



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). The Buddhavaṃsa, a late addition to the Pāli Canon, explains that the Ten Perfections are mastered over many life times by the bodhisattva, a Buddha-to-be, in order to realize the attainment of a Buddha. The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī),
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī),
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī),
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī),
5. Energy (viriya pāramī),
6. Patience (khanti pāramī),
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī),
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī),
9. Loving-kindness (mettā pāramī), and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
Note 763

Abhiññāvosānapāramippatta. MA explains as the attainment of arahantship. This may be the only sense that the word pāramī bears in the four Nikāyas. In the later Theravāda literature, beginning perhaps with such works as the Buddhavaṃsa, this word comes to signify the perfect virtues that a bodhisatta must fulfill over many lives in order to attain Buddhahood.

Bhadantacariya Buddhaghosa writes in The Path of Purification: Visuddhimagga, Chapter IX, that through developing the Four Divine Abodes (brahmavihāra), also called Sublime Abodes, the mind will cultivate the Ten Perfections. The Four Divine Abodes are:

1. loving-kindness (metta),
2. compassion (karunā),
3. altruistic joy (muditā), and
4. equanimity (upekkhā).

The Path of Purification: Visuddhimagga by Bhadantacariya Buddhaghosa

IX.124. ... For the Great Beings' minds retain their balance by giving preference to beings' welfare, by dislike of beings' suffering, by desire for the various successes achieved by beings to last, and by impartiality towards all beings. And to all beings they give gifts, which are a source of pleasure, without discriminating thus: "It must be given to this one; it must not be given to this one." And in order to avoid doing harm to beings they undertake the precepts of virtue. They practice renunciation for the purpose of perfecting their virtue. They cleanse their understanding for the purpose of non-confusion about what is good and bad for beings. They constantly arouse energy, having beings' welfare and happiness at heart. When they have acquired heroic fortitude through supreme energy, they become patient with beings' many kinds of faults. They do not deceive when promising "We shall give you this; we shall do this for you." They are unshakably resolute upon beings' welfare and happiness. Through unshakable loving-kindness they place them first [before themselves]. Through equanimity they expect no reward. Having thus fulfilled the [ten] perfections, these [divine abidings] then perfect all the good states classed as the ten powers, the four kinds of fearlessness, the six kinds of knowledge not shared [by disciples], and the eighteen states of the Enlightened One. This is how they bring to perfection all the good states beginning with giving.

Nyanatiloka Thera in Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines provides clarification to the above writing by Buddhaghosa.

Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines by Nyanatiloka Thera
p. 247-249

These qualities [the perfections - *pāramīs*] were developed and brought to maturity by the Bodhisatta in his past existences, and his way of practising them is illustrated in many of the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), of which, however, only the verses are regarded as canonical.

In *Vism IX*, 124 it is said that through developing the four sublime states (*brahmavihāra*: loving kindness, compassion, altruistic joy, equanimity), one may reach these ten perfections ...

"As the Great Beings (*mahā-satta*; a synonym often found in the *Mahāyāna* scriptures for Bodhisatta (q.v.), i.e., 'Enlightenment Being or Being destined for Buddhahood') are concerned about the welfare of living beings, not tolerating the suffering of beings, wishing long duration to the higher states of happiness of beings, and being impartial and just to all beings, therefore:

- (1) They give alms (*dāna*) to all beings so that they may be happy, without investigating whether they are worthy or not.
- (2) By avoiding to do them any harm, they observe morality (*sīla*).
- (3) In order to bring morality to perfection, they train themselves in renunciation (*nekkhamma*).
- (4) In order to understand clearly what is beneficial and injurious to beings, they purify their wisdom (*paññā*).
- (5) For the sake of the welfare and happiness of others they constantly exert their energy (*virīya*).
- (6) Though having become heroes through utmost energy, they are nevertheless full of forbearance (*khanti*) towards the manifold failings of beings.
- (7) Once they have promised to give or do something, they do not break their promise ('truthfulness'; *sacca*).
- (8) With unshakeable resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) they work for the weal and welfare of beings.
- (9) With unshakeable kindness (*mettā*) they are helpful to all.
- (10) By reason of their equanimity (*upekkhā*) they do not expect anything in return".

The Ten Perfections are not isolated virtues but an interwoven fabric, interconnected and mutually supportive, each contributing to the cultivation of wholesome qualities necessary for training the mind to be peaceful and free of suffering.

- Each perfection supports, reinforces and enhances each other, they are not developed in isolation, and all ten perfections are developed simultaneously. Practicing a specific perfection leads to the development of others.

For example, practicing generosity (*dāna*) support the development of loving-kindness (*mettā*). Loving-kindness kindles the practice of generosity and patience (*khanti*). As the practice of generosity increases, so will the qualities of patience and loving-kindness increase, and vice versa.

Wisdom (*paññā*) is essential in understanding the appropriate ways to practice generosity and ethical conduct (*sīla*). Similarly, cultivating patience (*khanti*) will aid in the development of wisdom and generosity.

Ethical conduct and truthfulness (*sacca*) support the development of wisdom (*paññā*). Without training the mind in ethical behaviour, pursuing and valuing truth, it will be difficult to experience insights into the characteristics of conventional and ultimate reality. Patience also supports the development of wisdom by allowing the mind to calmly observe and understand experiences without immediate reactivity.

During formal meditation, there is a simultaneous practice and development of generosity, patience, determination, and mindfulness.

The development and mastery of the perfections is a gradual progression, deepening and maturing over time. For example, as the understanding of wisdom deepens, it will strengthen determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*) to practice the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga*) with increasing consistency.

- There is usually a sequential emphasis on certain perfections over others. In a particular period or phase or lifetime, the mind is comfortable or confident to develop certain perfections in a concentrated manner and not feel comfortable cultivating other perfections in such a serious way. For example, the mind might be inclined to emphasize the cultivation of generosity and ethical conduct before the mind is prepared to fully concentrate on the development of wisdom and determination.

- The development of the perfections are assisted by integrating them into daily activities and relationships with mindfulness (sati). The training of the mind is enhanced with continuous practice and development of the perfections outside of formal meditation.

The Ten Perfections are qualities that are developed to the utmost by anyone striving for nibbāna.

The subject of this newsletter is on the **Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī)**. The next nine newsletters will discuss the remaining perfections.

The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom translated by Acharya Buddhārakkhita

177 Truly, misers fare not to heavenly realms; nor, indeed, do fools praise generosity. But the wise person rejoices in giving, and by that alone does he become happy here-after.

223 Overcome the angry by non-anger; overcome the wicked by goodness; overcome the miser by generosity; overcome the liar by truth.

The Pāli word for giving is “dāna”. The word for generosity, the attitude of giving, is “cāga”. The word cāga also has the meaning of “letting go” or “relinquishment”. Generosity is the mind's tendency or inclination towards the act of giving, and generosity is strengthened by the acts of giving. Generosity weakens the root defilements (kilesa) of greed (lobha) and hatred (dosā), and conditions the mind to eradicate ignorance (avijjā), thereby realize nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). In discussing the act of giving, generosity is also implied, and vice versa.

The Perfection of Giving is the first perfection and it is the practice of sharing, and having a generous attitude. The attitude of generosity is a condition that reduces craving (taṇhā) for and attachment to possessions. The elimination of craving is the Third Noble Truth, the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (nirodha), the realization of nibbāna.

