cause fear or troubles to other people. You have to let people know that you're a genuine friend not a foe. Let them know that you're not tricky and they can depend on you. This is what we call forgiveness. You have to understand that forgiveness means providing goodness to yourself; and people will entrust you with important jobs. This is the difference between you and those who are harmful to others. These types of people cannot be trusted, and wherever they are nobody wants to get closer or be in association with them. People are afraid of them, and nobody trusts them in their work and they are very bad in every aspect of their manner. You should not behave like these people who are harmful to others. If you can forgive people, you'll be happy. If you can become a harmless person, you can stay wherever you wish; and nobody will cause any troubles to you, therefore it is advisable for you to train yourself in forgiveness. You should not think that practicing forgiveness is a sign of weakness. It does not ruin any honor or any position of authority at all. Due to love of honor and prestigious positions, people abuse

their authority to an extreme; and they will create all sorts of bad Karmas and misfortunes among themselves endlessly.¹¹

Have you ever thought that books are our best friends? Books are our friends in all occasions whether we are happy, sad, regretful or bored. They can be with us in many places in the forest, mountains, in the middle of the ocean and even in our bedroom. Regardless of who you are, wherever you are, don't discard books. Discarding books mean that you give up your best friends. You must read many books and be diligent in your reading. You should know how to choose books to read in order to save your time. The Buddha's teachings that you've read or heard are the road map for your life. One good book is equal to one best friend. Every book that you've read, you have to think thoroughly about it and decide whether you can believe the author or not because there're so many kinds of writers with different knowledge and intention. You have to remember that the book is the writer's thought. If you have read a good book, it means that you have implanted the author's good thoughts in your mind. Even in broad daylight, it will be dark in the house if you close all doors and windows. In a similar situation, if you close your eyes and ears it means you do not read or listen to proverbs of intellectuals, your mind will be dark just like the house with all doors and windows closed. In order to become a good person, you must:

1. Look for knowledge and don't waste your time, and
2. Act according to your knowledge, and let it be your guide in life instead of being led by your desires. Beloved children, you have to be friends with wise men via readings their works. We can assure you that progress and prosperity will occur in the future.

You have to be careful with people, especially with those who are using sweet words. Sugar cane or palm juice has sweet taste but if you leave it sit for a prolonged period with yeast, it will become an intoxicated drink. The same can be said for people with sweet words that can intoxicate you. Once intoxicated, you become light-headed, dazed and you're not yourself in what you do. In some instances, this can lead to financial loss because you believe someone else sweet words. You should think carefully when someone speaks sweetly and praises you that you are good at this and excellent at that. You have to be very careful and don't be flattered by those who pull you into their trap. Don't lose yourself with all their sweet words. If you are not deceived by those sweet words, you won't be disappointed at a later time. Fishes die because of the lure of the bait and its shelter. They do not die if they are not attracted to the bait. For this reason that you must be careful in every way, not just the sweet words alone. You have to be careful with other worldly enticements in your life and don't let yourself be deceived like those fishes.¹²

A boss who is kind, fair, caring and friendly, never takes advantage and does not cause any harm to his subordinates. He creates a warm and trustful atmosphere for them. In return, his subordinates will sincerely and truly respect him from the bottom of their heart. They will remember their boss's virtues for the rest of their lives. You may have the opportunity to be the boss or in a position of decision-making. You must not forget our advice if you wish to gain a true love and respect from your subordinates. It is a good policy to make your subordinates love and respect you from the bottom of their heart. People who are afraid of you will not respect you at all. This is a very bad policy. Leaders who use only their authority but

not their human virtues will create only the subordinates who are fearful. They lack warmth and confidence in their heart and are devoid of true love and respect for their leaders. For those managers who use their virtues more than their authority their subordinates are confident, obedient and respectful to them. This means that they are good leaders who can manage physically and spiritually their subordinates. People in positions of responsibility who wish to control other people's heart using their authority to earn their respect are completely wrong. The real power arises from the creation of an ambiance of warmth for the subordinates. The ambiance of warmth endowed with sincerity, love and respect is the result of generosity, caring and the real concern of the managers towards their subordinates. These are expressed in terms of gift in kind and money, moral support, familiarity, provision of good and useful advice, forgiveness, intimacy, honor and promotion, etc. If you need to manage people's heart, you should know how to provide help and assistance to them with compassion and loving-kindness as often as possible.¹³

Therefore, the parents' lessons or words are very important to be followed. The parents' words are priceless and meaningful. If all the children follow their parents' words and adhere to these lessons faithfully, they will definitely succeed in their life sooner or later.

THE BUDDHA'S VIEW ON THE INFLUENCE OF FRIENDSHIP



Human being cannot live properly without connecting to the social relationship as the plant cannot grow properly without relating to the environmental factors such as temperature, available water, available light, carbon dioxide and available nutrients in the soil. Therefore, friendship is considered as a very necessary fertility for the healthy growth of the plant of life that plays a vital role in the development of humanities in socialization. According to Buddhist perspective, having a good friendship is very necessary for leading life in social world. Then, what is the Buddha's view on the influence of friendship?

Before answering this question, first, please let us consider the definition of 'friendship'. The term 'Friendship' is the combination of 'friend' and 'ship'. 'Friend' is someone who knows well and 'ship' is a suffix that means the state of quality of, status or office of, skill or ability, such as in ownership, companionship, comradeship, friendship, relationship and so on. Here, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the word 'friendship' means "A relationship between friends or companions," "The feeling or

relationship that friends have,” “The state of being friends.”¹⁴

According to Buddhism, human beings are influenced by two conditions for arising of their views, namely,

1. Hearing from the words of other (*paratoghosa*) and
2. The proper attention (*yonisomanasikāra*). Both of them have enormous potential for human development.

Hearing from the words of other is considered as the external factor. It refers to an association with others in human environment. Generally, when people live together in any kind of group, they naturally influence each other through their eye contacts, ear contacts, nose contacts, tongue contacts, body contacts, and mind contacts. For example, when we were young, we were naturally influenced and guided by the people who lived in our community especially our families indeed.

The proper attention is noticed as the internal factor. It is used in the context of personal reflection or personal consideration. For instance, when seeing our families go worshiping the statue of the Buddha at the temple every Buddhist Holy Day, we begin to think that the activities of our families are right or wrong. If we have skillful reflection, it is no matter for us; however, we will be swamped by the influence of environmental factors such as religions, traditions, cultures, ideologies and so on if we have no skillful reflection. All of these can be either harmful or beneficial depending on the kind of our own associates.

Therefore, in the first stanza of the famous *Maṅgalasutta*, the Buddha urges all of us to choose our own associates carefully because we will become like them. In that *sutta*, the Buddha taught

that the great blessing of humanities comes from our own relationship. If we associate with the fool, the fool will guide our lives to the dangerous ways; if we associate with the wise, our lives will be led to the prosperous ways.

Based on this *sutta*, it is bravely to claim that friendship is very essential for the developmental progression of humanity. We cannot live without connecting with others in society while we are being surrounded by many kinds of people such as parents, siblings, relatives, schoolmates, classmates, teachers, spouses, physicians, employees, employers and many more. All of them are considered as our environmental factors because they can influence the way we think and the way we do. In relating to relationship, the Buddha divided all of them into two groups, namely, (a) *Pāpamitta* and (b) *Kalyāṇamitta*.

(A) PĀPAMITTA

Pāpamitta means a false friend, a fool friend, a bad friend, an evil friend, and so on. Having associated with such kinds of these friends, it brings about the worst ruins; so one should not associate with all of them. As we have already known, people usually tend to copy the habit and behavior of their friends. Therefore, when a person associates with evil people, he himself slowly becomes evil.¹⁵ It is most definitely true, when we have a bad companion, we give ears to evil advice; because of such advice, evil reflections occupy the mind; because of such reflections, mental confusion prevails and the senses are uncontrolled; as a result of this, actions of body and speech are faulty.¹⁶

On the other hand, when associating with evil people, we may decline in all our health, wealth and spirituality due to the association of unworthy friends. Therefore, in the *Attavagga* of the *Dhammapada* said, "He, who is exceedingly corrupt, Like a *Māluvā* creeper strangling a Sal tree, does to him what even an enemy would not wish for him."¹⁷

A fool resembles stale fish, and one who associates with him resembles a leaf-bag in which stale fish has been wrapped. Hence, wise people reject and dislike the association with the fools. In connecting with this, many teachings can be found in *Pāli* literature such as: "A man ties up a stinking fish with blades of *Kusa* grass; the blades of grass also become stinking; the associating with a fool is the same as that."¹⁸

The best example of this association is found in *Fundamentals of Sociology* of Dr. Vong Emsamarn. In his book, he described about two children who were found in a herd of wolves in 1920. The first one was eight years old and the second one was only six years old. After finding, unfortunately, the second one died only a few months later. However, the first one was still alive for six years. Both of them neither knew how to communicate with any kind of people nor understood any human word. Because they had stayed in a herd of wolves for long time, so their gestures most completely the same to wolves' gestures. They howled like a wolf that lives in forest and were terrified while seeing anyone came closer to them.

Furthermore, having friendship with an evil one brings about loss and ruin. For instance, in history of humanities, many people were ruined because of their confusion in choosing their own association

such as the King *Ajātasattu*. In the Buddhist history, as we have known, it is said the life of King *Ajātasattu* who had killed his father because of the association with Venerable *Devadatta*. The Venerable *Devadatta*, who is the evil monk, prompted him to kill his father to reign over the Kingdom. The king *Ajātasattu* firmly believed whatever Venerable *Devadatta* told to him. Because of Venerable *Devadatta*'s influence, he had put his father in prison, tortured, and killed.

Evil friendship is very harmful to all human creatures in society; that is why, in the *Theragāthā*, Venerable *Cakkhupāla Thera* refused to go together with his guide after knowing his guide was immoral. Venerable *Cakkhupāla Thera* was a blind monk. He was going with a guide to *Sāvatthi* through a forest. When he knew that his guide was impure, he refused to go together with him and said, "Even if I have to lie down here and die or even if I have no move about here and there, I will not go with you." Then, he uttered the following stanzas, "Now I have lost my eyesight, I have come upon a dangerous way, and I will lie down rather than go (with you). There is no friendship with a fool."¹⁹

Moreover, In the *Itṭhidhammasutta*, it is said that association with false friends is a hindrance for the development of moral virtues. The Buddha had explained that if someone wants to bring about his own ruin or downfall, he could associate with evil friends. Here, in the 'Verses of Elders (*Theragāthā*),' there comes a record of three kinds of bad friends:

1. One who accosts friendship only at the time of drinking;
2. One who accosts a man saying, "O, my good friend, O, my good friend." only in his presence but out of sight bears

- enmity and find faults in him; and
3. One who professes friendship with another only at the time of one's adversity.²⁰

When saying about the characteristics of bad friend, the researcher of this article cannot do anything better except to quote the Teaching of Buddha from the *Siṅgālakasutta* to give more details in here. In the *Siṅgālakasutta*, the Buddha said, "A bad friend is one who is selfish; who talks much about the past and future, not the present; who persuades you to gossip; who ruins you with intoxicants and drugs; who encourages you to associate with immoral acts, and one who says good things about you in your presence and criticizes you in your absence."²¹

If one meets someone who has such characteristics as described above, one should consider him as a false friend and should stay away from him as much as possible. Please notice that the Buddha teaches us to stay away from the fools, but He does not teach us to discriminate against or hate all of them. Instead, He stresses us to pervade loving-kindness towards all living beings without limitation. According to Buddhism, the Buddha encourages all of us to extend loving-kindness to ourselves, our families, our friends, our communities, and our world including our enemies as well.

