

Introduction to Buddhism

3 Feb 2010 – 24 March 2010
(2nd Run)

Course Notes

The series of talks is aimed at helping participants understand the fundamentals and core teachings of Buddhism. Participants will explore the fascinating world of Buddhism from the time of its founding more than 2,500 years ago till today. Through the use of contemporary language and illustrations, participants will be able to understand why this ancient religion remains relevant today, especially in this turbulent and uncertain time. The course will also teach participants skillful ways of dealing with the stress of modern living and to cultivate your foundation for a happy and meaningful life.

Course outline

- Week 1 What Buddhism is and isn't. Who is the Buddha?
Significant events and milestones in Buddhism. The
Buddha's life from birth to parinibbana.
- Week 2 What did the Buddha teach? The Middle Way. The Four
Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Paths. Ti-Sarana(3
Refuges).
- Week 3 Morality and ethics in Buddhist practice. Right
Speech.Right Action.Right Livelihood. The Five
Precepts.
- Week 4 Mental cultivation and development. Right Effort. Right
Mindfulness. Right Concentration. Meditation.
- Week 5 Wisdom, the heart of Buddhist practice. Right
Understanding. Right Thought
- Week 6 Dependent Origination and Kamma. Introduction to the
Tipitaka and Suttas.
- Week 7 Buddhism today. The different schools of Buddhism.
Monks,nuns and laypeople.
- Week 8 Practices to help you deal with stress, anxieties and
worry. Cultivating your foundation for a happy and
meaningful life.

*One may conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, yet he is the
best of conquerors who conquers himself Dhammapada 103*

Buddhism is:

- based on the teachings of the Buddha whose main message is that of peace and compassion
- inclusive and non-discriminatory
- about avoiding extremes, taking the middle path
- cultivating wisdom, morality/ethics, mental development
- a unique path of enlightenment
- more than 2,500 years old, Indian in origin, spread to other eastern countries and more recently to the West
- an inspiration for many great civilisations and a strong influence in the fields of literature, art, philosophy, psychology, science, architecture, culture and sports

Buddhism isn't:

- a system of faith and worship
- about worshipping the Buddha, a creator God or any individual
- idol worship
- just a philosophy or a way of life
- intolerant of other religions ; it does not claim the monopoly of truth
- dogmatic
- about superstitious rites and ceremonies. No sacrifices and penances
- strict about vegetarianism

Life of the Buddha

Childhood

- born in 623 B.C.E in **Lumbini** at Kapilavattu.
- his father was King Suddhodana. Mother was Queen Maha Maya
- visit by a sage Asita who is also the King's tutor.
- named Siddhattha. Family name is Gotama and Sakya is name of the clan.
- 8 brahmins invited to palace. They predicted that he would either become a King of Kings or a Buddha except for one, Kodanna, who said he would definitely become a Buddha.
- ploughing festival - sat under a rose-apple tree in quiet meditation. First Jhana.

Married Life

- married to Princess Yasodhara at the age of 16.
- lived a luxurious life - 3 palaces for the three seasons.
- not satisfied with the life of luxury. Felt deep pity and compassion for suffering humanity.

Just as a mother protects her only child even at the risk of her own life, so too, one should have unbounded love to all beings in the world. Metta Sutta (Sn.150)

Renunciation

- the four sights – aged man, sick man, a corpse, and a noble hermit. Decided to renunciate and search for Truth and Eternal Peace.
- news of birth of son, Rahula (rahu : fetter).
- parted with his wife and son.
- left the palace with his charioteer Channa and horse Kanthaka.
- was 29 , a wealthy prince at the full bloom of youth when he renunciated.
- penniless and wearing only the simple garb of an ascetic.

The Search

- laboured for 6 years to find the Truth.
- sought out the foremost religious masters of the day, Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta.
- learnt everything that the masters could teach him. Decided to find the Truth through his own efforts.
- joined a band of 5 ascetics. Practised severe austerities.
- realised the futility of self-mortification. Decided to practise moderation.
- took food. Saved by a village girl Sujata. His 5 companions left him.

Enlightenment

- crossed the Neranjara River
- on the full moon night of Vesakha, he sat under the pipala (Bodhi) tree at **Bodhgaya** in deep meditation and realised the true nature of all life and all things. Became Samma Sambuddha.
- stayed 7 weeks in Bodhgaya.
- became the Buddha , the Enlightened One at the age of 35.
- known as Sakyamuni or Gotama Buddha.