Generosity is crucial for freeing the mind from selfishness, the main characteristic of the egoic personality. The ego never has enough; craves more wealth, possessions, fame, and power; suffers from a sense of lack; and fears what it does have is eroding, and will be lost or stolen. The narrow view of the ego, that promotes selfishness, prevents connecting and bonding with others in a authentic and mutually beneficial manner by erecting defensive and offensive mechanisms. The ego's wrong view of itself as a being apart and isolated from others are the causes for the negative emotional states of loneliness, sadness and depression. The egoic consciousness is discussed in the January 2023 Newsletter: Egoic consciousness, the false self.

Giving without attachment or expecting anything in return, not only counters the ego's fears of lack and selfishness but is also conducive to connecting with others. The emotional experience of not being complete or whole results in the longing for loving authentic relationships. Loving authentic relationships are obstructed by the fears, defensive and offensive mechanisms that are generated by the ego. The training of the mind to be generous relaxes the ego's grip over the mind, allowing for the courage and strength to be open and vulnerable, which is necessary in order to form loving authentic relationships.

Generosity must be balanced with wisdom due to the current state of humanity: minds manipulated and driven by the egoic consciousness. Therefore, discernment is necessary to prevent others from taking advantage of the generous mind. Generosity requires understanding to give effectively and discernment to know when, how, and to whom to give. Wisdom ensures that generosity is directed towards worthy causes and not motivated by attachment or desire for reward.

- Understand the mind's motivation for generosity. Is the intention to give produced by the egoic personality which expects something in return, such as material possessions or recognition? Or is the intention selfless, coming from the wisdom that understands the workings of kamma and the love that joins with others?
- Choose the right time, place, and recipient for generosity. Discernment and investigation is used to practice generosity without causing harm to anyone, including oneself. Also, wisdom is used to prevent the recipient from becoming dependent on your generosity.
- Generosity encourages letting go of attachments, virtue (sīla) provides a structure and support for wholesome action, and wisdom prevents the misuse of given resources.

- Wisdom realizes that all beings are interconnected and interdependent. No being or phenomenon exists independently or in isolation.
 - Everything is interrelated and influenced by a complex web of causes and conditions.
 - The Buddha taught that all beings have been relatives to one another at some lifetime within the cycle of birth, ageing, sickness, death, and rebirth (saṃsāra).
 - Actions (kamma) have consequences not just for the individual but also impact the wider network of beings. Positive and negative actions influence the collective consciousness and shape the experiences of all sentient beings.

The practice of generosity should not cause undue suffering for oneself, give often and what is appropriate without threatening physical and emotional safety, nor peace of mind.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
5.148 (8) A Good Person

...
“Bhikkhus, there are these five gifts of a good person. What five? He gives a gift out of faith; he gives a gift respectfully; he gives a timely gift; he gives a gift unreservedly; he gives a gift without injuring himself or others.

“(1) Because he has given a gift out of faith, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and he is handsome, attractive, graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion. (2) Because he has given a gift respectfully, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and his sons and wives, slaves, servants, and workers are obedient, lend an ear, and apply their minds to understand. (3) Because he has given a timely gift, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and timely benefits come to him in abundance. (4) Because he has given a gift unreservedly, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and his mind inclines to the enjoyment of the five kinds of fine sensual pleasures. (5) Because he has given a gift without injuring himself or others, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and no damage comes to his property from any source, whether from fire, floods, kings, thieves, or displeasing heirs. These are the five gifts of a good person.”

Generosity is an important condition for reducing and eventually eliminating the ego's power and control over the mind, and allowing pure consciousness, wisdom and loving-kindness to radiate and brighten the mind. The generous heart is joyful because there is a joining and bounding with others that leaves no room in the mind for loneliness or depression.

Generosity may be performed in various ways, such as offering material support, food, clothing, shelter, medicine or financial resources to those in need, as well as giving one's time, knowledge, and emotional support.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
4.57 (7) Suppavāsā

...
“Suppavāsā, a female noble disciple who gives food gives the recipients four things. What four? She gives life, beauty, happiness, and strength. (1) Having given life, she partakes of life, whether celestial or human. (2) Having given beauty, she partakes of beauty, whether celestial or human. (3) Having given happiness, she partakes of happiness, whether celestial or human. (4) Having given strength, she partakes of strength, whether celestial or human. Suppavāsā, a female noble disciple who gives food gives the recipients these four things.”

When one gives well-prepared food,
pure, delicious, and flavorful,
to the upright ones who are
exalted and of excellent conduct,
that offering, which links merit with merit,
is praised as very fruitful
by the world-knowers.⁷⁴²

Those recollecting such generosity
dwell in the world inspired by joy.
Having removed the stain of miserliness and its root,
blameless, they go to the heavenly abode.

Note 742: Mp identifies the “world-knowers” (lokavidūna) with the Buddhas.

The sharing of food, material things and money do help people in this life but the benefits are temporary due to the impermanent nature of materiality, their loss and decay. However, the sharing of Dhamma has long lasting benefits that will continue into future lives and will also lead to the ending of the cycle of all rebirths (saṃsāra). The gift of Dhamma (Dhammadāna) is timeless and invaluable in its ability to bring permanent peace, happiness and liberation from suffering (dukkha), nibbāna.

The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom translated by Acharya Buddhārakkhita

354. The gift of the Dhamma excels all gifts; the taste of the Dhamma excels all tastes; the delight in the Dhamma excels all delights; the craving-freed vanquishes all suffering.

The acts of generosity is a way to accumulate wholesome kamma and to cultivate qualities like kindness, compassion, and selflessness. Generosity is one of the Three Pillars of Dhamma, necessary practices which support the path to nibbāna. The Three Pillars of Dhamma or Grounds for Making Merit (puñña kiriya vatthu) are:

1. Generosity (dāna),
2. Moral restraint (sīla), and
3. Meditation (bhāvanā).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
8.36 (6) Activity

"Bhikkhus, there are these three bases of meritorious activity. What three? The basis of meritorious activity consisting in giving; the basis of meritorious activity consisting in virtuous behavior; and the basis of meritorious activity consisting in meditative development.

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya translated by Maurice O'C Walshe
33 Sangīti Sutta: The Chanting Together

...

(38) 'Three grounds based on merit: that of giving, of morality, of meditation (dānamayaṃ puñña-kiriya-vatthu, sīlamayaṃ puñña-kiriya-vatthu, bhāvanāmayā puñña-kiriya-vatthu).

Buddhadhamma by Bhikkhu P. A. Payutto
Chapter 11 Happiness

In Buddhism, the essential aim of performing wholesome deeds or making merit – whether this be through generosity (dāna), moral conduct (sīla), or cultivating the mind (bhāvanā) – is not to receive a reward in the form of sense pleasure, say of wealth, fame, respect, an entourage of followers, or rebirth in a heavenly realm. The true purpose of wholesome actions is to support spiritual development and to access true, lasting happiness, which leads to a reduction of mental defilement, a disengagement from evil, and an elimination of craving – the source of suffering. The person engaging in good actions thus experiences deeper, more refined forms of happiness – up to the happiness of Nibbāna – which bring peace and wellbeing to the individual and to society:

Mahāniddeśa (Khuddakanikāya)

I. 424-5.

Not for happiness tarnished by defilement, not for future birth, does a sage give gifts. Indeed, a sage gives gifts for the end of defilement, for the absence of future birth.

Not for happiness tarnished by defilement, not for future birth, does a sage develop the jhānas. Indeed, a sage develops the jhānas for the end of defilement, for the absence of future birth.

Aiming for the state of peace (i.e. Nibbāna), inclining in this direction, devoted to this state, a sage gifts gifts. Sages set Nibbāna as the goal, just as rivers head for the heart of the ocean.