(B) KALYĀṆAMITTA

Kalyāṇamitta means a good friend, a virtuous friend, a noble friend, a wise friend, or an admirable friend. The *kalyāṇamitta* is a friend who is endowed with many kinds of good qualities such as virtue, morality, and intellectual excellence.²² Based on Dr. R.L. Soni, "Companionship with the wise" leads to the following developmental

progression: “listening to good advice, rational faith, noble thoughts, clear thinking, self-control, good conduct, conquest of the hindrances, gaining of wisdom and the consequent liberation.”²³ In Buddhism, the virtuous friend has an essential influence on both (1) secular life and (2) spiritual life.²⁴

(1) FOR THE SECULAR LIFE

For the secular life, the virtuous friend helps one to fulfill the day to day tasks of life in relation to his neighbor, society, government and country. Its immediate goal is helping one towards worldly gain and human achievement.

In addition, a good friend is a cause for the cultivation of virtues. Buddhism emphasizes the necessity of associating with the virtuous friend to secure worldly gains as well as to attain spiritual advancement. Association with the virtuous friend is regarded as a source of much benefit. The Buddha has absolutely declared, “Monk, I do not see any other single factor that conduces to the arising of efficient states of mind and bring about the waning of unwholesome mental states than a virtuous friendship. The virtuous friendship causes the arising of wholesome mental states that are not already arisen in a person and (at the same time) dispels the unwholesome mental states that are already arisen in a person’s mind.”²⁵

Furthermore, the good friendship is not only for the progress of good mental states but also would be getting an advantage of great development. The Buddha further said, “Monks, as a matter concerning the outside I know not of any other single factor as conducive to great benefit as friendship with the lovely. Friendship with lovely indeed conduces to great profit.”²⁶

(2) FOR THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

For the spiritual life, the virtuous friendship is very important. According to the Teaching of the Buddha, the aim of having a friend is to get help in leading a righteous and prosperous life. The highest purpose of having a friend in life is to obtain assistance in practice of the Noble Eightfold Path. Regarding the vitality of a good friend for a successful practice of the path to liberated happiness, we are told that one day King *Pasenadi* of *Kosala* Kingdom came to report to the Buddha about the wonderful conversation between him and Venerable *Ānanda*. The King said that on one occasion Venerable *Ānanda* told him that a good friend is worth as much as half of a holy life. That prompted the Buddha to correct Venerable *Ānanda's* remark. The Buddha said that a good friendship is worth more than half the holy life; indeed, it is worth the whole of the holy life itself because a good friend helps you develop the Noble Eightfold Path as a way of life. In plain terms, this means when we have a good friend, we have already secured all the purposes of spiritual achievement. However, if we had fallen into bad friendship, we would have lost all of it. This is because a bad friend cannot distinguish what is beneficial from what is harmful.²⁷

Venerable *Sāriputta*, the chief disciple of the Buddha also mentioned the necessity of virtuous friend for a recluse. As we have known in the *Goliyānisutta* in the *Majjhimanikāya*, Venerable *Sāriputta* advised forest-dwelling *bhikkhus* to find a good friend, as well as to be a good friend themselves. This prompted his friend, the other chief disciple, Venerable *Moggallāna*, to enquire if a good friend is needed only for the forest-dwellers. Venerable *Sāriputta* replied that if a forest-dwelling *bhikkhu*, when he is amongst the *Saṅgha*,

should develop the will to listen and be a good friend himself, it is even more important for a city-dwelling *bhikkhu* to do so.²⁸

In relating to the influence of the virtuous friendship, Venerable *Saṅgharakkhita*, the founder of the Western Buddhist Order or Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO) said, "Spiritual friendships are important to building a bond between peers, in particular having at least one platonic friend with whom we can be intimate and completely frank. Through friendship we have the opportunity to develop the virtues of generosity, compassion, patience and forgiveness."²⁹

Moreover, in the *Sambodhisutta* of *Aṅguttaranikāya*, *kalyāṇamitta*, a virtuous friend, is a condition for the arising of wings of enlightenment. In that *sutta*, the Buddha said, "If, monks, wanderers who are members of other sects should ask you thus, "What, friend, are the prerequisites for the development of the wings to self-awakening?" You should answer, "Friend, a monk has a good companion and a good colleague. This is the first prerequisites for the development of the wings to self-awakening."³⁰

In his important work, *Blessing...You Can D.T.Y.*, Venerable *Dhammasami* said that a good friend is not always popular and loved. It is most definitely true, as we have already known clearly in our social relationship; sometimes, most of the people are bored with their friends when they were advised by them during their committing mistakes. For instance, Venerable *Channa*, the former charioteer to Prince *Siddhattha*, often rebuked monks who offered him constructive criticism for his behaviors. He did not care about others, whether they were chief disciples, senior disciples or an

arahant because he had known the Buddha since before the Master renounced his princely life; he was arrogant because of his closeness to the Master. However, to be a good friend, the monks were asked by the Buddha to go on having the same concern for him and advising on what is right and what is wrong even though he might not appreciate their concerns. We all know that the Buddha just before his *Mahāparinibbāna* forbade anyone from speaking to or advising to *Channa*, as a noble punishment handed to someone who was disobedient. *Channa Thera* soon realized the need and value of good friends and with that; he became one of the liberated.³¹

One more thing, a good friend always opens criticism. The best example is found in the *Pavāraṇāsutta* of the *Samyuttanikāya*: The Buddha had a meeting every fortnight in which he asked the assembly of monks to point out his faults, if any. When everyone was silent, Venerable *Sāriputta*, one of his two disciples, then asked any member of the assembly to criticize him. That was how other monks became motivated to follow their model. The Buddha founded the monastic order to operate in that open and caring way. It is not at all easy to be open like that. We feel easily offended when criticized. Here a person who is not receptive towards other people's opinion is compared with a spoon which does not experience the taste of a curry although a curry is never cooked without being given a stir with a spoon. He is not a good friend. Like the spoon, he is indifferent to the consequences of his own action. A person who is flexible and receptive is like the tongue that experiences the taste of a curry. He learns from his mistakes and becomes mature. That is why a fool who acknowledges that he is foolish is indeed a wise man.³²

In concerning with the characteristics of the good friend, it will become unspecific description if we describe without quoting the Teaching of the Buddha from the *Singālakasutta* to give more specific characteristics. In that *sutta*, the Buddha said, "A good friend is one who protects you and your interests; who encourages you to do good things; who never abandons you when you are in trouble; who asks you to refrain from doing bad things; who does not gossip about you; who appreciates your good qualities and achievements; who acknowledges his own weak points; and who is not boastful."³³

Besides having a good friend, one is needed to be a good friend as well. All the teachings of the Buddha not only encourage everyone to look for good friends but to be good friends themselves too. We can make ourselves to be good friends by fulfilling our duties as a spouse, as members of societies, as members of communities and as members of the world. This good action will be our true friend which always stays along with us forever.

In brief, friendship is very necessary fertilities for the healthy growth and producing luscious fruits from the tree of life. It won't be a profit for both oneself and others unless our lives are nourished and surrounded with thoughts, acts, association and environment of the evil friend, who is evil in nature. On the contrary, to live with a virtuous friend is considered as one of the great blessing for human beings. Therefore, we have to carefully choose our own associates by recognizing the characteristics of them through the Teaching of the Buddha.

LIFE TODAY

HOW LIFE WORKS, DIGEST IT!



In daily life, one normally faces many problems at different levels and experiences countless sorts of objects of feelings. Whenever experiencing the satisfactory objects, one is always pleased; whereas the unsatisfactory objects come to presence, one may feel uncomfortable and think that it is a problem. On thinking in such a way, one is known as uncultured or not having adequate knowledge of the reality in this very life. To know how this life works, here some important points of Buddhism are illustrated.

To say in a very short extent, one comes to this world of human in the form of human being by first perceiving in the womb of a mother for ten months or so and then being born as a human being afterwards. After being born, one always experiences the taste of life of all types. In that case, one experiences happiness, suffering, and so forth. Moreover, the things that are inevitable such as aging, sickness, and death come one after another.

To come deeper into this matter, let's study the teachings of the Buddha in the *Dhammapada* (The Words of Truth) as well as short stories depicting verses of each as follows:

HOW WILL YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE TODAY?

The objects of feelings are merely the things which arise from causes, the actions committed in the past, both wholesome and unwholesome. Neither the satisfactory objects nor the unsatisfactory one is bound to anyone, but one's mind itself clings to it. If one knows the objects of feelings clearly, one will not be satisfied or dissatisfied by them. For this problem, it is evidently shown in the following story:

THE FATE OF MAHĀKĀLA AND CULLAKĀLA

Mahākāla and *Cullakāla* were two merchant brothers. While travelling about selling their merchandise, they had the opportunity to listen to a discourse given by the Buddha. After hearing the discourse, *Mahākāla* became a Bhikkhu with conviction (*saddhā*) while *Cullakāla* also became a Bhikkhu but without any faith.

Mahākāla was serious in his meditation practice (*sosānikadhutaṅga*) and diligently meditated on decay and impermanence of the body at the cemetery. He finally gained insight and attained *Arahantship*. *Cullakāla* was not interested in meditation practice and was constantly thinking of sensual pleasures.

Later, the Buddha and his disciples, including the two brothers, happened to be staying in the forest of *Siṃsapā*, near a town of *Setabya*. While staying there, the former wives of *Cullakāla* invited the Buddha and his disciples to their house. *Cullakāla* himself went ahead to prepare seating arrangements for the Buddha and his disciples. Once there, the former wives of *Cullakāla* made him change into a householder's life.

The next day, the wives of *Mahākāla* invited the Buddha and his disciples to their house hoping to do the same with *Mahākāla* as the wives of *Cullakāla* had done to *Cullakāla*. After the meal, they requested the Buddha to let *Mahākāla* remain to express the appreciation (*Anumodanā*). So, the Buddha and the other disciples left.

Arriving at the village gate, the *Bhikkhus* expressed their apprehension that *Mahākāla* would also be made to leave the Order by his former wives. To this, the Buddha replied that the two brothers were different. *Cullakāla* indulged in sensual pleasures and was lazy and weak minded; He was just like a weak tree. *Mahākāla*, on the other hand, being free from sensual pleasures, was diligent, steadfast and strong in his faith in the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha*; He was like a mountain of rock. The Buddha said, 'The weak succumb to temptation but not the strong.' Therefore, the Buddha further said:

*"Subhānupassim viharantaṃ,
indriyesu asaṃvutaṃ;
Bhojanamhi amattaññum,
kusītaṃ hīnavīriyaṃ;
taṃ ve pasahatī māro,
vāto rukkhaṃva dubbalaṃ.*

*Whoever lives contemplating of pleasant things,¹
with senses unrestrained, in food immoderate,
indolent, inactive, him verily Māra^{II} overthrows,*

¹ Describing pleasurable sensual objects.

According to Buddhism, the term '*māra*' means a 'killer, destroyer, or evil One). There are five kinds of *Māras*, namely, (1) the five aggregates (*khandha*), (2) the moral and immoral activities (*abhisāṅkhāra*), (3) the death (*maccu*), (4) defilements (*kilesa*), and (5) the deity, the evil deva whose abode is in *Vasavatīdevaloka* (*devaputta*). Here, the term *Māra* is used in the sense of 'defilements.'

as the wind (overthrows) a weak tree.

Asubhānupassim viharantaṃ,

indriyesu susaṃvutaṃ;

Bhojanamhi ca mattaññum,

saddhaṃ āraddhavīriyaṃ;

taṃ ve nappasahatī māro,

vāto selaṃva pabbataṃ.

Whoever lives contemplating of 'the impurities,'^{III}

with senses restrained, in food moderate, full of

faith,^{IV} full of sustained energy, him Māra over-

throws not, as the wind (does not overthrows) a

rocky mountain.^V 34

For the foolish persons who do not know that their lives today are the results of their past *kammas*, they make use of their present lives in the wrong ways which are harmful to themselves now and then. To know how the fools act without understanding about the reality, the following story will enlighten the readers.