The Buddha's Ministry

- Delivered first discourse (*Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta*) to the 5 ascetics at Deer Park, **Sarnath**. Turning of the Wheel of Truth. Expounded the Middle Path.
- For 45 years travelled widely teaching the Dharma
- Founded order of monks and nuns
- Challenged the caste system
- Raised the status of women
- Encouraged religious freedom and free inquiry
- Taught all classes, kings or beggars, rich or poor, Brahmins or outcasts, saints or criminals such as serial killer Angulimana and courtesan Ambapali
- Freed humanity from religious slavery, religious dogma and blind faith.
- Embraced outcasts, poor and dejected person, restoring his or her self-respect and turned the ignoble life to that of a noble being.
- Full of compassion and wisdom, teach according to level of understanding.

Pari-nibbana

- Passed away at **Kusinara** at the age of 80.

*Avoid evil, do good, purify the mind. This is the teaching of all Buddhas.
Dhammapada 183*

Significant Events in Buddhism

566-486 BCE:	Life of Siddhattha Gotama
486 BCE:	First Buddhist Council at Rajagaha
386 BCE:	Second Buddhist Council at Vesali
272-231 BCE:	Reign of King Asoka
250 BCE:	Third Buddhist Council at Pataliputra
247 BCE:	Mahinda, Asoka's son establishes Buddhism in Sri Lanka
200 BCE:	Beginning of Mahayana Buddhism
35-32 BCE	Theravada canon in writing on palm leaves, Sri Lanka
1st century CE:	Buddhism establishes in Cambodia , Vietnam. Buddhism enters Central Asia and China; 4th Buddhist Council
3rd century CE:	Expansion to Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand
4th century CE:	Buddhism enters Korea
5th century CE:	Nalanda University founded
6th century CE:	Major Chinese schools founded. Buddhism enters Japan
7th century CE:	Potala Palace, Jokang, Ramoche temples in Tibet
8th century CE:	Borobudur Temple built in Java, Indonesia
9th century:	Angkor Wat built
11th century:	Kagyupa and Sakyapa schools of Tibetan Buddhism
14th century:	Gelugpa or Yellow Hat school established
15th century:	Beginning of Dalai Lama lineage in Tibetan Buddhism
19th century:	First western translation (German); 5th Buddhist Council in Mandalay, Burma
20th century:	Tibetan Buddhism spreads to the West ; 6th Buddhist Council in Yangon, Myanmar (1954)

Note: Some chronology marked Buddha's life as between 623 BCE and 543 BCE.

Week 2

What did the Buddha teach?

The Middle Path (*Majjhima Patipada*)

- futility of self-mortification – weakened one’s intellect, no spiritual progress with a totally exhausted body
- other extreme of self-indulgence and sensual pleasure – retards moral progress
- He remembered peace of meditation in childhood, joy in contemplation of the breath and the First *Jhana*.
- “This is the path to enlightenment”
- the Middle Path is one of the salient features of the Buddha’s teaching
- spiritual insight and intellectual wisdom to see things as they truly are
- leads to understanding of the Four Noble Truths and to realisation of ultimate goal, *Nibbana*
- what is the Middle Path? The Noble Eightfold Path

Dawn of Truth

- 1st watch (6 pm to 10 pm) :
attained the fourth *jhana* with mind perfectly one-pointed. Cleansing his mind of impurities, he recalled his past births over many world cycles
- 2nd watch (10 pm to 2 am) :
perceived the disappearing and reappearing of beings of varied forms, in good or woeful states of existence according to their deeds
- 3rd watch(2am to 6 am) :
comprehended the destruction of corruptions. His mind was liberated from the corruption of sensual craving, from the corruption of craving of existence, from the corruption of ignorance (the Truth of Dependent Origination)
- ignorance was dispelled, and wisdom arose; darkness vanished, and light arose.

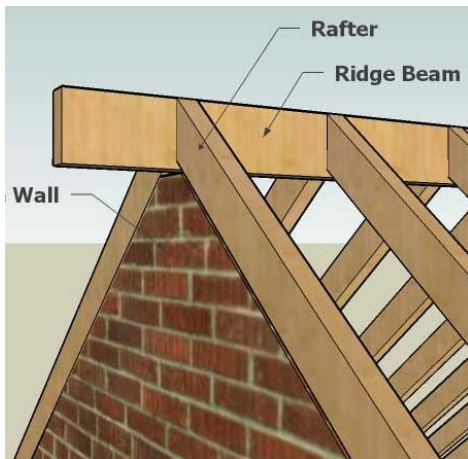
“ Light arose in me in things not heard before.” Dhammacakkavattana Sutta

One of the first utterances of the Buddha after His Enlightenment:

*Through many a birth in samsara
have I wandered in vain,
seeking the builder of this house.
Repeated birth is indeed suffering!*

*O house-builder, you are seen!
You will not build this house again.
For your rafters are broken
and your ridgepole shattered.
My mind has reached the Unconditioned;
I have attained the destruction of craving.*