The Buddha frequently taught the Dhamma to lay people as a Gradual Discourse (anupubbikathā). Talk on giving (dāna kathā) is the initial subject of the instruction because it is the foundation and seed of spiritual development. The Gradual Discourse is as follows:

1. talk on giving (dāna kathā),
2. talk on virtue (sīla kathā),
3. talk on heavenly pleasures (sagga kathā),
4. talk on the dangers of sensual pleasure (kāmaṇaṃ ādīnava kathā),
5. talk on the benefits of renunciation (nekkhamma kathā), and
6. talk on The Four Noble Truths (cattāri ariya-saccāni kathā).

A discussion on Progressive Instruction and Gradual Training is found in the June 2023 Newsletter.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
56 Upāli Sutta: To Upāli

...

18. Then the Blessed One gave the householder Upāli progressive instruction, that is, talk on giving, talk on virtue, talk on the heavens; he explained the danger, degradation, and defilement in sensual pleasures and the blessing of renunciation. When he knew that the householder Upāli's mind was ready, receptive, free from hindrances, elated, and confident, he expounded to him the teaching special to the Buddhas: suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path. Just as a clean cloth with all marks removed would take dye evenly, so too, while the householder Upāli sat there, the spotless immaculate vision of the Dhamma arose in him: "All that is subject to arising is subject to cessation."⁵⁸⁸ Then the householder Upāli saw the Dhamma, attained the Dhamma, understood the Dhamma, fathomed the Dhamma; he crossed beyond doubt, did away with perplexity, gained intrepidity, and became independent of others in the Teacher's Dispensation.⁵⁸⁹ ...

Notes:

588 MA: Vision of the Dhamma (dhammacakkhu) is the path of stream-entry. The phrase "All that is subject to arising is subject to cessation" shows the mode in which the path arises. The path takes cessation (Nibbāna) as its object, but its function is to penetrate all conditioned states as subject to arising and cessation.

589 The "Dhamma" referred to here is the Four Noble Truths. Having seen these truths for himself, he has cut off the fetter of doubt and now possesses the "view that is noble and emancipating and (which) leads the one who practises in accordance with it to the complete destruction of suffering" (MN 48.7).

The Buddha taught four qualities that bond people together of which generosity was the first listed in The Four Bases of Sympathy (saṅgahavatthu):

1. generosity (dāna),
2. speak kind words (peyyavajja),
3. render service for the benefit of others (atthacariya), and
4. treat everyone equally, impartiality and behave properly in all circumstances (samānattatā).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
4.32 (2) Sustaining

"Bhikkhus, there are these four means of sustaining a favorable relationship. What four? Giving, endearing speech, beneficent conduct, and impartiality."⁶⁸⁷ These are the four means of sustaining a favorable relationship."

Note 687: ... The four saṅgahavatthu are means by which one can attract others and sustain a relationship with them characterized by friendliness and respect. The four in Pāli are dāna, peyyavajja, atthacariyā, samānattatā. ...

Mp: "Some people are to be sustained by a gift, so a gift should be given to them. Others expect endearing speech, so they should be addressed with pleasant words. Beneficent conduct is a talk on increasing goodness; these people should be told, 'You should do this, you shouldn't do that. You should associate with this person, not with that person.' Impartiality is being the same in happiness and suffering. This means sitting together with them, living together, and eating together."

Generosity is included among the essential attributes of the good, superior or true person (sappurisa). On the breakup of the body, an inferior person (asappurisa) will be reborn in hell or the animal world, while a good person will be reborn among the devās (heavenly beings) or excellent human beings. The following are the qualities of a good person.

1. A good person has faith in the Buddha, has shame in immoral actions, has fear in immoral actions, learned, energetic, has mindfulness and wisdom.
2. A good person has friends and companions who possess the same qualities of a good person.
3. A good person does not think of their own detriment, to the detriment of others or to the detriment of both.
4. A good person does not counsel to their own detriment, to the detriment of others or to the detriment of both.
5. A good person abstains from false speech, abstains from malicious speech, abstains from harsh speech, abstains from idle chatter.
6. A good person abstains from killing living beings, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from sexual misconduct.

7. A good person holds views like these: There is what is given, what is offered, what is sacrificed, there is fruit or result of good or bad actions, there is this world, there is other world, there is mother, there is father, there are spontaneously reborn beings, there are good and virtuous recluses or brahmins in the world who have realised for themselves through direct knowledge and proclaim this world and the other world.
8. A good person gives a gift with proper attention, gives it with his own hands, gives it with respect, gives it not as if throwing it away, gives it with the view that something will come of it.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
110 Cūḷapunnama Sutta: The Shorter Discourse on the Full-Moon Night

...
12. "And how does an untrue man [asappurisa] give gifts as an untrue man? Here an untrue man gives a gift carelessly, gives it not with his own hand, gives it without showing respect, gives what is to be discarded, gives it with the view that nothing will come of it. That is how an untrue man gives gifts as an untrue man.

13. "That untrue man — thus possessed of bad qualities, who thus associates as an untrue man, wills as an untrue man, counsels as an untrue man, speaks as an untrue man, acts as an untrue man, holds views as an untrue man, and gives gifts as an untrue man — on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappears in the destination of untrue men. And what is the destination of untrue men? It is hell or the animal world.

...
23. "And how does a true man [sappurisa] give gifts as a true man? Here a true man gives a gift carefully, gives it with his own hand, gives it showing respect, gives a valuable gift, gives it with the view that something will come of it. That is how a true man gives gifts as a true man.

24. "That true man — thus possessed of good qualities, who thus associates as a true man, wills as a true man, counsels as a true man, speaks as a true man, acts as a true man, holds views as a true man, and gives gifts as a true man — on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappears in the destination of true men. And what is the destination of true men? It is greatness among the gods or greatness among human beings."

The August 2022 Newsletter: The Practice of Generosity (dāna) provides additional discussion. The sutta excerpts listed below provide teachings by the Buddha on the practice of generosity.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
3.24 (4) Archery

At Sāvattthī. Sitting to one side, King Pasenadi of Kosala said to the Blessed One:

"Venerable sir, where should a gift be given?"

"Wherever one's mind has confidence, great king."

"But, venerable sir, where does what is given become of great fruit?"

"This is one question, great king, 'Where should a gift be given?' and this another, 'Where does what is given become of great fruit?' What is given to one who is virtuous, great king, is of great fruit, not so what is given to an immoral person. ...

"So too, great king, when a person has gone forth from the household life into homelessness, no matter from what clan, if he has abandoned five factors and possesses five factors, then what is given to him is of great fruit. What five factors have been abandoned? Sensual desire has been abandoned; ill will has been abandoned; sloth and torpor have been abandoned; restlessness and remorse have been abandoned; doubt has been abandoned. What five factors does he possess? He possesses the aggregate of virtue of one beyond training, the aggregate of concentration of one beyond training, the aggregate of wisdom of one beyond training, the aggregate of liberation of one beyond training, the aggregate of the knowledge and vision of liberation of one beyond training. He possesses these five factors. Thus what is given to one who has abandoned five factors and who possesses five factors is of great fruit.²⁵⁵

Note: 255 The five factors abandoned are the five hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā); the five factors possessed are the five aggregates of one beyond training (pañca asekhaṅkhandhā), the asekha being the arahant.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
5.35 (5) The Benefits of Giving

"Bhikkhus, there are these five benefits of giving. What five?"

(1) One is dear and agreeable to many people.

(2) Good persons resort to one.

(3) One acquires a good reputation.