A BUTCHER WHO SUFFERS HERE AND HEREAFTER (CUNDA)

Once in a village not far away from the *Veluvana* monastery, there lived a very cruel and hard-hearted pork-butcher by the name of

^{III} The thirty-two parts of the body such as hair, hair of the skin, nails, teeth, skin, etc are impure and loathsome. To eradicate lust, the contemplation of the impurities of the body is absolutely practiced.

^{IV} *Saddhā* is a faith in the Buddha (the teacher), the *Dhamma* (the teachings), and the *Saṅgha* (the Order) based on the knowledge. There is no blind faith in Buddhism. One is not expected to accept anything on mere unreasoned faith.

^V These two verses are meant exclusively for a *Bhikkhu* who leads the holy life. The first verse indicates the worldly path of sense-gratification, the second, the spiritual path of sense-control and asceticism. It should be noted that Buddhism offers one way of life to the monks and another to the laity.

Cunda who slaughtered animals by torturing them. He had been in this profession for over fifty-five years and in all this time he had not done a single meritorious deed. Before he died, he was in such great pain and agony that he was grunting and squealing and kept moving about on his hands and knees like a pig for seven whole days. Then, after suffering physically and mentally, on the eighth day, he died and was reborn in a suffering state, *Avicīniraya*.

Some *Bhikkhus*, having heard the grunting and squealing coming from his house for several days, thought that *Cunda* must be busy killing more pigs. They remarked that *Cunda* was a very cruel and wicked man, for he did not have a single thought of loving-kindness and was also devoid of any compassion.

Upon hearing their remarks, the Buddha says, "*Bhikkhus! Cunda* has been killing pigs. His past evil deeds have overtaken him. Because of the great pain, he had to suffer before his death; he was acting and behaving in a very unnatural way. Today he died and was reborn in the hell."

The Buddha concluded his discourse by saying, "The evil-doer always suffers for the evil deeds done by him; he suffers in this world as well as in the next. There is no escape from the consequences of evil deeds."^{VI} Therefore, the Buddha further said:

*"Idha socati pecca socati,
pāpakārī ubhayattha socati;
so socati so vihaññati,
disvā kammakiliṭṭhamattanoti.*

^{VI} This does not mean that a man must always suffer according to his deeds without any hope. If that is the case, there is no benefit in leading a religious life nor is there any opportunity to work for one's emancipation.

Here he grieves,^{vii} hereafter he grieves,^{viii} in both states the evil-doer grieves. He grieves; he is afflicted, perceiving the impurity of his own deeds."³⁵

However, in the opposite case, for those who have come to realize the reality of this very life, they act properly according to the discipline of human beings and live happily in the present lives and the lives in the future. To see this clearly, the following story is to be studied:

HAPPINESS HERE AND HEREAFTER

Once there lived in *Sāvatthī* city, a lay disciple by the name of *Dhammika*, who was virtuous and very fond of doing charity. He generously offered food and other requisites to the noble disciples regularly and also on special occasions. He was, in fact, the leader of many virtuous lay disciples of the Buddha who lived in *Sāvatthī* city. He had seven sons and seven daughters and all of them, like their father, were virtuous and devoted to charity. When *Dhammika* was very ill and was on his death-bed,^{ix} he made a request to the *Saṅgha* to come and recite the *Suttas* by his bedside. While the *Bhikkhus* were reciting the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta*, he saw a vision of six decorated chariots from the six celestial worlds arriving to invite him to their respective world.^x *Dhammika* told them to wait for a

^{vii} Repenting over his evil deeds, he suffers mentally.
^{viii} Experiencing the effects of his evil deeds.
^{ix} According to Buddhism, the subsequent birth is determined by the thought-process at the moment of death.
^x Buddhists do not believe that the earth is the only habitable plane and that human beings are the only beings. Planes are numerous and beings are innumerable. After death, one may be reborn as a human being or in a subhuman state or in a celestial plane according to one's actions. The so-called being in the subsequent life is neither the same as its predecessor (as it has changed) nor absolutely different (as it is the

while for fear of interrupting the recitation of the *sutta*. The *Bhikkhus* thinking that they were being asked to stop discontinued their chanting and left the place.

A little while later, *Dhammika* told his sons and daughters about the six decorated chariots waiting for him. Then and there he decided to choose the chariot from *Tusita* world and he passed away with happiness and confidence in his mind. Thus, the virtuous man experiences happiness in this world as well as the next. Therefore, the Buddha said:

*"Idha modati pecca modati,
katapuñño ubhayattha modati;
so modati so pamodati,
disvā kammavisuddhimattanoti.*

*Here he rejoices, hereafter he rejoices. In both states the well-doer rejoices. He rejoices, exceedingly rejoices, perceiving the purity of his own deeds."*³⁶

According to these three stories mentioned above, the reality of life today is going about receiving the results of past *kammas* and producing new *kammas* for the next existences.

Realizing this, one should live properly with this life, should make use of this life beneficially, and should not harm one's own-self or the others by doing bad deeds which will bring one to suffer in the woeful states, *Apāyas*.

Thus, 'Life Today' is the most important thing to care about. Live virtuously and be the refuge of one's own-self!

identical stream of life). Buddhism denies an identical being but affirms and identity in process.

VIRTUE IS THE FOUNDATION OF HUMANKIND



To bring peace, security, happiness, and safety to our society and to become a good person, we should not lack of virtues. If we lack of the virtues, the whole society is not different from an animal society; or it can be worse than animals. It is dangerous if the people lead lives without virtues. On the contrary, it becomes peaceful and free from fear or any danger if people are virtuous.

Normally, the actions to be considered as the virtues are many kinds in different society. Here, according to the Buddha's teachings, the five moral precepts or five moral rules are considered as the fundamental foundations for humankind. They are very significant virtues that bring happiness and peace to our society.

Loving-kindness (*mettā*) is also the important virtue. A person who adheres to this virtue always wishes happiness and peace for all living beings. Besides, truthfulness (*sacca*), gratitude (*kataññū*), and patience (*khanti*) are definitely important virtues to be practiced. So, all these virtues are described here.

MORALITY (*SĪLA*)

Morality is the important virtue for humankind. The morality is many kinds, both social and religious ethical codes in the world. Among those moral codes, Buddhist morality is very important in our society because it leads to the peaceful life and freedom. However, the immorality or inhumanity exists in any society; neither happiness nor peace exists in it. It is a danger, fear, and insecure society. The immoral life is not good for human beings. The human beings without virtue are not different from animals; or it can be worse than animals. Hence, the Buddha said, "Better it is to live one day virtuous and meditative than to live one hundred years immoral and uncontrolled."³⁷ Therefore, the people should not lack the morality.

The present world should be in more need of good-minded and good-hearted persons than beautiful and attractive bodies; but they are not naturally good. They must learn how to become the good persons. Therefore, the late venerable *K. Sri Dhammananda* said in his book 'What Buddhist Believe' thus: "Men are not perfect by nature; they have to train themselves to be good; therefore, Buddhist morality becomes the most important aspect of living."³⁸ Likewise, the Buddhist morality is the significant virtue leading to the final goal of ultimate happiness. The first important Buddhist morality is the five precepts. These five precepts are the essential foundations of humankind. They keep bodily and verbal conducts well and they are the good method to train people to be virtuous. Once again, Venerable *K. Sri Dhammananda* said, "By observing precepts, not only do you cultivate your moral strength, but you also perform the highest service to your fellow beings to live in

peace.”³⁹ Here, the five Precepts are:

1. Abstention from killing any living beings,
2. Abstention from taking possessions not given,
3. Abstention from sexual misconduct,
4. Abstention from false speech, and
5. Abstention from intoxication.

These five precepts are the important virtues leading the whole society and the whole world to the peace and freedom.

All beings need happiness, peaceful lives, and non-fear. They love their lives and need the union of the beloved families and relatives. So, in the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha said, “All tremble at violence; all fear death. Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill nor cause another to kill. All tremble at violence; life is dear to all. Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill nor cause another to kill.”⁴⁰ Therefore, all people should adhere to the five precepts and spread them for peace and happiness of mankind.

Abstention from killing is the good way to stop hatred and violence. Not killing or not harming is the respect for life. Human beings satisfactorily live without violence or fear that will threaten their lives. In fact, we abstain from killing means we cultivate and radiate the virtue of loving-kindness toward the other beings. By the virtue of loving-kindness, hatred and violence are stopped. Hence, we cultivate and radiate loving-kindness to stop the hatred and violence and to bring happiness and peace to the world.

The good way to control greedy mind and to eradicate covetousness is avoidance of taking or stealing another’s possessions. Not

stealing or not robbing is the respect for ownership rights. The second precept brings the security for wealth.

Through abstention from sexual misconduct, it is an effective way to control the sexual lust or sensual desire and cultivate contentment. It is the precept to respect the national, family, or personal honor. It is able to bring highest honor to our human society.

Normally, all people have rights to receive true information or news. Therefore, they have to cultivate the virtue of truthfulness by refraining from false speech. This virtue of truthfulness is the respect for realities and trustworthiness.

The last precept is very vital method for developing mindfulness, strengthening memory, enlarging ability of understanding and knowledge through avoidance of intoxication. In truth, the use of intoxication destroys mindfulness, attention, and recognition and also leads to carelessness or heedlessness. The use of intoxication is the major root of heedlessness and thoughtlessness. One who uses the intoxication not only leads himself to heedlessness and destruction of mindfulness but also causes violence and danger in his own family, the others, and the whole society. Domestic violence and traffic accident are mostly caused by using of intoxication such as alcohol or liquor.

Frankly, the adherence to the five precepts are the respect for life; respect for private possessions; respect for individual honor and social honor; adherence to truthfulness; and development of mindfulness and heedfulness as well as enlargement of ability of understanding. These five precepts can be summarized in three

simple principles: "Not to do any evil deeds; to do good deeds, and to purify one's own mind."⁴¹ If all people adhere to these precepts without breaking them, the world will be peaceful, fearless, and satisfactory.

Generally, the five precepts exist not only at the Buddha's time but exist all times. They are the universal laws for humankind. So, all people should practice these precepts firmly in daily life.

LOVING-KINDNESS (METTĀ)

Loving-kindness taught in Buddhism is the pure love without selfishness or sexual love. In the world, everything is abundant at the present time. It can be called the 'Affluent Society' in the modern scientific period. Modern science, modern technology, and modern technological materials are available everywhere in the world today. Even the scientists, technologists, writers, scholars, poets, and other successful men exist plentifully but they still cannot find out and bring the real peace and security to the world. The reason is that they lack of this virtue, loving-kindness.

Loving-kindness is the wishes for the real peace and happiness for all beings. It is the pure love that is free from selfishness. Definitely, each person wants to be rich and wealthy; therefore, human mind is jealous and stingy. The jealousy and stinginess are the main roots of loss of moral qualities. They lead to selfishness.⁴²

All beings want to live without harm, hatred, hostility, malignity, and live in peace; yet they cannot do so because of jealousy and stinginess that have dislike and like as their roots. These like and dislike have desires as origin.⁴³

Loving-kindness or Goodwill is the major virtue and also one of ten perfections; that is, perfection of loving-kindness that wishes happiness and peace for others. Hence, Venerable *K. Sri Dhammananda* said, "Loving-kindness is the most effective method to maintain purity of mind and to purify the mentally polluted atmosphere."⁴⁴ For social peace and happiness, we should adhere to *Brahmavihāra*: Loving-kindness, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy, and Equanimity. Living a virtuous life brings happiness and peace to all beings.

Cultivation of loving-kindness not only wishes for happiness and peace for all beings but also protects oneself from harmfulness. This virtue leads to the destruction of harmful mind and development of good-will. The virtuous man always practices spreading thoughts of good-will to all beings in all directions. When we know the other people living in happiness, we share sympathetic joy with them; we are not jealous of their happiness. The jealousy of others' happiness or prosperity enables us to destroy happiness and harmony of others. We wish to bring peace and happiness to our society, so we try to avoid harmfulness to others. We do not try to hurt someone both physically and mentally.