Dhammapada 153,154



<i>house:</i>	<i>body or life</i>
<i>house-builder:</i>	<i>craving (tanha) or attachment, a mental self-creation</i>
<i>rafters:</i>	<i>passions (kilesa) such as greed, aversion, illusion</i>
<i>ridge-pole:</i>	<i>ignorance (avijja)</i>
<i>Unconditioned:</i>	<i>Nibbana</i>

The Four Noble Truths

First Noble Truth :	There is suffering (<i>dukkha</i>)
Second Noble Truth:	There is a cause to suffering
Third Noble Truth:	There is an end of suffering
Fourth Noble Truth:	The way out of suffering – the Noble Eightfold Path

- The heart of the Buddha's teaching
- expounded in his first discourse to the 5 ascetics at Isipatana (modern: Sarnath) near Benares (Varanasi). "Setting in motion the Wheel of Truth" (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*)
- the Middle Path is about going against the worldly current - caused by greed, hatred and delusion - that pushes people
- appeared many times in Buddhist scriptures
- a realistic view of life and the world, not pessimistic
- presented in a simple way as a wise physician. He was not interested in unnecessary metaphysical questions (simile of poisoned arrow)
- with proper understanding, shows the way to freedom, peace, tranquility and happiness

The First Noble Truth: There is suffering (*dukkha*)

- *Dukkha*, a Pali word hard to translate. Loosely translated as ‘suffering’, ‘pain’, ‘incapable of satisfying’
- Suffering is a common bond we all share; something we all understand regardless of who you are. Understanding this brings out our compassion tendencies
- 3 aspects: (a) physical or mental suffering (b) change (c) conditioned states
- Physical suffering from birth, old age, sickness and death
- Mental suffering from association with the unpleasant ; dissociation from the pleasant
- The five aggregates subject to grasping is suffering
- ‘There is suffering’ is different from ‘I am suffering’. Is there a ‘sufferer’?
- The problem associated with the denial of suffering - pleasure seeking, killing (from pests to people)
- Be aware and understand pain is just pain, anger is just anger. Being angry or impatient with suffering does not remove it, on the other hand, it adds to one’s misery
- Understanding brings peace and happiness

With mindfulness, we are willing to bear with the whole of life; the excitement and the boredom, the hope and despair, the pleasure and the pain, the fascination and the weariness, the beginning and the ending, the birth and the death. Ajahn Sumedho

The Second Noble Truth: There is the origin of suffering

- Origin comes from desire or craving (*tanha*). 3 kinds of craving: sensual pleasure, eternal existence, non-existence
- Desire is not what we are but it is conditioned in our mind and a reaction out of ignorance
- We need not be hopeless victims of desire. Allow it to be the way it is and let go of it. It has power over us only when we grasp it, believe in it and react to it eg depression
- Real happiness comes from within, and is not found in material wealth, power, honours or conquests
- Letting go - the way to go

The Third Noble Truth: There is an end of suffering

- All that is subject to arising is subject to ceasing
- Contemplate on how attachment to desires is suffering. Happiness through getting things or letting go of things?
- Sense pleasures are all transient ie impermanent
- Allowing things to arise, to let go of them. Patience in practice, watch it don't feed it or react to it. Left along, it will cease
- Put an end to craving. The 5 aggregates are still there but there is no craving
- Insights into emptiness and non-self. Liberating.

*By self is one defiled,
By self is one purified.
Both defilement and purity depend on oneself,
No one is purified by another. Dhammapada 165*

The Fourth Noble Truth: The way out of suffering,

The Noble Eightfold Path

Right Understanding	}	Wisdom (<i>Panna</i>)
Right Thought		
Right Speech	}	Morality (<i>Sila</i>)
Right Action		
Right Livelihood		
Right Effort	}	Mental Discipline (<i>Samadhi</i>)
Right Mindfulness		
Right Concentration		

- interdependent, interrelated and not in numerical order. At the highest level, function simultaneously
- individual responsibility, individual freedom (*case of the Kalamas*)
- leads to complete freedom, happiness and peace through moral, spiritual and intellectual perfection
- through self-cultivation, not through praying or worship to an external agency

“Striving should be done by yourselves. The Tathagatas are teachers.” Dhp 276

Homage (Vandana)

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa (3 times)
Homage to Him, the Blessed One, the Exalted One, the Fully Enlightened One.

Three Refuges (Tisarana)

Buddham saranam gacchâmi

I go to the Buddha as my refuge.

Dhammam saranam gacchâmi

I go to the Dhamma as my refuge.

Sangham saranam gacchâmi

I go to the Sangha as my refuge.

Dutiyampi Buddham saranam gacchâmi

For the second time I go to the Buddha as my refuge.

Dutiyampi Dhammam saranam gacchâmi

For the second time I go to the Dhamma as my refuge.

Dutiyampi Sangham saranam gacchâmi

For the second time I go to the Sangha as my refuge.