(4) One is not deficient in the layperson's duties.

(5) With the breakup of the body, after death, one is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world.

These are the five benefits in giving."

...

“Bhante, why is it that one gift is not of great fruit and benefit while the other is?”

(1) “Here, Sāriputta, someone gives a gift with expectations, with a bound mind, looking for rewards; he gives a gift, [thinking]: ‘Having passed away, I will make use of this.’ He gives that gift to an ascetic or a brahmin: food and drink; clothing and vehicles; garlands, scents, and unguents; bedding, dwellings, and lighting. What do you think, Sāriputta? Might someone give such a gift?”

“Yes, Bhante.”

“In that case, Sāriputta, he gives a gift with expectations, with a bound mind, looking for rewards; he gives a gift, [thinking]: ‘Having passed away, I will make use of this.’ Having given such a gift, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in companionship with the devas [ruled by] the four great kings. Having exhausted that kamma, psychic potency, glory, and authority, he comes back and returns to this state of being.

(2) “But, Sāriputta, someone does not give a gift with expectations, with a bound mind, looking for rewards; he does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘Having passed away, I will make use of this.’ Rather, he gives a gift, [thinking]: ‘Giving is good.’...

(3) “He does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘Giving is good,’ but rather he gives a gift, [thinking]: ‘Giving was practiced before by my father and forefathers; I should not abandon this ancient family custom.’...

(4) “He does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘Giving was practiced before ... I should not abandon this ancient family custom,’ but rather he gives a gift, [thinking]: ‘I cook; these people do not cook. It isn’t right that I who cook should not give to those who do not cook.’...

(5) “He does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘I cook ... to those who do not cook,’ but rather he gives a gift, [thinking]: ‘Just as the seers of old—that is, Atthaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmita, Yamataggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa, and Bhagu—held those great sacrifices, so I will share a gift.’...

(6) “He does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘Just as the seers of old ... held those great sacrifices, so I will share a gift,’ but rather he gives a gift, [thinking]: ‘When I am giving a gift my mind becomes placid, and elation and joy arise.’...

(7) “He does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘When I am giving a gift my mind becomes placid, and elation and joy arise,’ but rather he gives a gift, [thinking]: ‘It’s an ornament of the mind, an accessory of the mind.’ He gives that gift to an ascetic or a brahmin: food and drink; clothing and vehicles; garlands, scents, and unguents; bedding, dwellings, and lighting. What do you think, Sāriputta? Might someone give such a gift?”

“Yes, Bhante.”

“In that case, Sāriputta, he does not give a gift with expectations, with a bound mind, looking for rewards; he does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘Having passed away, I will make use of this.’ He does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘Giving is good.’ He does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘Giving was practiced before by my father and forefathers; I should not abandon this ancient family custom.’ He does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘I cook; old ... held those great sacrifices, so I will share a gift.’ He does not give a gift, [thinking]: ‘When I am giving a gift my mind becomes placid, and elation and joy arise.’ But rather, he gives a gift, [thinking]: ‘It’s an ornament of the mind, an accessory of the mind.’ Having given such a gift, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in companionship with the devas of Brahmā’s company. Having exhausted that kamma, psychic potency, glory, and authority, he does not come back and return to this state of being.

“This, Sāriputta, is the reason why a gift given by someone here is not of great fruit and benefit. And this is the reason why a gift given by someone here is of great fruit and benefit.”

...

And how is an offering possessed of six factors? Here, the donor has three factors and the recipients have three factors.

“What are the three factors of the donor? (1) The donor is joyful before giving; (2) she has a placid, confident mind in the act of giving; and (3) she is elated after giving. These are the three factors of the donor.

“What are the three factors of the recipients? Here, (4) the recipients are devoid of lust or are practicing to remove lust; (5) they are devoid of hatred or are practicing to remove hatred; (6) they are devoid of delusion or are practicing to remove delusion. These are the three factors of the recipients.

... it is not easy to measure the merit of such an offering ... rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merit.”

...

“There are, Byagghapajja, these four [other] things that lead to a clansman’s welfare and happiness in future lives. What four? Accomplishment in faith, accomplishment in virtuous behavior, accomplishment in generosity, and accomplishment in wisdom.

...

(7) “And what is accomplishment in generosity? Here, a clansman dwells at home with a heart devoid of the stain of miserliness, freely generous, openhanded, delighting in relinquishment, one devoted to charity, delighting in giving and sharing. This is called accomplishment in generosity.

Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planning to attend at www.MeetUp.com. Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at www.google.com/maps.

Activities of the Meditation Center

- Sitting meditation is held everyday at 6:30AM and 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com on the days and time you would like to participate.
- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).
- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
- There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
- Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
- Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
- For more additional information please send an email to mittameditation@gmail.com. We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its' mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.
- Giving alms during alms-round.
- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com.
- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyana-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the

support page of the website www.mittameditation.com and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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February 2024 Newsletter



Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter: The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī),
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī),
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī),
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī),
5. Energy (vīrya pāramī),
6. Patience (khanti pāramī),
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī),
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī),
9. Loving-kindness (mettā pāramī), and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī).

The subject of this newsletter is on the Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī). The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī) is discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter. The next eight newsletters will discuss the remaining perfections.

The meaning of the Pāli word "sīla" is morality or ethical conduct.

- Morality are the principles of what is right or wrong, good or bad, in human behavior. Morality is the code of conduct that result in wholesome actions (kamma) and behavior that avoids unwholesome actions.
- Ethics is a systematic way of examining and understanding moral principles. Ethics guides individuals in making decisions by evaluating what actions are morally right or wrong.
- Virtue are qualities or traits of character that are morally good or desirable, such as the ten perfections. The cultivation of virtues is the purpose for ethical behavior.

In this newsletter the terms 'ethics' and 'morality' are used interchangeably.

Therefore, "sīla pāramī" is the Perfection of Virtue that embodies ethical behavior. The development of moral conduct is the foundation and initial practice for developing self-control and restraint of the senses. Ethical behavior is the first and foremost among wholesome actions and is the bases for a calm quiet mind and concentration. The calm quiet concentrated mind is a condition for the development of wisdom (paññā) and compassion (karunā). The development of wisdom purifies the mind of defilements (kilesa) which in turn, liberates the mind from suffering (dukkha) and to realize nibbāna.

Training in moral conduct and moral restraint aids in the reduction of suffering, both for oneself and others, by not causing harm but instead, to have loving-kindness (mettā) and compassion (karunā).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
note 108

MT: Non-cruelty, avihiṃsā which is a synonym for compassion [karunā] is the root of all virtues, especially the root-cause of morality.

The individual, relationships and society will suffer when moral principals are not followed. The following are some repercussions of not adhering to ethical conduct.

- Without a moral compass, the mind will be in conflict and emotional turmoil, experiencing guilt, remorse, shame, and a lack of peace.
- Neglecting morality could lead to actions that harm others physically, emotionally, or socially. The absence of the training in morality will have a negative impact on the community, there will be an erosion of cultural values, a decline in ethical standards that encourages a culture of dishonesty, corruption, and exploitation.
- Without honouring moral principles, relationships with others will be damaged by competitiveness, exploitation, and aggression. Lack of moral conduct will lead to dishonesty, betrayal, and harm, eroding trust and causing emotional distress in the individuals that form relationships.
- Not adhering to moral principles will result in a loss of respect from peers, family, and members of society. Others will perceive individuals without moral integrity as unreliable, untrustworthy, or unethical, which results in loss of reputation.
- Engaging in unethical behavior will lead to unwholesome kamma, resulting in future suffering and unfavorable circumstances.
- The mind would not be able to trust itself nor would others be able to have trust and respect in a person without moral scruples. Without trust, personal and professional relationships would be affected adversely, resulting in isolation or difficulties in collaboration.
- A lack of moral development will hinder the purification of mind and hinder progress towards nibbāna.
- Continual disregard for moral values will desensitize the mind to ethical concerns, resulting in a lack of loving-kindness, compassion, and a diminished sense of responsibility towards others.