If all people cultivate the good-will, they will reduce the evil mind and decrease violence in their community. Development of universal love is against the social violence in the world. Hate restricts; love releases. Hatred strangles; love enfranchises. Hatred brings remorse; love brings peace. Hatred agitates; love quietens, stills, and calms. Hatred divides; love unites. Hatred hardens; love softens. Hatred hinders; love helps. Hatred or violence brings harmfulness

to the human society; loving-kindness or good-will brings peace and happiness to the society. All beings wish for peaceful life and happy life; they do not desire for harmfulness and oppression. Therefore, we should cultivate loving-kindness and good-will in our daily life.

TRUTHFULNESS (SACCA)

Truthfulness is also the essential virtue for all people. Definitely, they want to listen to the essence of this truthfulness. The truthfulness is one of the ten perfections, the Perfection of Truthfulness. This virtue also plays a key role in leading to realization of the Noble Truths. One who adheres to the truthfulness is regarded as a good or virtuous person. He is a trustworthy, believable and respectful person.

The truthfulness refers to not only telling the true things or true speech but also to keeping promise or keeping an agreement. In truth, the virtuous man always tells the truth and keeps his words. He avoids telling lie but tells what he has seen and known; he does not tell what he has not seen or known. Hence, in the *Āḷavakasutta*, the Buddha said, "The essence of the truth is the most delicious of all tastes; the praiseworthiness and trustworthiness will be achieved by the truthfulness."⁴⁵ So, it is not only true but beneficial as well. The abstinence from telling lie is the fourth precept. The truthfulness is really achieved by refraining from falsehood.

GRATITUDE (KATAÑÑŪ)

In society, no one can live without dependence on the other persons or association with others. Indeed, all people need to communicate

each other, need help from others and also share their property to each other. If a person helps us when we are in trouble, we think he is the good person and say the word of thanks for his help and kindness. This just shows our gratefulness. If we have done good things to others, we also expect that they will be grateful to us.

Remarkably, in this world, a person who is grateful is less than a forgetful person. The Buddha himself also regarded gratitude as a rare virtue in the world. In fact, the gratitude is very rare to find in any society, particularly in the present time. Therefore, Venerable *K. Sri Dhammananda* said, "The gratitude is the rare virtue."⁴⁶

It is very difficult to find the thankful person in the human society. So, gratefulness is also very rare to be found. The grateful person is regarded as the praiseworthy, the good, and the virtuous man. Therefore, in *Maṅgalasutta*, it is said: "The state of gratitude, by the wise, should be remembered as the highest blessing."⁴⁷

Normally, we mostly forget goodness that other people have done to us. Remembrance of kindness or good deeds that others have done to us is very good but not enough for being a grateful person. We should remember one's kindness and find a suitable chance to repay him. The grateful men are praiseworthy and they are always praised and valued by the learned and the wise. For one's own happiness and welfare of the other beings, we should be thankful to one who has done good deeds not only to us but to the whole society; likewise, we have to do good deeds to all beings. We do not extremely expect for thankfulness from others to whom we have done good deeds; otherwise, we will be disappointed due to our expectation.

The gratitude and its manifestation are the sign of the virtuous man. The Buddha said that the good man has his symbol. The gratefulness symbolizes the true man. One who adheres to this virtue has the symbol of goodness. The Buddha's teaching teaches all people to be thankful. The gratitude is the fundamental foundation of goodness and progress. A man lacking this virtue has no symbol of goodness.⁴⁸ The gratefulness is awareness of the value of kindness that other people have done to us. The people such as our parents, teachers, friends, and other good persons have performed good deeds to us, brought happiness to us, taught us different knowledge, and supported us. They are the good persons whom we have to pay back by looking after them, showing respect to them, and helping them in the time of necessary need. Hence, the gratitude is the most important virtue to be instilled in our mind forever.

PATIENCE (*KHANTĪ*)

In society, quarrels and violence often arise. The good way to reduce or avoid them is the adherence to patience, tolerance, and forgiveness. The Buddha said, "If a person foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my boundless love. The more evil comes from him, the more good will go from me. I will always give off only the fragrance of goodness."

This virtue is hard to practice because we must be patient upon both external and internal enemies. The external enemy is the performances or actions of others that have dissatisfied us, harmed us, or hurt our minds. We always react to their performances with mind full of anger if we do not cultivate patience in our mind.

Therefore, when we feel angry with someone, we have to fight with ourselves; for we are the most dangerous enemy of ourselves.

The internal enemy with which we must be patient is our own mind. Our mind can be the best friend or the worst enemy. If people have enough ability to firmly control their mind associated with hatred, they can avoid every argument and violence.

The disadvantages of intolerance not only cause quarrels, hurt one own mind, and do harm to others but also destroy nature and poison environment around us. Therefore, the Buddha said, "Let us live happily, not hating those who hate us; among those who hate us, let us live free from hatred; let us live happily and free from ailment; let us live happily and free from greed among those who are greedy."⁴⁹

Patience is one of the highest blessings.⁵⁰ It is ornament of the wise men. Forbearance is like bitter medicine but produces good results. One who practices tolerance frequently faces hardship or difficulty during the development of patience but encounters the good results in their life. On the other hand, the patience is forgiveness without any vengeance. Besides, we must have patience to fight with the obstacles such as the weather, thirst, hunger, and other personal problems in daily life. Endurance to hardship of life is also the main factor leading to successfulness, so we train both physical and mental endurance.

Meanwhile, we have to understand the advantages of patience and the disadvantages of impatience. The patience is the good virtue leading to avoidance of any quarrels, disputes, and violence, that is,

the avoidance of the domestic violence and social violence; while the impatience always causes arguments and violence. The man who is endowed with patience is the virtuous one. To get rid of domestic violence or social troubles, we should not lack the practice of patience, tolerance, and forgiveness. We train to cultivate these virtues in mind, for they can bring us happiness and peace to our society.

Human beings have the highest mind or the most excellent thoughts. These human beings who understand the cause and effect (*Kamma* and *kammic* result) have the highest ability to cultivate the virtue and practice morality. Therefore, we have to consider the cause and effect well before beginning to do something. We should ponder its effect when we commit any action. Moreover, we should think about whether our action has bad influence to the human society or it brings happiness and peace to the others. The following we should take the Buddha's advice to his royal son *Rāhula* into our consideration.

The Buddha gave the good advice to his royal son thus: "*Rāhula!* If you would commit one deed, first, you should ponder thus: 'Whether or not this deed which I am going to perform will give pain and misery to me, to others, or to both me and others.' If you are aware that the deed which you will perform will cause pain and misery to oneself, to others, or to both, and realize that this action is unwholesome and produces harmful results, you should not perform it, because this deed increases pain and misery with painful consequences. If you are exactly aware that the action which you are going to perform will not cause pain and misery to

oneself, to others, or to both; so this deed is virtuous and wholesome. You should perform it because this deed increases happiness with pleasant consequences.”⁵¹

This teaching is never outdated but practical and useful all times in human society. So, before doing something, we must think about its effect first. We have to abstain from any action which causes bad impact on our society or generation. Our action always gives both negative and positive results due to the cause of action. If we know surely that our action causes any dangers to us, to others or to both, we must avoid it. If we are exactly aware that the action will bring happiness and peace to our society, we should perform it regularly. If everyone takes this advice into their consideration, they will think carefully before making decision to do anything. We remember in our mind thus: all beings tremble at violence; all beings fear death; so do we; therefore, we must not kill by ourselves or cause another to kill the other beings.

In conclusion, all beings, being born as human beings, not only human beings but also other beings, in this world, wish for the happiness and peaceful life and want to live in peace. They always tremble at punishment, fear death, and want to keep away from all kinds of suffering. Therefore, to live together happily and peacefully with ease and comfort, we each should adhere to the fundamental virtues; cultivate the loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. We should radiate our loving-kindness to all beings without discrimination. Likewise, we should adhere to the truthfulness, gratitude, and patience in our daily life. Only living with all these fundamental virtues can bring the real happiness and peace to humankind.

CHARITY (*DĀNA*)



Giving *dāna* is essential in Buddhism. The giving includes charity, or giving material help to people in need. It also includes giving spiritual guidance to those who seek it and loving-kindness to all who need it. However, one's motivation for giving to others is at least as important as what is given. The Buddha taught that when we give to others, we give without expectation of reward. We give without attaching to either the gift or recipient. We practice giving *dāna* to release greed and self-clinging.

Dāna means giving or charity. There are two types of *dāna*, namely, (i) *cetanādāna* and *vatthudāna*. Offering of goods, robes, monasteries, etc., is classified as *vatthudāna*, while the good-will in this charitable act is called *cetanā* (volition). This *cetanā* that produces beneficial results here and in the next existences is not the material things that are offered. This mental attitude which is projected onto the offerings produces the good results in the future existences. If the offerings are good and noble, so also is the *cetanā* (volition).⁵²

During an offering of alms-food to the *saṅgha* (monks), if a donor has as his object of awareness the food he offers and the *saṅgha* he is offering to, then continuous stream of *cetanā* (volition) occurs incessantly in his mind-continuum. That *cetanā* arises and disappears in a very rapid succession, but does not disappear totally. The forces created by the *cetanā* are just like dormant to produce corresponding later. Taking into consideration that more than one trillion units of consciousness can occur and disappear with the snap of fingers, one might imagine the magnitude of *cetanā* that occurred during an almsgiving rite which lasts, say, three hours.

OFFERINGS AND RECIPIENT PROMOTE KEEN *CETANĀ*

Although offerings such as alms-food and recipients of offerings cannot follow the donor to the next life and bring benevolence, they certainly help to promote a keen *cetanā* in the donor. For example, offering specially prepared alms-food to the *saṅgha* incites a vigorous *cetanā* whilst offering ordinary alms-food incites a somewhat feeble *cetanā*. Again, charity given to worthy recipients incites strong *cetanā*, whereas charity given to normal recipients incites a frail *cetanā*. In this way, offerings donated and the persons receiving the charity help promote a keen *cetanā* in the mind of the donors.

THE QUANTITY OF OFFERINGS

The respective efforts exerted to offers different amounts offerings may differ accordingly. For the zealous efforts in procuring a large quantity of offerings, there will arise a strong *cetanā* (volition). Procuring only a small quantity of offerings will naturally call for

less effort and the corresponding *cetanā* will be relatively less. In preparing for a large amount of offerings, the volition before the moment of giving (*pubba-cetanā*) will accordingly be immense. Therefore, when the *cetanās* in *dāna* of large and small quantity are compared, it is obvious that the *cetanā* in *dāna* of large amount is superior. So, *dānas* of large and small amount differ in effects because of the duration of *cetanā* in each case.

If *dāna* be grand and lavish so also is the *cetanā*. During the time of *dāna*, volition at the moment of giving (*muñcana-cetanā*) will also be proportion to the *dāna*. After charity has been made, the volition after the moment of giving (*aparāpara-cetanā*) will also be of equal scale whenever you think of this *dāna* again and again. Such states of mind are of common occurrence.

LAVISH DĀNA BUT MEAGER CETANĀ

Some donors offer alms-food, buildings, clothes, ritually or perfunctorily. If so, even though *dāna* may be lavish and grand, their *cetanā* is no match to it; they do not feel appreciatively joy because the good deed was done with little volition. Therefore, quantity or quality of offerings alone cannot determine the generosity of a donor. When King *Duṭṭhagāmanī Abhaya* was on his death-bed, he did not feel much joy in his merit of building the great *Mahāceti* Pagoda; instead he felt great joy in recalling his small merit of offering one meal to a monk in the forest. Due to this great *cetanā* he was reborn in the celestial abode of *Tusita Devas*. Therefore, keep in mind that *cetanā* only will determine your destiny, not the quantity or value of gifts you have offered. *Cetanā* is more important than lavishness of your charity.