Tatiyampi Buddham saranam gacchâmi

For the third time I go to the Buddha as my refuge.

Tatiyampi Dhammam saranam gacchâmi

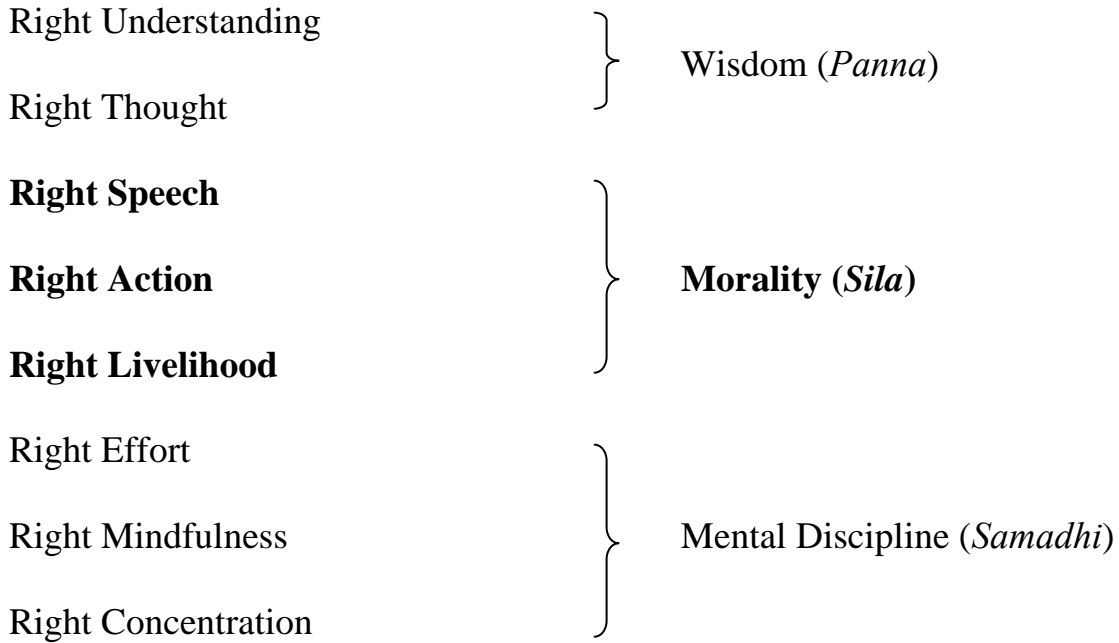
For the third time I go to the Dhamma as my refuge.

Tatiyampi Sangham saranam gacchâmi

For the third time I go to the Sangha as my refuge.

Week 3

The Noble Eightfold Path



- *Sila* or morality frees the mind from remorse. It is about exercising restraint in our actions.
- Without restraint, life is like a vehicle without a brake.

What do you think, Rahula, for what purpose is a mirror?

For the purpose of reflecting, Venerable Sir

Even so, Rahula, after repeated reflections should bodily, verbal and mental actions be done.

- Buddha's advice to Rahula

Buddhist Morality

- The Buddhist way of life is an intense process of cleansing one's speech, action and thought. The Buddha's teaching is "For the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world."
- Practical self-cultivation. No one else can do it for you.
- Virtue (*sila*) is based on the thought for others to be well and happy. Love and compassion coming from the heart.
- The basic code of conduct: to abstain from evil and do good.
- Basis for mental training; virtue nourishes mental life and makes it steady and calm. Conduct purifies wisdom and wisdom conduct. Don't be a good-hearted fool or a hard-hearted intellect.
- Makes society secure by promoting unity, harmony and good relations among people.
- Buddha did not make laws or commandments. Wrongdoing is not regarded as a 'sin'. You are responsible for your own actions and suffer or enjoy the consequences. (Compare man-made laws).
- Our speech and actions are physical manifestations of our mind. Morality provides the discipline needed to train the mind to be free of the fires of greed, hatred and delusion.

Much though he recites the sacred texts but acts not accordingly, that heedless man is like a cowhead who only counts the cows of others - he does not partake of the blessings of the holy life. Dhammapada 19

Right Speech *(Samma Vaca)*

- Speech is a gift given to man. However, a word can help or destroy others.
- 1st virtue : abstain from falsehood and speak the truth (Buddha to Rahula “Not even for fun will I tell a lie” , *Ambalattika-rahulovada Sutta*)
- 2nd virtue: abstain from slander or tale-bearing. The slanderer commits two wrongdoings – says what is false, and back-biting, sowing discord and destroying friendship.
- 3rd virtue: abstain from harsh words. Be pleasant and courteous. Use speech to heal, not hurt. A gentle word can melt the hardest heart, while a harsh word can cause misery. (how Buddha in his past life weaned his mother from harsh speech- Jataka 269)
- 4th virtue: abstain from frivolous speech or gossip. Buddha told his monks, whenever they gather to do two things , either talk about the Dhamma or keep noble silence. Silence is golden. Tibetan saying: do not speak unless you can improve on the silence.