Bhikkhu Bodhi defines virtue or moral discipline (sīla) in the following passage.

The Essential Meaning of Sila by Bhikkhu Bodhi

The Pali word for moral discipline, sila, has three levels of meaning: (1) inner virtue, i.e., endowment with such qualities as kindness, contentment, simplicity, truthfulness, patience, etc.; (2) virtuous actions of body and speech which express those inner virtues outwardly; and (3) rules of conduct governing actions of body and speech designed to bring them into accord with the ethical ideals. These three levels are closely intertwined and not always distinguishable in individual cases. But if we isolate them, sila as inner virtue can be called the aim of the training in moral discipline, sila as purified actions of body and speech the manifestation of that aim, and sila as rules of conduct the systematic means of actualizing the aim. Thus sila as inner virtue is established by bringing our bodily and verbal actions into accord with the ethical ideals, and this is done by following the rules of conduct intended to give these ideals concrete form.

Using Bhikkhu Bodhi's definition for moral discipline (sīla), the following is the threefold meaning.

1. Inner virtue is a mind endowed with the ten perfections (pāramī) which are a necessary condition for training the mind to realize nibbāna.
2. Wholesome kamma are virtuous actions of mind, body, and speech, and aides in purifying the mind of defilements (kilesa).
3. Training in the precepts (sikkhāpada) are the rules of conduct governing actions of body and speech that prevent unwholesome kamma from arising and actualize wholesome kamma. Each precept contains two aspects: a negative aspect, which is a rule of restraint, and a positive aspect, which is a virtue to be cultivated.

The precepts are principles of training the mind in ethical conduct (sīla) that are undertaken freely by the individual without coercion from a supernatural power or governing authority. The precepts assist in developing such mental faculties as energy (vīrya), mindfulness (sati), and concentration (samādhi), as well as the virtues of the Ten Perfections (dāna pāramī). There are Four Categories of Precepts (sikkhāpada).

- I. Five Precepts (pañcasīla) are the ethical guidelines for which lay disciples of the Buddha train their mind. These precepts are the bases from which the other categories of precepts are derived.
1. Refrain from killing sentient beings.
 - This precept is about respect for all forms of life, recognizing and honoring the value of living beings. All sentient beings are to be protected because life is precious.
 - A being is a constantly changing combination of physical and mental elements that arise and cease due to causes and conditions, and are therefore, not separate from the world. As the physical and mental elements change, the being itself changes. Beings act as a condition that affect other beings, beings are interconnected, and do not exist independently or in isolation. Harming a being has an affect on other beings and the environment.
 - The protection of beings by not harming them produces wholesome qualities of mind, such as loving-kindness, compassion, sympathy and empathy.
 - The principle of non-violence (ahiṃsā) emphasizes the importance of causing no harm to any being. The principle of non-violence contributes to the mind's inner peace and health, in addition to allowing others the freedom to also be at peace, and free from worry and fear.
 - When the body does not engage in harming others, the mind does not experience guilt, remorse, and agitation, which results in a peaceful and calmer mind.
 - Wholesome kamma is produced with the intention to not cause harm and instead, to protect all forms of life. The wholesome kamma contributes to the mind's progress towards liberation from suffering and perfect peace.
 - Unwholesome kamma is not produced when there is no intention to cause harm. Unwholesome kamma results in unfortunate future states of existence.
 - Respecting the sacredness of life encourages a mindful attitude towards the environment and ecosystems, promoting a sense of responsibility towards preserving nature.
 - Practicing non-violence helps to achieve harmonious relationships in communities by promoting peaceful coexistence and reduction in conflicts, and contributes to a more compassionate and understanding society.
 - Refraining from killing living creatures is assisted by the Ten Perfections (pāramī) thereby, the perfections are further developed by exercising the virtues.
 - The training in this precept gives the assurance that sentient beings will not be intentionally harmed, living beings are safe and secure thereby, the moral mind offers the gift of fearlessness to others.
 2. Refrain from taking that which is not given.
 - This precept is about respecting the possessions of others, and the value of what others own.
 - The precept also cultivates contentment and satisfaction with our own possessions, and reduces the unwholesome desire for what others possess.
 - Training in the precept develops honesty, a wholesome quality of mind.
 - Respect of ownership develops trust within communities. When people trust that their belongings won't be taken without permission, the result is a harmonious environment where individuals feel secure and respected.
 - Wholesome mental kamma is the intention to not take what is not freely given, thereby unwholesome kamma is avoided.
 - The mind trains in the wholesome practice of generosity which is produced from loving-kindness and compassion rather than the unwholesome activity of coercion or theft.
 - The training in this precept gives the assurance that the possessions of others will not be stolen, their belongings are safe, thereby, the moral mind offers the gift of fearlessness to others.
 3. Refrain from sexual misconduct.

- This precept is about pursuing wholesome marital fidelity in order to maintain harmonious relations based on trust and mutual respect. Respect for the boundaries and well-being, autonomy and dignity of individuals in the relationship, will result in healthy and consensual relationships.
 - Discipline of restraining the appetite for multiple partners and practicing mindfulness in relationships, aides in developing a sense of responsibility and accountability.
 - Avoiding unwholesome actions that are harmful, such as infidelity or exploiting others for personal gain will result in a mind at peace. By abstaining from unwholesome actions that lead to suffering for oneself and others, the mind grows in stability and concentration.
 - The precept contributes to a harmonious society that encourages trust and stability within communities by promoting healthy relationships and by reducing conflicts arising from misconduct.
 - The training in this precept gives the assurance that there will be no transgression on the spouse or partner, personal relationships are safe and secure thereby, the moral mind offers the gift of fearlessness to others.
4. Refrain from lying.
- This precept is about cultivating truthfulness, which has the affect that the mind can trust itself and others can trust you. The practice of speaking the truth develops integrity and trust in relationships, the environment thus created is harmonious and supportive.
 - Lying leads to a tangled web of deceit, causing mental stress and confusion. Honesty promotes a clear conscience and a peaceful state of mind which supports mental health and tranquility.
 - Upholding truthfulness demonstrates respect for others by honoring their right to know and understand reality as it is. Truthfulness promotes communication that is sincere and authentic, helpful for developing meaningful relationships.
 - Lying creates unwholesome kamma which causes suffering in this life and future lives.
 - Truthfulness produces wholesome kamma which results in the liberation from suffering. Truthfulness is an essential ingredient of the path to nibbāna because it conditions the development of wisdom.
 - The training in this precept gives the assurance that others are confident that they will hear the truth from the moral mind: the speech is trustworthy and reliable, thereby, the moral mind offers the gift of fearlessness to others.
5. Refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness. The actual translation of the training rule is to abstain from fermented and distilled intoxicants which are the basis for heedlessness.

An intoxicant is something that causes the mind to become excited or confused, and prevent mindfulness and control over speech and actions. The Vietnamese Zen Master, Thich Nhat Hanh taught this precept to include mindful consumption, that is, to abstain from unhealthy food, unhealthy entertainment and unhealthy conversations which are intoxicants to body and mind.