CHARITY IS ANALOGOUS TO SOWING SEEDS

Recipients are the fields, donors are the farmers, offerings are the seeds sown, and benefits in future are the fruits.

In the *Petavatthu*, it is said, “The recipient of charity is like the land; the donor, the farmer, the offerings, the seeds sown. The benefits accrued later throughout *saṃsāra* (cycle of rebirths) are the fruits that are borne from the plants.” Let us elaborate:

1. In agriculture, the type of soil whether good or bad, determines the yield. Similarly, the integrity and nobility of the recipient determine the nature of beneficial results.
2. Just as the vitality of the seeds sown determines the growth and productivity of the plants, the purity of offerings, gifts, whether they are procured through right livelihood or not, and the quantity, determine the nature of beneficial results.
3. Just as farmers will reap harvest in conformity with their skill in farming and efforts, so also donors will enjoy results depending on their level of intelligence, appreciative joy and their sincere effort in giving *dāna*.
4. Farmers have to prepare to till and plough their fields properly, before sowing the seeds so as to ensure a good yield. Likewise, donors must have the pre-charity good-will (*pubba-cetanā*) before giving *dāna*. Result will depend on the intensity of their *pubba-cetanā*.
5. Farmers need to weed and water their fields; only then the plants will flourish. In the same way, donors need to recall their charity and feel satisfaction for the meritorious deed. This post-charity volition (*aparāpara-cetanā*) of the donors

determines the nature of beneficial results.

6. If farmers, through folly, destroy their sprouts and seedlings, they cannot enjoy the product of their labor. Similarly, If donors feel that they should not have done the alms-giving and regret for it afterwards, then they fail to enjoy good results due to their feeble post-charity volition (*aparāpara-cetanā*).
7. Even though the land and the seeds are all in good condition, the sowing should be done in the right season, the right time so as to get a healthy crop. In the same way, one should give alms-giving to the needy at the suitable time and place. Such charity brings about the best results.

There are such valuable lessons and guidance regarding *dāna* in the *Peta-vatthu*. Therefore, in the giving charity, the correct choice of recipient, the appropriateness of the time and place are very important. The *dāna* must be done with a blissful mind and cheerful volition. Moreover, one should not do *dāna* with a view to getting worldly wealth because such a wish is associated with greed and craving. Your *cetanā* should be as pure as possible.

In addition, all forms of charity call for three types of *cetanā*, namely, the volition before the moment of giving (*pubba-cetanā*), volition at the moment of giving (*muñcana-cetanā*), and volition after the moment of giving (*aparāpara-cetanā*).

VOLITION BEFORE THE MOMENT OF GIVING (PUBBA-CETANĀ)

The good volition which occurs while procuring and preparing for charity is called *pubba-cetanā*. Your *cetanā* must be free from vain

pride or selfishness such as, “I am the builder of this pagoda; I am the donor of this monastery; I am the donor of offerings,” etc. while you are preparing for the charity, you and members of your family must not indulge in quarrels and disagreements. You must not hesitate in carrying on with the good deed once you have already decided. When you feel delighted and cheerful during your preparations throughout, you may then rest assured that pure and sincere *pubba-cetanā* will prevail.

VOLITION AT THE MOMENT OF GIVING (*MUÑCANA-CETANĀ*)

Muñcana means renouncing. Therefore, the volition which arises while one is renouncing or giving in the act of donating food, the volition that arises when one is in the act of offering to the recipient, and in the act of donating by giving orders, the volition that arises at the moment one says: “I donate.” –is called *muñcana cetanā*. At the moment of this *muñcana cetanā*, if one can prevent unwholesome states mentioned earlier from arising, or avoiding attachment to the recipient, or give freely without expecting any return from the recipient, one can rest assured that one’s volitions renouncing have arisen with purity.

VOLITION AFTER THE MOMENT OF GIVING (*APARĀPARA CETANĀ*)

This third *cetanā*, which occurs after the completion of the deed of the merit, is the bliss of accomplishment you enjoy for having done a virtuous act. You feel joyous for your accomplishment of the deed, recall it often and wish to repeat it soon. This is the burgeoning of your *aparāpara-cetanā*.

However, at a later time *aparāpara-cetanā* can be contaminated if you feel dissatisfied at the loss of the property donated or if you feel disappointed with the abbot to whom you have donated a monastery. Then you might ponder: “May I should not have given that charity,” if so, not only is your *aparāpara-cetanā* spoiled but also you develop an evil attitude of dissatisfaction.⁵³

On the other hand, giving with pure enthusiasm is called “Perfection of Giving.” There are lists of perfections that are slightly different between *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, but charity is the first perfection on every list. The perfection might be thought of as strengths or virtues that lead one to enlightenment. Nevertheless, the practice of giving is universally known as one of most basic human virtues, a characteristic that testifies to the depth of the one’s humanity and one’s capacity for self-transcendence. In the Buddha’s teaching, likewise, the practice of giving demands a place of special eminence, one that singles it out as being in a sense the foundation and seed of spiritual growth.

Furthermore, Buddha advised to give without attaching to either the gift or the recipient. Yet in Buddhism, to avoid attachment doesn’t mean we all can not have any friends. Completely the opposite, as a matter of fact, attachment can only happen when there are at least two separate things, an attacher, and something to attach to. But shorting the world into subjects and objects is delusion. Nonetheless, attachment comes from a habit of consciousness that sorts the world into “Me” and “Everything else.” Attachment leads to possessiveness and a tendency to influence everything, including people, to our own personal advantage. To be

non-attached is to recognize that nothing is extremely separate.

Moreover, this leads us back to the realization that the giver and the receiver are one. And the gift is not separated either; therefore, we give without expectation of reward from the recipient. Including a "Thank you," and we place no conditions on the gift. Even so, a generous spirit is about more than just giving to charity. It is a spirit of responding to the world and giving what is needed and appropriate at the time.

All in all, this spirit of charity is an important foundation of practice. It helps tear down our ego-walls while it makes better some of the pain of the world. And it also includes being grateful for the generosity shown to you. This is the practice of perfection of giving.

KĀYĀNUPASSANĀ

THE WAY TO NIBBĀNA



In the Buddha's teaching, the Buddha taught the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*). These four foundations of mindfulness are the direct Paths to free oneself from all types of mental and physical sufferings, distress, painful and so forth and finally attain the *Nibbāna*. In daily life, we always encounter with these types of mental and physical sufferings at different levels. If we apply the practice of these Four Foundations of Mindfulness from day to day, then we can get rid of all types of these sufferings.

In the *satipaṭṭhānasutta*, the Buddha teaches the Four Foundations of Mindfulness as follows:

1. *Kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*—the contemplation of body,
2. *Vedanānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna* –the contemplation of feeling,
3. *Cittānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna* –the contemplation of mind, and
4. *Dhammānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna* –the contemplation of phenomena.⁵⁴

Among these four, here the contemplation of body (*kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*) is described. The contemplation on body (*kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*) is divided into 14 ways:⁵⁵ *ānāpanapabba*—the section of *ānāpāna*, *iriyāpathapabba*—the section on the deportment of four postures, *sampajaññapabba*—the section on clear comprehensive, *paṭikūlamanasik-ārapabba*—the section on the reflection on the repulsiveness of the body, *dhātumanasikārapabba*—the section on the reflection of material element and *navasīthikapabba*—the section on nine cemetery contemplations. These fourteen ways are the direct paths to free from sufferings, the attainment of *Nibbāna*.

The practice of *ānāpāṇa* is the essential factors for the enlightenment of final *Nibbāna*. In the *Ānāpaṇa-satisutta*, the Buddha said:

“O *Bhikkhus*, if mindfulness of breathing is cultivated and developed many times for a lengthy period, the four foundations of mindfulness are fulfilled and perfected.

If the four foundations of mindfulness are cultivated and developed many times for a lengthy period, the seven factors of enlightenment are fulfilled and perfected.

If the seven factors of enlightenment are cultivated and developed many times for a lengthy period, knowledge and deliverance are fulfilled and perfected.”⁵⁶

The practice of *ānāpāṇa* is observed in four ways:

1. He understands, “I breathe in long.” When he breathes in long; He understands, “I breathe out long.” When he breathes out long.
2. He understands, “I breathe in short.” When he breathes in

- short; He understands, "I breathes out short." When he breathes out short.
3. "I shall breathe in experiencing the whole breath body," thus he trains; "I shall breathe out in experiencing the whole breath body," thus he trains.
 4. "I shall breathe in tranquillizing the whole body-formation," thus he trains; "I shall breathe out tranquillizing the whole body-formation," thus he trains.⁵⁷

The next section is the noting on the postures of the body (*iriyāpatha*). In general, there are four types of posture: lying down, walking, standing and sitting. In the *satipaṭṭhānasutta*, the Buddha said, "Oh *Bhikkhus*, when he is going, he understands: 'I am going'; when he is standing, he understands: 'I am standing'; when he is sitting, he understands: 'I am sitting'; when he is lying down, he understands: 'I am lying down'; or just as his body is disposed so he understands it."⁵⁸

Further, the practice of clear comprehension is regularly practiced in daily life. In going forwards, or backwards; in looking forwards or backwards; in eating or drinking and so on, he is clear comprehension. In this regard, the Buddha said, "Oh *Bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu*, in going forwards and in going backwards, in looking straight on and in looking away from the front, in bending and stretching, in wearing and taking bowl, ...is a person practicing clear comprehension..."⁵⁹

Once again, the reflection on the repulsiveness of the body (*paṭikūlamanasikāra*) is taught after *sampajañña* for the purpose of seeing the reality of body as repulsiveness. In the body,

it is full of repulsive impurities. It is tied with hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, and flesh and so on.⁶⁰ By practice the reflection on the repulsiveness of the body, one is free from the attachment to the body.

Next, it is the practice of the reflection on the element (*dhātu*). The Buddha further said, "Oh *Bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* reflects on just this body according as it is placed or disposed, by way of the modes of materiality, thinking thus: 'There are in this body the mode of solidity, cohesion, caloricity, and the mode of oscillation.'⁶¹

Last, it is the practice of nine cemetery contemplations. These nine cemetery contemplations are enumerated in detail in the *sutta*. Here is briefly described as the Buddha said, "Oh *Bhikkhus*, if a *bhikkhu*, in whatever way, sees a body dead, one two, or three days; swollen, blue, and festering, thrown into the charnel ground, ...he thinks of his own body thus: Verily, this body of mine too is of the same natures as that body, is going to be like that body and has not got past the condition of becoming like that body."⁶²

By practicing the contemplation of body (*kāyānupassanā*), one is hope to get many benefits enumerated in the *satipaṭṭhānasutta*. Hopefully, seven benefits are obtained as the Buddha said, "Oh *Bhikkhus*, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for reaching the right Path, for the attainment of *Nibbāna*..."⁶³

Therefore, '*kāyānupassanā: the way to Nibbāna*' is the Path leading to the island of *Nibbāna* where all types of mental and physical sufferings, distress, etc., are completely free. Hence, one should not neglect this Path but regularly practice in daily life.

I THINK THEREFORE I AM NOT



What is mind? No matter. What is matter? Never mind. The Indian philosophy considers soul and mind different from each other. But the western philosophy believes them to be one and the same.