Better than a thousand useless words is one useful word, hearing which one attains peace. Dhammapada 100

Right Action
(Samma Kammanta)

- Founded on love (*metta*) and compassion (*karuna*)
- Based on compassion for all living beings, taking only of things that are given, and living a pure and chaste life. Not killing, stealing and indulging in sexual misconduct.
- By such moral conduct, one gives others fearlessness, security, respect and peace.
- Conduct builds character which is the result of one's own effort. Not by birth, wealth or position.
- Restraint important part of training. An unrestrained mind is driven by urge to enjoy themselves and waste itself on frivolous activities.
- Abstain from killing, even to the smallest of creatures. Extend metta to all living beings, all that breathe.
- Abstain from stealing. Deprives someone from happiness. Respect. Common violation in the world today –politics, business, office. In workplace, slacking or loafing yet getting full pay is stealing. Claiming credit for work not yours is stealing.
- Abstain from sexual misconduct. Buddha recognised sex as the strongest impulse in man. The most powerful man turn into a weakling when he becomes slave to this impulse. The sage is not spared. Restraint is the key word.
- We reap what we sow. Evil results in pain and good in happiness.
- The Five Precepts - layman's minimum moral obligation.

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. Dhammapada 130

Right Livelihood *(SammaAjiva)*

- Designed to bring true happiness to all – promotes unity and good relations among people.
- Not dealing in :
 - (a) arms and lethal weapons,
 - (b) animals for slaughter,
 - (c) human beings,
 - (d) intoxicating drinks, and
 - (e) poison.

Note: India in sixth century B.C., ways of earning a living then different from today

- Buddha was concerned with the well-being of his monks and laypeople.
- He understood that certain degree of material and economic security necessary for moral and spiritual progress. For monks there are the 4 requisites: robes, food, a lodging, and medicine.
- *Sigalovada-sutta* or layman's code of conduct – Buddha's doctrine of love and good-will – for parents/children, teacher/pupil, husband/wife, friends, employers/employees, religious/laypeople.
- Anathapindika, the millionaire, most respected alms-giver. Donated Jetavana Grove. The 4 kinds of happiness : ownership or economic security, joy of wealth or happiness gained from giving, bliss of not being in debt, bliss of being without blame.
- Ten duties of a king. King Asoka – righteous, work for the good of all.

Neither for one's own nor for others' sake should one do evil. One should not covet a son, wealth or a kingdom, nor wish to succeed by unjust means. Such a man is indeed virtuous, wise and righteous. Dhammapada 84.

Maha Mangala Sutta

Life's Highest Blessings

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Exalted One was dwelling at Anathapindika's monastery, in Jeta's Grove, near Savatthi. Now when the night was far spent, a certain deity whose surpassing splendor illuminated the entire Jeta Grove, came to the presence of the Exalted One and, drawing near, respectfully saluted him and stood at one side. Standing thus, he addressed the Exalted One in verse: "Many deities and men, yearning after good, have pondered on blessings.. Pray, tell me the greatest blessing!"

The Buddha:

Not to associate with the foolish, but to associate with the wise; and to honor those who are worthy of honor -- this is the greatest blessing.

To reside in a suitable locality, to have done meritorious actions in the past and to set oneself in the right course -- this is the greatest blessing.

To have much learning, to be skillful in handicraft, well-trained in discipline, and to be of good speech -- this is the greatest blessing.

To support mother and father, to cherish wife and children, and to be engaged in peaceful occupation -- this is the greatest blessing.

To be generous in giving, to be righteous in conduct, to help one's relatives, and to be blameless in action -- this is the greatest blessing.

To loathe more evil and abstain from it, to refrain from intoxicants, and to be steadfast in virtue -- this is the greatest blessing.

To be respectful, humble, contented and grateful; and to listen to the Dhamma on due occasions -- this is the greatest blessing.

To be patient and obedient, to associate with monks and to have religious discussions on due occasions -- this is the greatest blessing.

Self-restraint, a holy and chaste life, the perception of the Noble Truths and the realisation of Nibbana -- this is the greatest blessing.

A mind unruffled by the vagaries of fortune, from sorrow freed, from defilements cleansed, from fear liberated -- this is the greatest blessing.

Those who thus abide, ever remain invincible, in happiness established. These are the greatest blessings.

This sutta appears in the Sutta-Nipata. The thirty-eight blessings are an invaluable guide on life's journey. To follow these ideals is the sure way to harmony and progress for the individual as well as for society, nation and mankind.

The Five Precepts (*Panca Sila*)

Panatipata veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from destroying living creatures.