- This precept is about the avoidance of intoxicants in order to preserve the training in the above four precepts by maintaining mental clarity, heedfulness, mindfulness and awareness. The consumption of intoxicants may result in loss of wisdom and clarity of mind which will then result in disregarding the training in the above four precepts.
- Avoiding intoxicants results in clear-mindedness, which aids in understanding the mind's inner world and the external world, and results in making informed decisions with mindfulness in daily life.
- Intoxicants impair judgment and may lead to actions that cause harm or suffering. The avoidance of intoxicants will help prevent harm, both to oneself and to others, the clear and sharp mind promotes safety and peace.

- The avoidance of intoxicants will enable the mind to better focus on the training towards purification of mind. The precept supports the development of discipline and mindfulness, which are necessary conditions for the development of wisdom.
- Avoiding intoxicating substances will contribute to physical health. Substance abuse results in health issues, and by abstaining, the mind and body will experience a healthier life physically, mentally, and emotionally.
- This precept promotes responsible behavior and understanding of the consequences that unwholesome actions have on both the mind, relationships and the community. The practice of abstaining from intoxicants will produce a mind that is compassionate and responsible.
- The training in this precept gives the assurance that the crimes and transgressions that result from intoxication will not be committed by the moral mind, living beings are safe and secure, thereby, the gift of fearlessness is given to others.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

8.39 (9) Streams

... “There are, bhikkhus, these five gifts, great gifts, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated and never before adulterated, which are not being adulterated and will not be adulterated, not repudiated by wise ascetics and brahmins. What five?

(4) “Here, a noble disciple, having abandoned the destruction of life, abstains from the destruction of life. By abstaining from the destruction of life, the noble disciple gives to an immeasurable number of beings freedom from fear, enmity, and affliction. He himself in turn enjoys immeasurable freedom from fear, enmity, and affliction. This is the first gift, a great gift, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated and never before adulterated, which is not being adulterated and will not be adulterated, not repudiated by wise ascetics and brahmins. This is the fourth stream of merit ... that leads to what is wished for, desired, and agreeable, to one’s welfare and happiness.

(5)–(8) “Again, a noble disciple, having abandoned the taking of what is not given, abstains from taking what is not given ... abstains from sexual misconduct ... abstains from false speech ... abstains from liquor, wine, and intoxicants, the basis for heedlessness. By abstaining from liquor, wine, and intoxicants, the basis for heedlessness, the noble disciple gives to an immeasurable number of beings freedom from fear, enmity, and affliction. He himself in turn enjoys immeasurable freedom from fear, enmity, and affliction. This is the fifth gift, a great gift, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated and never before adulterated, which is not being adulterated and will not be adulterated, not repudiated by wise ascetics and brahmins. This is the eighth stream of merit ... that leads to what is wished for, desired, and agreeable, to one’s welfare and happiness.

“These, bhikkhus, are the eight streams of merit, streams of the wholesome, nutriments of happiness—heavenly, ripening in happiness, conducive to heaven—that lead to what is wished for, desired, and agreeable, to one’s welfare and happiness.”

When an individual, for one reason or another, find it challenging to train in all of the above five precepts then that individual should train in the precepts that can be accomplished, and form the intention to train in the remaining precepts when circumstances permit.

- To train in the precepts, the mind must form the intention to follow the precepts. What matters most is the sincerity of the mind’s intention and the commitment to improve in the training.
- Awareness of thoughts, speech, and actions is the condition that results in conscious choices that are aligned with the precepts.
- Start training at the level the mind is at morally. Practice the precepts that can be accomplished and gradually progress to the more challenging precepts.
- Rather than aiming for perfection immediately, set realistic and achievable goals to improve the minds’ observance of the precepts.
- Seek support from a Buddhist community to maintain and improve upon the training.
- Recognize that everyone faces challenges, and the practice is about growth and understanding. Therefore, be compassionate towards oneself and others.
- Investigate past speech and past actions in order to learn if they were in alignment with the precepts. Regular introspection helps in understanding where improvements are required.
- If avoiding intoxicants is challenging, then focus on reducing their consumption. Moderation is a starting point towards eventual abstinence.

- II. Eight Precepts (aṭṭhasīla) are the ethical guidelines observed during special religious occasions or a commitment to a more ascetic lifestyle. These training precepts are observed by postulants who have aspirations to fully ordain in the monastic Saṅgha.
1. Refrain from killing living creatures. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
 2. Refrain from taking that which is not given. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
 3. Refrain from any intentional sexual activity.
 - Abstaining from all sexual activity will free up mental and emotional energy, allowing the mind to concentrate on cultivating wholesome kamma, the perfections, and purification of mind.
 - Abstinence helps to maintain emotional stability by avoiding the complexities or emotional entanglements that may arise from intimate relationships.
 - Practicing abstinence will develop self-control, and strengthen willpower in different aspects of life.
 - Choosing to abstain removes the pressure associated with dating or seeking sexual relationships, allowing the mind to focus on the cultivation of virtues and wholesome mental faculties without distractions or obstructions.
 4. Refrain from lying. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
 5. Refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
 6. Refrain from eating at inappropriate times.
 - Observing specific times for eating cultivates restraint, discipline and mindfulness. The mind cultivates mindfulness of actions, thoughts, and habits related to consumption, and a greater sense of self-control.
 - By eating at appropriate times, the mind trains in contentment and simplicity. This practice also encourages gratitude for the food, and reduces the tendency toward overindulgence or attachment and clinging to sensual pleasures. This training precept helps to cultivate the understanding of impermanence and non-attachment.
 - By refraining from eating at inappropriate times, there will be minimal disturbances to others who offer or prepare meals.
 7. Refrain from entertainment, beautification, and adornment.
 - This precept aides in cultivating renunciation (nekkhamma) and the pursuit of a simpler, and mindful way of life. The mind that is comfortable with simplicity will be peaceful and concentrated on purification in order to realize nibbāna.
 - Refraining from entertainment, beautification, and adornment encourages the mind to find contentment and happiness with refined states of mind rather than seeking external sources.
 - Avoiding engagement in entertainment, beautification, and adornment will help reduce attachment to material possessions and superficial desires. By letting go of these attachments, the mind will experience freedom and peace.
 - By abstaining from excessive attention on outward appearances or indulgence in entertainment, the mind will instead direct attention toward developing virtues, the ten perfections.
 - Avoiding entertainment and beautification will reduce distractions that can hinder progress in training the mind. The mind is then able to dedicate more time and energy to meditation, study, and contemplation.
 - Refraining from beautification and adornment promotes humility by letting go of the need to enhance the body's appearance for desires motivated by the selfish and conceited ego. The practice encourages acceptance of the body's appearance as it is in reality.
 8. Refrain from lying on a high or luxurious sleeping place.
 - By choosing not to sleep on high or luxurious beds, the mind practices humility and renunciation, letting go of attachments to comfort and extravagance. The precept cultivates contentment with simple and modest living conditions.

- Refraining from luxurious sleeping places aides in reducing attachments to material possessions and comforts. The precept of letting go of attachments supports the development of inner virtues, the ten perfections. The precept also emphasizes moderation and simplicity, which results in contentment and tranquility.
- Choosing simpler sleeping arrangements promotes a sense of equality among members of society. By forgoing opulent sleeping places, the mind accepts a lifestyle that is relatable to others, regardless of their social or economic status.
- Sleeping on a less lavish bed encourages physical and mental restraint; the mind refrains from indulgence in physical comfort and supports a disciplined approach to daily living rooted in simplicity.
- Sleeping on a modest bed encourages mindfulness and gratitude for basic necessities. The mind is aware of and grateful for the simple comforts that are available.
- Renouncing luxurious sleeping arrangements allows the mind to concentrate on purification. The precept reduces distractions arising from concerns for physical comfort, enabling greater concentration during meditation and contemplation.