According to some religions, each individual has such a separate soul which is created by God, and which, finally after death, lives eternally either in hell or heaven, its destiny depends on the judgment of its creator. According to others, it goes through many lives till it is completely purified and becomes finally united with God or *Brahman*, Universal Soul or *Ātman*, from which it originally emanated. This soul or self in man is the thinker of thoughts, feeler of sensations, and receiver of rewards and punishments for all its actions: good and bad. Such a conception is called the idea of self.⁶⁴

The Jainas define *Jīva* or *Ātman* as conscious substance. *Ātman* is this world is known as *Jīva*. It has *prāñā* and physical, mental and sensuous powers. In its pure condition, *Jīva* has pure knowledge and vision. *Jīva* is self-illuminated and illuminates others things

also. It is eternal and pervades the whole body. It enjoys the fruits of actions and tends to go upwards.⁶⁵ A classical Hinduism accepts the immortality of the soul. *Shankara* teaches that a *Jīva* is really identical with Brahman (*jīvo brahmaiva*). According to *Rāmānuja*, a *Jīva* is only a part of *Brahman* and remains conserved to the end, whether in bondage or in the state of liberation. This is also maintained by all those who advocate the path of devotion to a personal God.⁶⁶

On the other hand, Buddhism, in the contemporary religions of Brahmanism and Jainism, is the religion of non-self which denies the absolute self, everlasting ego and unchanging soul as the result of trickery of ignorance and craving. The Self-concept is imaginary work, hallucination, false view and egoism goes against the reality. It encourages neither beings to find the self nor the creator of the soul. Naturally the Buddha did not accept that the illusory notion of man as a permanent self can be maintained. This illusion will land him into a state of painfulness, for analysis reveals that man is but a stream of psycho-physical events. What is transitory, is painful, what is painful, is *anattā*, what is *anattā*, is not mine, this am I not, this is not myself. Anyway, His negative way is perhaps final:

"You teach the attā, but I teach what attā is not.

You know the attā, but I only know what the attā is not.

*Therefore, you are always talking about the attā, but I only speak of anattā."*⁶⁷

This teaching shows the nobility of the Buddha who insights the truth and radical concept against the soul ideas and *Ātman*. The

Buddha's teaching does not support this ignorance, weakness, craving, hallucination, fear, and desire as the higher qualities of life. For him, self or ego is just unreal, doubtful, confused, false and empty, and it can lead the man to falling into the mystical, animistic and metaphysical worshipping. This is a reason why He taught non-self in self in contrast to self in non-self.

Besides, the source of self-concept is nothing but misunderstanding of the reality to be folded by the unwholesome roots especially ignorance and illusion. Or, No-soul is erroneously perceived, thought, and viewed as soul that is in *Pāli* called *saññāvipallāsa* (hallucination of perception), *cittavipallāsa* (hallucination of mind) and *diṭṭhivipallāsa* (hallucination of view). Here *atta* or soul is the supposed underlying essence of a pictorial idea (*santhāna-paññatti*), and *Jīva* or life is the supposed underlying essence of an aggregate-idea (*santati-paññatti*).⁶⁸ To this view can be traced all the evil in the world. Two ideas are psychologically deep-rooted in man: self-protection and self-preservation. For self-protection, man has created God, on whom he depends for his own protection, safety and security, just as a child depends on his parents. For self-preservation, man has conceived the idea of an immortal Soul or *Ātman*, which will live eternally. In his ignorance, weakness, fear, and desire, man needs these two things to console himself. Hence, he clings to them deeply and fanatically. These ideas are so deep-rooted in man, and so near and dear to him, that he does not wish to hear, nor does he want to understand any teaching against them.⁶⁹ For example, Descartes believes that the mind (soul or self) and the matter are the two substances of the ultimate reality, adding that thinking is not possible without self as no running is possible

without the runner and especially his philosophical sentence says *Cogito ergo sum*, “I think therefore I am.”

According to above philosophical concept of Descartes, it is from the attachment of thinking and soul or I which Buddhist language erroneously called *vipallāsa* (hallucination) or *micchādiṭṭhi* (wrong view). Indeed, “I think therefore I am.” known to me that the starting point of Descartes seems to recognize the existence of reality of thinking, but his conclusion comes to attach to the existence of soul or self as thinking’s result. Actually, he denied the empirical research because it cannot be experimented by scientific method. He did not deliberate where his real psychology of mind process and what difference of self and thinking are and how thinking can become soul. Or, he thought that thinking is self or self represents thinking or both have the same values and characteristics in his philosophical concept.

However, considering into this theory of what he mentioned, thinking is ‘I’. Without thinking, surely never is there ‘I’. And ‘I’ is the result of ‘Thinking.’ But he rejected the other actions from thinking. He did not mean that ‘I do therefore I am.’ Yet, this is not the same thing for the word ‘thinking’ and ‘I’. Thinking is just mental process conditioned by causes and roots. According to Buddhism, thinking is just mind. The mind is reality working in normal way of arising, developing and falling away. And ‘I’ is not reality. It is just trickery of misconception and hallucination of feeling or mind. Self or I is against mental function and its reality. If we ask what in the word ‘think’ is, there must be just the process of thought. If thinking is ‘I,’ it is possible to be various ‘I’. If I think of monkey, therefore I am a

monkey. If I think of my plan, therefore I am a plan. If I think of computer, therefore I am a computer. This is the game of personality belief. Hence, it is not the same thing for thinking and 'I'. Thinking is not 'I' and 'I' is not thinking. It is wrong to say thinking is 'I,' and 'I' is thinking.

Analogously speaking, his concept is to take earthen dish as real dish, not earth. It mistakes earth with dish. The dish made from earth is not the same. Earth is one thing and dish is another. Earth is an ultimate thing and dish is a mere conception of the mind. And again, the dish is the earth. It is wrong to call earth as dish, and to call dish as earth. In fact, this theory originates four false thoughts or hallucinations which can be concluded as follows:

1. Thinking is 'I' or 'soul'.
2. 'I' is thinking or thought.
3. Thinking has an instinct nature of 'I'.
4. Thinking can create different 'souls' or 'I-identities' by its own tendencies. As the result, "*I think therefore I am.*"

Still, for Buddhists, there is existence of thinking and thought process in ultimate sense, and I- concept cannot be found in reality but can be heard by conventional truth. What is called soul or I is replaced by non-soul or non-I. If self or soul really existed, the Buddha would not teach the *Dhamma* to enlighten beings, for soul is a kind of ignorance, pride and craving especially it has no ear and ear-consciousness to listen to the Buddha's sound. The illusory and hallucination of feeling, consciousness and thought are not necessary standpoints for the ultimate good of life for Buddhists because they cannot take soul or delusion as real refuge to liberate

themselves from suffering. Based on this, Buddhism upholds *anattā* with the purpose of distinguishing self from thinking or thought process. Here, the argument goes as following:

1. No 'I' in thinking.
2. 'I' is not thinking.
3. Thinking is just the natural process of mind.
4. Thinking and soul or I are not the same and thinking cannot create 'I' in Buddhist reality. Hence, "*I think therefore I am not.*"

The Buddha further explained the detail of the non-substantiality of life saying, "Whatsoever form there is should be regarded: 'This is not mine (*netam mama*); this am I not (*nesohamasmi*); This is not my soul (*na meso attā*).'"⁷⁰ Here, Venerable *Nārada* explained that with craving (*taṇhā*) one erroneously thinks – this is mine. With pride (*māna*) one thinks – This am I. With false view one thinks – this is my soul. These are the three misconceptions.⁷¹ *Ajahn Chah* said, "If the body could talk, it would be telling all day long 'You are not my owner,' you know."⁷² Eyes are not I or mine, ears are not you or yours, nose are not her or hers, tongue is not him or his, body is not us or ours and of whose are these?

Denying the personality belief of 'I,' Hume (English philosopher) believes the self is a bundle of perception. He made improvement upon the empirical theories of Berkeley. He argues that just as we cannot experience the existence of a fundamental substance. So, we cannot experience any self that is believed to be within us. He demonstrated that there is no self either absolute or infinite. He believes that what is called self is nothing but a conglomeration of differing sensations, sensations that follow each other with

bewildering and thought defying rapidity, sensations which change in a never ending stream. He contends that the self is not something simple but is in fact a collection of mental function. Nothing exists apart from mental functions and as these functions change, one should believe the self to change accordingly. Obviously then, it is not possible to accept the existence of soul which is absolute, infinite, and indestructible. Thus, his arguments against self are given by him as follows:

1. Self is not absolute.
2. Self is not subject of perception, and
3. Thought experiences itself.⁷³

With this respect, whatever is called self is not absolute, not real, not thought or perception. Just the experiences of thought or perception exist.

His standpoint is on a par with Buddhist teachings which regard the thought process called *vithī-citta* in *Abhidhamma* functioning as knowing the objects as its characteristic and changing its movement as natural law due to some causes and conditions. The conditioned and unconditioned things are in the hand of what is called Non-self. Everything connected to the five aggregates are non-self, the mind and matter of five aggregates are non-soul, and everything outside the five aggregates are non-self. Hence, its function is in the place of self or soul. This evidence is the case in the Buddhist argument to be recognized as following:

- There is thinking, no thinker.
- There is feeling, no feeler.
- There is seeing, no seer.

There is doing, no doer.

There is walking, no walker.

This argument points out some reasons:

1. Buddhists recognize mental function and its reality,
2. It is to give up the absolute self-concept, and
3. The beginning and the end start with the reality. On account of this, the striking verse was well uttered by the Buddha:

“Dukkham eva hi na koci dukkhito,

kāraṇaṃ na kiriyāva vijjati;

atthi nibbuti na nibbuto pumā,

maggamatthi gamako na vijjati.

For there is suffering but none who suffers,

Doing exists although there is doer,

While there is peace no person is at peace,

A path exists but none who goes thereby.”⁷⁴

Hence, everybody means nobody. Nobody means non-self. Non-self means nothing but non-self. What is more, the stage of life begins with change and ends in non-self. Therefore, “I think therefore I am not.” is upheld by the Buddhist point of view.

THE OBSTACLES TO ATTAIN MAGGAS AND PHALAS IN THIS VERY LIFE



At the time of the Buddha, some persons failed to become one of the four noble persons in this very life even after hearing the *Dhamma* directly from the teachers or even in the presence of the Buddha. In this case, what is the reason for their failure to realization? Therefore, the purpose of this article examines the obstacles to their attainment in this very life.

The obstacles which hinder the way to realize the Noble Paths and Fruitions in this very life are: the negligence to perform the actions (*kiriyaāparihāni*) and association with bad friend (*pāpamittatā*). These two obstacles are clearly stated in the *Vinayasāratthadīpanīṭikā* and the *Majjhimaṭṭhakathā* (*Papañcasūdanī*).⁷⁵

The word '*kiriyaāparihāni*' means negligence to perform the action, failure to do the action or lack of practice. The negligence to perform the action (*kiriyaāparihāni*) is two kinds:

1. The negligence to perform the action on part of the teacher or the instructor, and
2. The negligence on part of the follower, disciple or practitioner.⁷⁶

The duty of teacher and student or practitioner is inactive. It is the negligence of duty if the teacher does not make his sermons comprehensive and intelligible enough to be understood by his disciples. Particularly, some people do wish to practice the *Dhamma* but there is no teacher to preach or guide them. So they grow old and die without having any opportunity to practice the *Dhamma*, let alone savour its taste. On the other hand, there are many people who have only themselves to blame for their non-enlightenment, for although they have heard many sermons on the *Buddhadhamma* but they do not study or practice them seriously.⁷⁷

Related to the negligence to perform the action of the preacher or the teacher, here the story of *Brāhmaṇ* named *Dhanañjāni* is an example. In the *Vinayasāratthadīpanītikā*, it is said that if the chief disciple Venerable *Dhammasenāpati Sāriputta* has known the *brāhmaṇ*'s predilection (*āsaya/ajjhāsaya*) and then expounded the *Dhamma* to him, he will become a *sotāpanna* person.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, he failed to attain the stream-enterer (*sotāpanna*). Therefore, the negligence to perform the action of the teacher is the obstacle to realize noble Paths and Fruitions in this very life.

Likewise, the story of *Tambadāṭhika* is also included in the case of *kiriyaṇaparihāni*. In the *Dhammapada* commentary, it is said that he never does any good deeds but killing the thieves for fifty-five years.