Adinnadana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from taking that which is not given.

Kamesu micchacara veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from sexual misconduct.

Musavada veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from false speech.

Suramerayamajja pamadatthana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness.

- He who knows the precepts by heart but fails to practise them is like the man who lights a lamp and then shuts his eyes. (Tibetan saying)
- The five precepts – Minimum moral obligation of the lay people

Sutta on Loving Kindness
(Karaniya Metta Sutta)

This is what should be done
By one who is skilled in goodness,
And who knows the path of peace:
Let them be able and upright,
Straightforward and gentle in speech.
Humble and not conceited,

Contented and easily satisfied.
Unburdened with duties and frugal in their ways.
Peaceful and calm, and wise and skillful,
Not proud and demanding in nature.

Let them not do the slightest thing
That the wise would later reprove.
Wishing: In gladness and in safety,
May all beings be well and happy.

Whatever living beings there may be;
Whether they are weak or strong, omitting none,
The great or the mighty, medium, short or small,

The seen and the unseen,
Those living near and far away,
Those born and to-be-born,
May all beings be happy.

Let none deceive another,
Or despise any being in any state.
Let none through anger or ill-will
Wish harm upon another.

Even as a mother protects with her life
Her child, her only child,
So with a boundless heart
Should one cherish all living beings:

Radiating kindness over the entire world
Spreading upwards to the skies,
And downwards to the depths;
Outwards and unbounded,
Freed from hatred and ill-will.

Whether standing or walking, seated or lying down
Free from drowsiness,
One should sustain this recollection.
This is said to be the sublime abiding.

By not holding to fixed views,
The pure-hearted one, having clarity of vision,
Being freed from all sense desires,
Is not born again into this world.

The Noble Eightfold Path

Right Understanding	}	Wisdom (<i>Panna</i>)
Right Thought		
Right Speech	}	Morality (<i>Sila</i>)
Right Action		
Right Livelihood		
Right Effort	}	Mental Discipline (<i>Samadhi</i>)
Right Mindfulness		
Right Concentration		

- The mind is capable of creating great monuments, civilisations, literature and the arts. But can also be the creator of mass suffering through greed, hatred and delusion.
- Buddha: “Mind is the source of all things and all things are created by the mind.”
- Mental cultivation helps us develop wisdom to free ourselves. To be able to see things as they really are. Safeguard our practice of good conduct.
- Mental purity is essential for true happiness and deliverance from suffering.

Mind precedes all mental states, Mind is their chief; they are all mind-wrought. If with a pure mind a person speaks or acts, happiness follows him like his never-departing shadow. Dhammapada 2

Mental Discipline

- Morality alone is not enough. When things are going well, keeping the moral precepts is easy but tough when things are not going well. Feel cheated?
- Danger of 'holier than thou' attitude. Snobbery? Instead of freedom, bondage and takes one on a narrow path. (eg *Devadatta*, pushing for a more stringent practice. 5 more precepts incl vegetarianism)
- Purify our mind of greed, hatred and delusion instead of trying to purify the whole universe (simile of protecting the feet with shoes instead of trying to cover the whole earth).
- Focus our mind on changing the way we experience things and the way we relate to others.
- Scientific proofs on how the mind influence our body, physical and mental well being. Meditation shown to help medical cases.
- Happiness from a calm and relaxed mind (tests on Tibetan lamas). How it can affect our performance at work (and sports).
- Free us from being a slave to our passions. Our busyness makes us react and respond to things on impulse - losing our guards against sense desire, ill-will, pride, ego and unwholesome thoughts. Auto pilot – but who is the pilot – ignorance?
- Freedom means no restraint, free to do what you like? Buddhism differs. Taming and guarding the mind from lust, hate and delusion is necessary for freedom.

*“Striving should be done by yourselves. The Tathagatas are teachers.” Dhp
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Right Effort (*Samma Vayama*)

- Effort is mental energy, not physical strength. Buddha is a good example – how he strives in search of the truth, sitting under the Bodhi tree. His health may be failing but his mental strength remains vigorous.
- Effort gives us enthusiasm and confidence. With it, one can be successful in studies, careers and practice of the *Dhamma*.
- 4 types of effort:
 - (a) Prevent unwholesome thoughts from arising
 - (b) Abandon unwholesome thoughts once they have arisen
 - (c) Develop wholesome thoughts
 - (d) Maintain wholesome thoughts that have arisen.
- With constant effort, wholesome thoughts become a natural and integral part of our mental state (analogy of a gardener who pulls weeds before he sows)
- Regular exercise and constant pressing on. But not to extremes, do it naturally. (Story of the lute - Ven *Sona-kolivisa* who was about to give up and disrobe).
- A mind with pure and wholesome thoughts gives rise to healthy relaxed living.