III. Ten Precepts (dasasīla) are the ethical guidelines observed by novices who have aspirations to fully ordain in the monastic Saṅgha and are rooted in the monastic code known as the Vinaya. The Vinaya sets forth rules and guidelines for monastic conduct and is designed to support the training of mind and ethical behavior.

1. Refrain from killing living creatures. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
2. Refrain from taking that which is not given. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
3. Refrain from any intentional sexual activity. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
4. Refrain from lying. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
5. Refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
6. Refrain from eating at inappropriate times. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
7. Refrain from dancing, singing, music, and going to see entertainments. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
8. Refrain from wearing garlands, using perfumes, and beautifying the body with cosmetics. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
9. Refrain from lying on a high or luxurious sleeping place. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
10. Refrain from accepting gold and silver (money).
 - Attachment to material possessions and wealth are obstacles to training the mind.
 - This precept is a training in renunciation and detachment. Monastics train to detach themselves from material possessions, which develops freedom from worldly desires.
 - By relying on basic necessities provided by the lay community (food, clothing, shelter, and medicine), monastics embrace simplicity in their lifestyle, reducing distractions in order to focus on the training of mind.
 - Not being tied to wealth helps in developing an attitude of equanimity, treating all offerings equally and avoiding favoritism or attachment to specific donors.
 - This precept strengthens the relationship between the monastic community and lay supporters, creating a sense of interdependence and encourages the practice of generosity among laypeople.
 - By relinquishing attachment to wealth and possessions, monastics direct their energy and time towards meditation, study, contemplation, and training the mind in cultivating the ten perfections, that assists in progressing on the path to nibbāna.

IV. Monastic precepts are defined in the Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka). The Three Baskets (tripiṭaka) are the components of the Pāli Canon consisting of the following:

1. Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka),
2. Basket of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka), and

3. Basket of Higher Doctrine (Abhidhamma Piṭaka).

The Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka) outlines the rules and guidelines for monastics. The Vinaya Piṭaka consists of:

- Suttavibhaṅga: Pāṭimokkha and commentary.
The Pāṭimokkha defines 227 precepts held by fully ordained monks (bhikkhus) and 311 precepts held by fully ordained nuns (bhikkhunis). These rules cover various aspects of conduct, including rules regarding celibacy, proper speech, handling of material possessions, proper comportment, and regulations for communal living.
- Khandhaka: gives numerous supplementary rules on various topics.
- Parivāra: analyses of rules.

The Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections.

- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Effort (vīrya pāramī), as it takes effort and diligence (appamāda) to maintain moral conduct consistently.

For example, a mind that abstains from unwholesome actions might encounter challenges or temptations that could compromise ethical behavior. The virtue of effort offers the determination needed to resist these temptations, thereby maintaining the integrity of virtuous conduct.

- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī), as wisdom provides the understanding of the causes and consequences of actions, allowing for skillful application of virtue. Without wisdom, the training in virtue will become rigid and dogmatic, mere rule-following, devoid of insight and motivation. Wisdom illuminates the reasons behind ethical conduct, allowing the mind to cultivate genuine virtue.

There is a mutual relationship between wisdom and virtue. Where there is wisdom there is virtue and where there is virtue there is wisdom, wisdom purifies virtue and virtue purifies wisdom. In addition, virtue forms the foundation for mental development (bhāvanā) and insight (vipassanā).

- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Loving-kindness (mettā pāramī), as loving-kindness provides the emotional foundation for virtue. Loving-kindness cultivates compassion (karunā), understanding (paññā), and goodwill towards all beings, motivating the mind to act ethically out of a genuine concern for others' well-being; and prevents virtue from becoming self-righteous or judgmental. Loving-kindness also encourages the understanding of interconnectedness and reinforces the wholesome consequences of virtuous actions.
- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī), as equanimity maintains emotional balance in the face of life's inevitable challenges. Equanimity prevents virtue from becoming rigid or judgmental, allowing the mind to respond to situations with clarity and composure, even when faced with difficult choices or temptations. Equanimity also encourages a balanced and accepting attitude towards all experiences, preventing virtue from being swayed by attachment or aversion.
- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī), as patience is necessary for persevering on the path of virtue. Patience enables the mind to withstand obstacles, setbacks, and criticism without losing commitment to ethical conduct. Patience allows virtue to endure even in challenging circumstances, promoting unwavering dedication to moral principles.
- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Generosity (dāna pāramī), as generosity complements virtue by encouraging the giving of one's time, resources, and skills in order to benefit others. This outward expression of virtue fosters interconnectedness and reinforces the wholesome kammic consequences of ethical actions. Generosity also helps cultivate detachment from material possessions, a key aspect of virtue.

Morality is part of the Threefold Training (sikkhā) and a division of the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga) that aims at purifying the mind of defilements (kilesa) in order to realize nibbāna. The Threefold Training and the three divisions of the Noble Eightfold Path are:

1. morality (sīla),
2. concentration (samādhi), and
3. wisdom (paññā).

Ethical conduct may also be described as the training of body and mind in the Ten Courses of Wholesome Kamma (kusalakammamārga), which are listed as follows:

Bodily Actions

1. abstain from killing living beings (pāṇātipātā veramaṇī);
2. abstain from taking what is not given (adinnādānā veramaṇī);
3. abstain from wrong conduct in regard to sense pleasures - sexual desires, intoxicants, gambling, etc. (kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī);

Verbal Actions

4. abstain from false speech (musāvādā veramaṇī);
5. abstain from slanderous, malicious, tale bearing speech (pisuṇāya vacāya veramaṇī);
6. abstain from harsh speech (pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī);
7. abstain from idle chatter, gossiping, useless speech (samphappalāpā veramaṇī);

Mental Actions

8. free from covetousness (anabhijjhā);
9. free from ill will (abyāpāda); and
10. hold right views, free from wrong views (sammāditṭhi).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

10.176 (10) Cunda

... "Impurity by body, Cunda, is threefold. Impurity by speech is fourfold. Impurity by mind is threefold.

"And how, Cunda, is impurity by body threefold?

(1) "Here, someone destroys life. He is murderous, bloody-handed, given to blows and violence, merciless to living beings.

(2) "He takes what is not given. He steals the wealth and property of others in the village or forest.

(3) "He engages in sexual misconduct. He has sexual relations with women who are protected by their mother, father, mother and father, brother, sister, or relatives; who are protected by their Dhamma; who have a husband; whose violation entails a penalty; or even with one already engaged.²¹⁶⁷

"It is in this way that impurity by body is threefold.

"And how, Cunda, is impurity by speech fourfold?

(4) "Here, someone speaks falsehood. If he is summoned to a council, to an assembly, to his relatives' presence, to his guild, or to the court, and questioned as a witness thus: 'So, good man, tell what you know,' then, not knowing, he says, 'I know,' or knowing, he says, 'I do not know'; not seeing, he says, 'I see,' or seeing, he says, 'I do not see.' Thus he consciously speaks falsehood for his own ends, or for another's ends, or for some trifling worldly end.

(5) "He speaks divisively. Having heard something here, he repeats it elsewhere in order to divide [those people] from these; or having heard something elsewhere, he repeats it to these people in order to divide [them] from those. Thus he is one who divides those who are united, a creator of divisions, one who enjoys factions, rejoices in factions, delights in factions, a speaker of words that create factions.