When he is deposed from his position as the public executioner, he met with the chief disciple Venerable *Sāriputta* and heard the *Dhamma* taught to him. After hearing the discourse, he attained only the stage of *Saṅkhārūpekkhāñāṇa*.⁷⁹ In fact, he has the potential perfection to become the first noble person (*sotāpanna*) but he failed. Here the main reason for him not to become a noble person is the slackness in the practice of meditation with mindfulness, i.e. (*kiriyaṇāparihāni*).⁸⁰ Hence, it is included in the *kiriyaṇāparihāni* of the teacher.

Besides, the negligence of student or the practitioner is also included in the case of *kiriyaṇāparihāni*. Even the teacher who is competent and qualified can give the best instruction to student or the practitioner but his student or follower cannot realize the noble Paths and Fruitions. Here the story of *Pessa* is one of the examples. In the *Kandarakasutta* of *Majjhimanikāya*, it is said that soon after he had left, the Blessed One addressed the *Bhikkhus* thus:

“*Bhikkhus*, *Pessa*, the elephant driver’s son, is wise, he has great wisdom. If he had sat a while longer until I had expounded for him in detail these four kinds of persons, he would have greatly benefited...”⁸¹

Here *Pessa* would become the first noble person but he rose from his seat and left before the Buddha had completed his discourse. Therefore, he failed to be a *sotapanna*.

Remarkably, the negligence to perform the action (*kiriyaṇāparihāni*) on part of the teacher happens to only the disciples of the Buddha; it does not relate to the Buddha. If one failed to attain any of the

noble Paths and Fruitions in this very life, it is not because of the Buddha but his disciples. In fact, the Buddhas with their great effort always give a discourse to a person who has the potential perfection to realize His discourse. It happens to only the disciples of the Buddhas. Hence, there is no obstacle related to the Buddhas.⁸²

Regarding the teacher, most venerable *Sayadaw* Dr. *Nandamālābhivamsa*, rector of the *International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University*, delivered a speech to the university students during the 15th *ācariyapūjā* that there are two kinds of teacher: a teacher in the field study of general knowledge related to the mundane and a teacher in the field of path that leads to the enlightenment of *jhāna*, *magga*, and *phala*.⁸³ Here, among the two kinds of teacher, the first teacher can easily find but the second type of teacher is really difficult to find out.

Thus, the negligence to perform the action is one of the factors which hinder the way to realize the noble Paths and Fruitions in this very life.

Another reason is the association with a bad friend (*pāpamittatā*).⁸⁴ Generally, there are two kinds of friend: (i) good friend (*kalyāṇamitta*) and (ii) bad friend (*pāpamitta*). These two kinds of friend are associated one to another in this world. Even one cannot avoid all these kinds of friend but one should not associate with the bad friend. Importantly, one should not choose the bad friend as his teacher or his adviser. The reason is that the association with the bad friend is one of the most obstructive factors leading to not realization of the *maggas* and *phalas* in this very life. The attainment

of these *maggas* and *phalas* is impossible if one is associated with the bad friend.

In the *maṅgalasutta*, the Buddha said: “Not to associate with the evil friend.”⁸⁵ Here, He puts this blessing in the first place among the thirty eight blessings as to it is very important one. If it happens to oneself, the attainment of other blessings is impossible.

The association with false friends is a hindrance for the development of moral virtues, (*pāpamittatā sīlānaṃ paripantho*).⁸⁶ In the *santhavajātaka*, it is said, “Nothing is worse than evil company (*na santhavasmā paramatthi pāpiyo*).”⁸⁷ In the *Bhayasutta*, the Buddha said, “Whatever fear, danger or trouble has happened is because of the fool, not the wise.”⁸⁸ Hence, the fool is the great danger for the development of virtue.

To live or to go alone is the best choice if one cannot find anyone who is better than or equal to him for his companion. In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha said:

“*Carañce nādhigaccheyya,
seyyaṃ sadisamattano;
ekacariyaṃ daḷhaṃ kayirā,
natthi bāle sahāyatāti.*”⁸⁹

If a person seeking a companion cannot find one who is better than or equal to him, let him resolutely go on alone, there can be no companionship with the fool.”⁹⁰

Without the Buddha’s guidance, one is not easy to know or recognize the characteristics of the bad friend. Here, in the *Bālavagga* of

Aṅguttaranikāya, He shows the way how to recognize the characteristics of bad friend through his actions.

The fool usually does the actions in three ways:

1. The evil conduct by the body (*kāyaduccarita*),
2. The evil conduct by word (*vacīduccarita*), and
3. The evil conduct through mind (*manoduccarita*).

Again, the evil friend habitually does the other three actions:

1. An evil friend thinks unwholesomely (*duccintitacintī*),
2. He speaks unwholesomely (*dubbhāsitabhāsī*) and
3. He does unwholesomely (*dukkataṭakammakārī*).⁹¹

Moreover, the characteristics of bad friend are described in the *Siṅgālakasutta*. This *sutta* gives an explanation of friendship in detail. There are four false friends described in the advice to young *Siṅgālaka* as follows:

1. A friend who only takes from one and does not give in return;
2. The friend who renders lip-service by making empty promises;
3. The friend who flatters; and
4. The friend who is an associate in activities that lead to loss of wealth.

The friend who only takes is recognized by four characteristics:

1. He only takes from one and does not give in return;
2. He wants much in return for giving only a little;
3. He renders service only when he gets into trouble; and
4. He attends on one only for his own advantage.

The friend who renders lip-service by making empty promises is recognized by four characteristics:

1. He speaks about what he could have done for one;
2. He speaks about what he would do in future for one;
3. He tries to please one with empty promises; and
4. When occasion actually arises to render his assistance, he expresses his inability to do so.

The friend who flatters is recognized by four characteristics:

1. He approves of the evil actions of his friend;
2. He approves also of the good actions of his friend;
3. He praises him in his presence; and
4. He speaks ill of him in his absence.

And the friend who is an associate in activities that lead to loss of wealth is recognized by four characteristics:

1. He is a companion when indulging in intoxicants that cause inebriety and negligence;
2. He is a companion when sauntering in streets at unseemly hours;
3. He is a companion when frequenting shows and entertainments; and
4. He is a companion when indulging in gambling which causes negligence.⁹²

Therefore, one can recognize these natures of bad friends; Otherwise, one loses everything if he does not know the characteristics of bad friend.

The association with bad friend brings about the bad consequences, that is to say, the loss of one's benefits and the benefits to others.

With the influence of bad friend, the great destruction is happened to oneself. Everything is lost even the attainment of noble Paths and Fruitions in this very life. For instance, the king *Ajātasattu* and the son of *Mahādhanaṣeṭṭhi* are described here.

In the *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, it is said that the king *Ajātasattu* failed to become a *sotāpanna* after hearing this *sutta*. The reason is that he associated with the evil monk, venerable *Devadatta* whom he is regarded as his teacher. Because of this evil monk, he had killed his own father king *Bimbisāra*.⁹³ In the *Dhammapada* commentary, it is said that the son of *Mahāseṭṭhi* and his wife lost everything, that is to say, they lost all the great wealth of laymen and also the opportunity to become any of the noble persons in this very life.⁹⁴ These two stories point out that the association with bad friends destroys or cut off the benefit for oneself and others.

In conclusion, the negligence to do the action (*kiriyaṃparihāni*) and association with bad friend (*pāpamittatā*) are the main obstructions for the enlightenment of any noble Paths and Fruitions in this very life. If these two obstructions are happened, one is hopeless in his attempt to become any of the noble persons. Hence, these are the main reasons why some failed to become any of noble Paths and Fruitions in this life.

LIFE DEVELOPMENT



Life is a very complex machine to be understood precisely. According to its etymological definition, it is a state of being alive. Naturally when there is life, there is something that encircles the life—the bad things and the good things. From moment to moment life keeps changing and developing instantly and incessantly. But that changing and developing may go wrong or right, according to one's own actions. From the past up to now, many people have tried to develop their life by practicing many technical methods of various religious sects to get the right path of life. Just like the Buddha, He had practiced many methods to get the real meaning of life, but He could not find it within a period of long time. Ultimately, He has found the way of real meaning of life. He named that way the "The Middle Path," the way leading to understanding the real nature of life. So, to develop life correctly, one has to consult with the learned in order to receive their guidance, to associate with a good friend, to read a good book, and to practice to get the real sense of life, etc. with regard to finding of the sphere of life, Buddhism provides a clear reference to the

development of life. All the *Buddhas* teach thus: “Not to do any evil deeds, to accumulate the wholesome deeds, and to purify one’s mind. Another way, one has to develop the morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*).”

As it is above mentioned, one has to develop his/her life. First, we should know the life.

- What is really the life?
 1. Is life only the body?
 2. Is life only the experience?
 3. Is life only breathing?
 4. Is life only the dream?
- What do we live for?
 1. Do we live for ourselves?
 2. Do we live for our family?
 3. Do we live for study?
 4. Do we live for money?
 5. Do we live for eating?
 6. Do we live for marriage?
 7. Do we live for our work?
 8. Do we live for our country?
 9. Do we live for the new generation?

So, life is big to learn, not many people can understand clearly about life. But they know they are happy when they get good wealth, good status, good praise, and good pleasure, etc. And they get sad when they lost of wealth, lost of status, got criticized from the other people, and got pain.

That is the nature of life; just like the world says: "Do not worry about whether you are good or bad as long as you have money." This is just opposite of the *Dhamma* which says: "Do not worry about whether you are rich or poor as long as you are a good person." And each of us has four kinds of values as following:

- The goodness of our deeds,
- The goodness of our words,
- The goodness of our manners, and
- The goodness of our thoughts.

As we are different from animals by our wisdom; so, we are called human beings, and we recognized as the cleverest one in this world because we know how to think in the good ways, and by our good thinking, reasonable thinking, morality thinking can make us become the real human.

Here are some useful ideas for all human beings ...

- Everyone cannot be the same, so if you are lucky or rich, do not look down on others.
- There are a lot of clever people, but only a few good guides and there are many good things but only a few good doers.
- The good one wish to be the good child, good student, good citizen and good Buddhist.
- The biggest mistake of the people is that "They know the good things but they do not do, they know the bad things but they never stop."
- The people who get failed because they only think but never start to do or they only do but never think.
- The successful one always creates the new chances, but

they never wait for chances.

- Most of the people have the same mistake, by thinking that getting failed is the enemy of success.
- The people who have no goal always work for the one who has goal.
- The people like correcting the other people, but they never wish the other people to correct them.
- The people should know that "This life is so short and full of dangers." So, we should devote ourselves for others and society.
- In this world, it is impossible to have the same life and no clear meaning of the word "success" because the people always give different meaning of the word "success."
- Although the nature gives us different brain and body but we have the same "time" for study, for training, no body become clever by doing nothing.
- Time can change the people but the people cannot change it.
- It is useless to act as the great person because the great person is the simplest one.
- The nature of water always flows to the low place. In the same way, the bad deed also brings the people into the low place, only the good deed can lead people to reach the high place.
- There is different chance to become rich but we have the same chance to become good.
- Human resource development is the real property of one society.

- The living fish always swims against water but the dead fish always flows through water.
- If you are not a leader, you will be the follower.

In conclusion, we are human beings; so, we should focus the human resource development, avoid all kinds of evils, to pile up the good deeds, and should moralize in the society, tranquilize the mind, and amass the wisdom. All these factors will produce prosperous, healthy, happy, and peaceful society.

CONCLUSION



This book has discussed about ten articles in detail, and these ten articles which mainly based on the Buddha's teachings are very useful and important for all beings.