Right Mindfulness (*Samma Sati*)

- Mindfulness is awareness or attention. It means not having a distracted state of mind. Buddha called mindfulness the only way to end suffering.
- Essential in our ordinary daily lives. Protects us and others, leading to fewer accidents. By protecting oneself, we protect others (story of acrobat and apprentice).
- Helps to discipline our mind to the present moment, present task. Not get pulled away here and there with every stimulus – sight, sound, or even thoughts. Mindfulness is the guard against unwholesome bodily action, speech and thought.
- Mindfulness is like the light that shines, seeing things as they are, not in darkness. Weed out ignorance (eg mistaking a rope for a snake)
- “Strive on with heedfulness, this is my advice to you” Ven *Sariputta*’s last words.
- Meditation need not be just sitting. Mindfulness can be practiced anytime, anywhere. Going to work, driving, eating, drinking, and washing dishes.
- Mindfulness, together with effort and concentration, bring meditation to fulfillment.

- Real life is the present moment –not the past which is dead and gone, nor the future which is not born. One who lives in the present moment lives the real life and is happiest.
- When asked why his disciples, who lived a simple and quiet life with only one meal a day, were so radiant, the Buddha replied “They do not repent the past, nor do they brood over the future. They lived in the present. Therefore they are radiant. By brooding over the future and repenting the past, fools dry up like green reeds cut down in the sun. “ S I p 5
- The four foundations of mindfulness (*Satipatthana*) :
 - (a) contemplation of the body
 - (b) contemplation of feelings
 - (c) contemplation of mind
 - (d) contemplation of mind-objects

*Heedfulness is the path to the Deathless, heedlessness is the path to death;
The heedful die not, The heedless are as if dead already. Dhp 21*

Right Concentration *(Samma Samadhi)*

- Mind, single-pointed, focused on an object which may be physical (eg breath) or mental (eg loving kindness). Purpose is to bring calm and insight.
- Mind becomes totally absorbed in object to the exclusion of all mental activities (happens in sports, music)
- Leads to mental and physical well-being, joy, calm. Turns mind into a powerful instrument capable of seeing things as they really are. Prepares the mind to gain insight and wisdom.
- Concentration alone is not enough – like sharpening a pencil before proceeding to write, or an axe before using it to cut off the trunk of attachment, aversion, and ignorance. Need wisdom to gain enlightenment.
- Purpose is to bring calm and insight to be able to free the mind from all mental defilements.
- A man who cultivates calmness of mind rarely gets upset when confronted with the ups and downs of life,
- When we are too engrossed in worldly affairs and in material things, spiritual development suffers.
- Find time to reflect and calm down. Happier in work and life.
- “Though my body is sick, my mind is not sick.” Buddha’s advice to Nakulapita who is an old, weak and ailing disciple.

Having tasted the flavour of solitude and tranquility, one becomes pain-less and stainless, drinking the essence of the joy of Truth. Dhp 205

Meditation

- Meditation is neither escapism nor seeking an exile from life. It is part of life.
- *Samatha*: concentration of mind (*samadhi*). Mind becomes calm and clear. State of mental purity where disturbing passions and impulses are subdued.
- *Vipassana*: Insight to see beyond the ordinary and at things as they really are. See all objects or phenomena as impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*).
- *Samatha* and *vipassana* go together –one to calm the mind, the other for keen investigation.
- *Samadhi* alone is not enough as the latent tendencies are still present. Impurities may still arise when conditions are ripe and awakened. Through insight it can be rooted out.
- Buddha under bodhi tree. Reached perfect calm then went on to develop insight (*vipassana*) to see things as they really are. Contemplated on impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*). From this insight, he was able to break through the shell of ignorance and realise the Truth.
- Sharpens the power of observation – seeing things not seen before, Remembers things better.
- The way to happiness, rediscovering the simple things in life. Not day dreaming through life.
- Story of *Pandita*, disciple of Ven *Sariputta*, young and still a novice.

Irrigators regulate the water, fletchers straighten the arrow shaft, carpenters shape the wood; the wise control themselves. Dhp 80

Meditation, some tips

- 40 objects of meditation. Choose the one that suits you.
- Location: preferably a quiet spot with few distractions.
- Timing: anytime, but early morning when the mind is fresh or before bedtime is ideal. Keep a daily routine.
- Posture: full lotus, half lotus or cross-legged. Sitting on chairs is fine. Eyes may be closed or half-closed. Most important: easy and relaxed.
- Avoid tight clothing. Loosen belt.
- Walking meditation; mindfulness in daily activities.
- Psychic power – see things far away, past births etc? Not important in Buddhist practice. May even hinder realisation.
- The five hindrances: sense desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, doubt.
- Be happy and enjoy the meditation. Let go.