Having come to the conclusion of these ten articles, it is found out that many people both in Eastern and Western countries are very interested in Buddhism because of the following reasons:

- Buddhism is a religion teaching us to avoid the utterance of false speech but to utter only the words which are beneficial, useful and true. It gives us freedom of speech and the right of choice to say any words that bring peace, happiness, equality, harmony and justice to our society.
- Buddhism is a religion teaching us to be grateful to our parents. It is a religion teaching us the priceless lessons given by our parents. The priceless lessons given by the parents to be followed are very important for all children. If the children follow the parents' advice, they will succeed in their life just sooner or later.

- Buddhism teaches us not to associate with bad friend, to avoid him as much as possible. The evil friend is harmful to all human beings; he is the hindrance for development of tranquility and insight meditation. There is no attainment of good virtues by association with evil friend. It also teaches us to live a meaningful life, a valuable life, prosperous life, and attainment of noble Paths, Fruitions, and *Nibbāna* by association with good friend.
- Buddhism is a religion teaching us to believe in kamma and its results. The practice of morality, loving-kindness, truthfulness, gratitude, patience, and offering *dāna*, etc., is so important in today world.
- Buddhism is a religion teaching us a way to liberate from suffering in the round of rebirths through *Satipaṭṭhāna* Meditation to attain Noble Paths, Fruitions and *Nibbāna*. It is the only way to purify one's mind to free from defilements and realize the final *Nibbāna*. One has to come, see and practice by oneself; not depend on others. In fact, if one is one lacks it, one fails to realize the attainment of noble Paths, Fruitions and *Nibbāna*.
- Buddhism is a religion teaching us the essence of *Anattā*, which makes the religion more special in comparison with other religions. Buddhism, when spoken of on the level of absolute truth, does not embody self; and this is opposite to views of other religions which, even on their ultimate levels, still have self. This very self is what they try to find but

Buddhism tries to eliminate it completely.

Therefore, we should study and practice Buddhism thoroughly and carefully with our effort to know how Buddhism contributes special things to the world.

Ciraṃ Tiṭṭhatu Buddhasāsanam.

May the Teachings of the Buddha last long.

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!

Endnotes

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- 3 Ministry of Religious Affairs, *The teachings of the Buddha (Basic Level)* (Yangon: Kaba Aye Printing Press, 2010), 143-144.
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- 6 Vinayācārya Korm Eav: Āgāriyavinaya (Phnom Penh: Phnom Penh Publishing House, 2010), 42-43.
- 7 Aggapaṇḍit Buth Savong, *Parents' Words of Wisdom* (Phnom Penh: Dhamma4khmer Printing House, 2005), 14.
- 8 Ibid., 19.
- 9 Ibid., 23- 27.
- 10 Ibid., 28- 32.
- 11 Ibid., 38 – 43.
- 12 Ibid., 50.

- 13 Ibid., 60.
- 14 Venerable Saṅghapaṇḍita, *Buddhist Concept of Virtuous Friendship* (Yangon: International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University, 2011), 15.
- 15 Ibid., 35.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid., 34.
- 18 Ibid., 41.
- 19 Ibid., 34.
- 20 Ibid., 66.
- 21 Venerable Prof. Dr. K. Dhammasami, *Blessing...You can D.I.Y*, (Yangon: Nang Ei Ei Zar), 2012), 16-17.
- 22 Venerable Saṅghapaṇḍita, *Buddhist Concept of Virtuous Friendship*, 71.
- 23 Ibid., 46.
- 24 Ibid., 74.
- 25 Ibid., 76.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Venerable Prof. Dr. K. Dhammasami, *Blessing...You can D.I.Y*, 15.
- 28 Ibid., 20. Here, a different name of *Sutta* is that sometimes it is found as 'Golissānisutta'; or 'Gulissānisutta'; and 'Goliyānisutta'. According to Cambodian version, it is found as 'Golissānisutta'; Srilaṅkā version, it is 'Gulissānisutta' and Myanmar version, it is 'Goliyānisutta'.
- 29 Venerable Saṅghapaṇḍita, *Buddhist Concept of Virtuous Friendship*, 81.
- 30 Ibid., 100

- 31 Venerable Prof. Dr. K. Dhammasami, *Blessing...You can D.I.Y.*, 20.
- 32 Ibid., 18.
- 33 Ibid., 16.
- 34 Venerable K. Sri Dhammananda, *The Dhammapada* (Taipei: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 2009), 48.
- 35 Ibid., 55.
- 36 Ibid., 57.
- 37 Acharya Buddharakkhita, *Dhammapada: Sahassavagga* 110th, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/dhp/dhp.08.budd.html> (accessed April 23, 2012)
- 38 Venerable Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, *What Buddhists Believe*, Chapter 7 & 8 (Taipei: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 1993), 133-175.
- 39 Ibid., 161.
- 40 Acharya Buddharakkhita, *Dhammapada, Daṇḍavagga*, 129th & 130th
- 41 Venerable Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, *What Buddhists Believe*, 162-163.
- 42 Ibid., 165.
- 43 Khmer Tipiṭaka, *Dīghanikāya, Mahāvagga 17, Sakkapañhā Sutta 8th* (Phnom Penh: The Buddhist Institute, B.E., 2514), 191.
- 44 Venerable Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, *What Buddhists Believe*, 166.
- 45 Khmer Tipiṭaka, *Samyuttanikāya, Sagāthavagga, Dutiyabhāga 30, Yakkhasamyutta, Ālavakayakkha Sutta 12th* (Phnom Penh: The Royal Library, The Second Publishing,

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- 46 Venerable Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, *Who Is Responsible for Our Problems* (Taipei: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 2005), 45.
- 47 Venerable Preah Mahā Vinayadharo Yen Neourn, *Maṅgala Sutta (in Khmer Language) Part IV* (Long Beach: Wat Khemarabuddhikārāma, B.E., 2538), 15.
- 48 Venerable Panyananda Bhikkhu, *Love Your Children The Right Way* (in Thai language), Police Major General Somprasongk Prathnadi, trans., Part III (Chaing Mai: Buddhanihom Wat Umong Ampeo Muang, 2000), 169.
- 49 Venerable Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, *What Buddhists Believe*, 173-174.
- 50 Venerable Phreah Mahā Vinayadharo Yen Noeurn, *Maṅgalasutta (in Khmer Language) Part IV*, 90.
- 51 U Min Yu Wai, *Life of Buddha & His Teachings* (in Myanmar), Daw Khin Thein, trans. (Yangon: Seik koo cho cho Publishing House, 2008), 90.
- 52 Ashin Janakābhivamsa, *Abhidhamma in daily life* (Yangon: Meikkaung Press, B.E., 2543; C.E, 1999), 145.
- 53 Ibid., 146-158.
- 54 Ledi Sayadaw, *The Manuals of Buddhism: The Expositions of the Buddha-Dhamma* (Yangon: Mother Ayeyarwaddy publishing house, 2004), 307.
- 55 Soma Thera, *The Way of Mindfulness* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1981), 31.
- 56 Ledi Sayadaw, *The Manuals of Buddhism: The Expositions of The Buddha-Dhamma*, 663.

- 57 Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, *The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma* (Yangon: Yadanar Min Literature, 2010), 295.
- 58 Soma Thera, *The Way of Mindfulness*, 2.
- 59 *ibid.*, 3.
- 60 *ibid.*
- 61 *ibid.*, 4.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 5 ff.
- 63 *ibid.*, 15.
- 64 Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (London: The Gordon Frazer Gallery Ltd., 1978), 35.
- 65 Vatsyayan, *Indian Philosophy* (New Delhi: Kedar Nath Ram Nath, 1997), 84.
- 66 Y. Masih, *A Comparative Study of Religions* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass publisher, 1990), 160.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 223-224.
- 68 Ledi Sayadaw, *The Manuals of Buddhism: The Expositions of The Buddha-Dhamma*, 1.
- 69 Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, 35.
- 70 Nārada Thera, *The Buddha and His Teachings* (Kuala Lumpur: Publication of the Buddhist Missionary Society, 1988), 101.
- 71 *Ibid.*
- 72 Dhamma Garden, ed., *No Ajahn Chah* (Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 2010), 16.
- 73 Dr. N.N. Banerjee and K. Singh M. A., *Western Philosophy* (Lucknow: Prakashan Kendra, n.d., year?), 214- 215.
- 74 Nārada Thera, *The Buddha and His Teachings*, 510.
- 75 M-a.ii., 6; Vin-ṭ.ii., 1: *Atha kho kiriyaparihāṇiyā vā pāpamittatāya vā hoti.*

- 76 Vin-ṭ.ii., 1.
- 77 Mahāsi Sayadaw, U Aye Maung, trans., *A Discourse on Ariyavasa sutta* (Yangon: Buddha Sāsanānuggaha Organization, 1994), 48-50.
- 78 Vin-ṭ. ii., 1.
- 79 Dhp-a.i., 406.
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- 81 Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, trans. Bhikkhu Bodhi, ed., *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhimanikāya* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 343.
- 82 M-ṭ.ii., 6.
- 83 Dr. Nandamālābhivaṃsa, *Giving a speech to the University Students*, January 17, 2014, Friday Morning, noted by this researcher.
- 84 M-a. iii., 6. Vin-ṭ. ii., 1.
- 85 Kromchumnum preah traipitaka khmer, *khuddakanikāya: khuddakapāṭha*, vol. 52 (Phnom Penh: Buddhist Institute, B.E., 2500), 4.
- 86 Kromchumnum preah traipitaka khmer, *Aṅguttaranikāya*, vol. 50 (Phnom Penh: Buddhist Institute, B.E., 2499), 297.
- 87 W.H.D. Rouse, trans. *The Jātaka: Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*. Vol. II. (Oxford: The Pāli Text Society, 1995), 30.
- 88 Kromchumnum preah traipitaka khmer, *Aṅguttaranikāya*, vol. 41 (Phnom Penh: Buddhist Institute, B.E., 2456), 1.

- 89 Dhp., 21.
- 90 K.R. Norman, *Dhammapada: The Word of the Doctrine*, trans. (Oxford: The Pāli Text Society, 2000), 10. According to the *Dhammapada* commentary, the 'companionship (*sahāyatā*)' means 'The noble qualities such minor morality (*cūḷasīla*), middle morality (*majjhimasīla*), major morality (*mahāsīla*), ten topics or subjects of talk (*kathāvatthu*), thirteen types of austere practices (*dhutaṅga*), insight knowledge (*vipassanā*), four noble Paths (*magga*), four noble Fruitions (*phala*), three kinds of knowledge (*vijjā*), the six supernormal knowledge (*abhiññā*). These noble qualities are called 'sahāyatāguṇa).
- 91 Kromchumnum preah traipitaka khmer, *Aṅuttaranikāya*, vol. 41, 4-6.
- 92 Burma Tipiṭaka Association, *Dīghanikāya: Long Discourses of the Buddha* (Yangon: Kaba Aye Printing Press, 2010), 438-439.
- 93 Maurice Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīghanikāya* (Wisdom Publications, 1995), 109.
- 94 Daw Mya Tin, *The Dhammapada*, trans. (Yangon: Piṭaka Association, 1995), 295.

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- The suffering of Cambodians have been deep.
- From suffering comes great compassion.
- Great compassion makes a peaceful heart.
- A peaceful heart makes a peaceful person.
- A peaceful person makes a peaceful family.
- A peaceful family makes a peaceful community.
- A peaceful community makes a peaceful nation.
- A peaceful nation makes a peaceful world.

May all beings live in happiness and peace! By Preah Maha Ghosananda

Preah Maha Ghosananda (1929-2007) was a highly revered Cambodian Buddhist monk in the Theravāda tradition, who served as the Patriarch (Sangharāja) of Cambodian Buddhism during the Khmer Rouge period and post-communist transition period of Cambodian history. He has been called "The Gandhi of Cambodia" for his annual peace marches. He was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by the chair of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Claiborne Pell in 1994 and he was again nominated in 1995, 1996 and 1997. He also acted as an adviser to the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and resided part-time in the Palelai Buddhist Temple and monastery in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States. He passed away in Northampton, Massachusetts on March 12, 2007.