Buddha taught seven types of meditation to 18-year old Rahula:

1. Meditation on loving kindness (*metta*), for by this anger is banished
2. Meditation on compassion (*karuna*), for by this cruelty is banished
3. Meditation on sympathetic joy (*mudita*), for by this aversion is banished
4. Meditation on equanimity (*upekkha*), for by this hatred is banished
5. Meditation on impurity (*asubha*), for by this lust is banished
6. Meditation on impermanence (*anicca-sanna*), for by this pride of self or ego is banished
7. Develop the concentration of mindfulness on in-and out-breath (*anapanasati*), with mindfulness bears much fruit.

Better it is to live one day seeing the rise and fall of things than to live a hundred years without ever seeing the rise and fall of things. Dhp 113

Anapanasati

- Mindfulness on in-and-out of breathing.
- Leads to deep concentration, rapturous joy, calm and peace of mind.
- Used by the *Bodhisatta* when striving for Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. The Buddha spent many rain retreats doing this.
- Even if the *jhana* is not attained, its ok – one can still get clear thinking, deep understanding, mental balance, tranquility.

Satipatthana-sutta

- Most important discourse on mental cultivation, occurs twice in Buddhist canon. *Majjhima Nikaya* and *Digha Nikaya*.
- Covers principal tenets of Buddhism, and how mindfulness applied to everything we do in our life. (*sati* means mindfulness ; *patthana* means foundation)
- The four foundations of mindfulness: body, feelings, mind, mind-objects.
- Body: realise the true nature of the body, not permanent, repulsiveness of the body. Awareness of breath brings calm and power of concentration. Contemplation on the four postures. The 32 bodily parts. The four elements (earth, water, fire and wind). No doer but doing; no actor but action. No “I”.
- Feelings: pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. Learn to be detached, that they are only feelings. No “self” that feels.

- Mind: be aware of diverse thoughts, of greed, hatred, delusion. Understand thoughts do not last. Who is doing the thinking? Ego can be understood. (story of *Maha Phussa*, stops when evil thoughts arise. People thought he had lost his way.)
- Mind objects : *Dhamma*, the teachings of the Buddha :
 - the five hindrances : (a) sensual desire, (b) ill-will, (c) sloth and torpor, (d) restlessness and worry, (e) doubt.
 - the seven factors of enlightenment : (1) mindfulness (2) investigation of the *Dhamma* (3) energy (4) rapturous joy (5) calm (6) concentration (7) equanimity.
 - the five aggregates of attachment : (a) form (b) feeling (c) perception (d) mental formation (e) consciousness
 - the six bases : eye (sight objects), ear (sounds), nose (smells), tongue (tastes), body (tactile objects) , mind (mind objects)
 - the 4 Noble Truths.

Sutta on Loving Kindness
Karaniya Metta Sutta

*Karanīya mattha kusalena,
yantam santam padam abhisamecca;
Sakko ujū ca sujū ca,
sūvaco cassa mudu anātimānī*

*Santussako ca subhāro ca,
appakicco ca sallahukavutti;
Santindriyo ca nipako ca,
appagabbho kulesu anānu giddho*

*Na ca khuddam samācare kiñci,
yena viññū pare upavadeyyum;
Sukhino va khemino hontu,
sabba sattā bhavantu sukhittā*

*Ye keci pāna bhūtatti,
tasā vā thāvarā vanava sesā;
Dīghā vā ye mahantā va,
majjhimā rassa kānuka thūlā*

*Ditthā vā ye va aditthā,
ye ca dūre vasanti avidūre.
Bhūtā va sambhavesī va,
sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhittā*

*Na paro param nikubbetha,
nāti maññetha katthaci nam kañci.
Byāro sanā patigha saññā,
nāñña maññassa dukkha miccheyya.*

*Mātā yathā niyam puttam
āyusā eka putta manu rakkhe;
Evampi sabba bhūtesu,
mānasam bhāvaye aparimānam*

*Mettañ ca sabba lokasmim,
mānasam bhāvaye aparimānam;
Uddham adho ca tiriyañ ca,
asambādham averam asapattam*

*Tittham caram nisinno va,
sayāno va yāva tāssa vigata middho.
Etam satim adhittheyya,
brahmam etam vihāram idha māhu*

*Ditthiñ ca anupa gamma sīlavā
dassanena sampanno;
Kāmesu vineyya gedham,
nahi jātu gabbha seyyam punareti ti*

Eleven benefits of Metta Meditation

- Sleep happily
- Wake up happily
- No bad dreams
- Dear to all human beings
- Dear to non-humans
- Immune from poison
- Protected by deities
- Good mental concentration
- Beautify one's facial expression
- Peaceful death
- Born in the blissful realm or *brahma* realm

Metta is the best antidote for anger, in oneself and for those angry with us.

*Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world: by love alone is it
appeased. This is the eternal Law. Dhp5*