(6) "He speaks harshly. He utters such words as are rough, hard, hurtful to others, offensive to others, bordering on anger, un conducive to concentration.

(7) "He indulges in idle chatter. He speaks at an improper time, speaks falsely, speaks what is unbeneficial, speaks contrary to the Dhamma and the discipline; at an improper time he speaks such words as are worthless, unreasonable, rambling, and unbeneficial.

"It is in this way that impurity by speech is fourfold. "And how, Cunda, is impurity by mind threefold?

(8) "Here, someone is full of longing. He longs for the wealth and property of others thus: 'Oh, may what belongs to another be mine!'

(9) "He has a mind of ill will and intentions of hate thus: 'May these beings be slain, slaughtered, cut off, destroyed, or annihilated!'

(10) "He holds wrong view and has an incorrect perspective thus: 'There is nothing given, nothing sacrificed, nothing offered; there is no fruit or result of good and bad actions; there is no this world, no other world; there is no mother, no father; there are no beings spontaneously reborn; there are in the world no ascetics and brahmins of right conduct and right practice who, having realized this world and the other world for themselves by direct knowledge, make them known to others.'

"It is in this way that impurity by mind is threefold.

"These, Cunda, are the ten courses of unwholesome kamma.

Moral restraint is one of the Three Pillars of Dhamma, necessary practices which support the path to nibbāna. The Three Pillars of Dhamma or Grounds for Making Merit (puñña kiriya vatthu) are:

1. Generosity (dāna),

2. Moral restraint (sīla), and
3. Meditation (bhāvanā).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
8.36 (6) Activity

"Bhikkhus, there are these three bases of meritorious activity. What three? The basis of meritorious activity consisting in giving; the basis of meritorious activity consisting in virtuous behavior; and the basis of meritorious activity consisting in meditative development.

The Buddha frequently taught the Dhamma to lay people as a Gradual Discourse (anupubbikathā). Talk on virtue (sīla kathā) is the second subject of the instruction because it is a necessary condition for training the mind towards nibbāna. The Gradual Discourse is as follows:

1. talk on giving (dāna kathā),
2. talk on virtue (sīla kathā),
3. talk on heavenly pleasures (sagga kathā),
4. talk on the dangers of sensual pleasure (kāmaṇaṃ ādīnava kathā),
5. talk on the benefits of renunciation (nekkhamma kathā), and
6. talk on The Four Noble Truths (cattāri ariya-saccāni kathā).

A discussion on Progressive Instruction and Gradual Training is found in the June 2023 Newsletter.

In the political sphere, moral restraint occurs as the second item in a list of Ten Virtues of the Ruler (dasavidha-rājadhamma). The word 'Ruler' in The Ten Virtues of the Ruler is replaced today by the term 'Government.' The Ten Virtues of the Ruler, therefore apply today to all those in the government, such as the president, ministers, political leaders, legislative and administrative officers, etc. The Ten Virtues of the Ruler (dasavidha-rājadhamma) are:

1. generosity (dāna),
2. moral restraint (sīla),
3. altruism (pariccāga),
4. honesty (ājjava),
5. gentleness (maddava),
6. self control (tapa),
7. non-anger (akkodha),
8. non-violence (ahiṃsā),
9. patience (khanti), and
10. uprightness (avirodhana).

Moral restraint is the second item of the Seven Kinds of Wealth (satta dhana), indicating that people's economic life ought to be based on morality. The Seven Kinds of Wealth (satta dhana) are:

- (1) faith (saddhā dhana),
- (2) virtuous behavior (sīla dhana),
- (3) moral shame (hiri dhana),
- (4) moral dread (ottappa dhana),
- (5) learning (suta dhana),
- (6) generosity (cāga dhana), and
- (7) wisdom (paññā dhana).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
6 (6) Wealth in Detail

"Bhikkhus, there are these seven kinds of wealth. What seven? The wealth of faith, the wealth of virtuous behavior, the wealth of moral shame, the wealth of moral dread, the wealth of learning, the wealth of generosity, and the wealth of wisdom.

(1) "And what, bhikkhus, is the wealth of faith? Here, a noble disciple is endowed with faith. He places faith in the enlightenment of the Tathāgata thus: 'The Blessed One is an arahant ... the Enlightened One, the Blessed One.' This is called the wealth of faith.

(2) “And what is the wealth of virtuous behavior? Here, a noble disciple abstains from the destruction of life, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from sexual misconduct, abstains from false speech, abstains from liquor, wine, and intoxicants, the basis for heedlessness. This is called the wealth of virtuous behavior.

(3) “And what is the wealth of moral shame? Here, a noble disciple has a sense of moral shame; he is ashamed of bodily, verbal, and mental misconduct; he is ashamed of acquiring bad, unwholesome qualities. This is called the wealth of moral shame.

(4) “And what is the wealth of moral dread? Here, a noble disciple dreads wrongdoing; he dreads bodily, verbal, and mental misconduct; he dreads acquiring bad, unwholesome qualities. This is called the wealth of moral dread.

(5) “And what is the wealth of learning? Here, a noble disciple has learned much, remembers what he has learned, and accumulates what he has learned. Those teachings that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, with the right meaning and phrasing, which proclaim the perfectly complete and pure spiritual life—such teachings as these he has learned much of, retained in mind, recited verbally, mentally investigated, and penetrated well by view. This is called the wealth of learning.

(6) “And what is the wealth of generosity? Here, a noble disciple dwells at home with a heart devoid of the stain of miserliness, freely generous, openhanded, delighting in relinquishment, one devoted to charity, delighting in giving and sharing. This is called the wealth of generosity.

(7) “And what is the wealth of wisdom? Here, a noble disciple is wise; he possesses the wisdom that discerns arising and passing away, which is noble and penetrative and leads to the complete destruction of suffering. This is called the wealth of wisdom.

“These, bhikkhus, are the seven kinds of wealth.”

The following sutta excerpts are teachings that further illustrate the importance of virtuous behavior.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

10.1 (1) What Purpose?

- ... (1) “Bhante, what is the purpose and benefit of wholesome virtuous behavior?”
(2) “Ānanda, the purpose and benefit of wholesome virtuous behavior is non-regret.”
(3) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of non-regret?”
“The purpose and benefit of non-regret is joy.”
(4) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of joy?”
“The purpose and benefit of joy is rapture.”
(5) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of rapture?”
“The purpose and benefit of rapture is tranquility.”
(6) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of tranquility?”
“The purpose and benefit of tranquility is pleasure.”
(7) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of pleasure?”
“The purpose and benefit of pleasure is concentration.”
(8) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of concentration?”
“The purpose and benefit of concentration is the knowledge and vision of things as they really are.”
(9) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of the knowledge and vision of things as they really are?”
“The purpose and benefit of the knowledge and vision of things as they really are is disenchantment and dispassion.”
(10) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of disenchantment and dispassion?”
“The purpose and benefit of disenchantment and dispassion is the knowledge and vision of liberation.”
“... Thus, Ānanda, wholesome virtuous behavior progressively leads to the foremost.”

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya translated by Maurice O’C. Walshe

16 Mahāparinibbāna Sutta: The Great Passing

1.24. ‘And, householders, there are these five advantages to one of good morality and of success in morality. What are they? In the first place, through careful attention to his affairs he gains much wealth. In the second place, he gets a good reputation for morality and good conduct. In the third place, whatever assembly he approaches, whether of Khattiyas, Brahmins, householders or ascetics, he does so with confidence and assurance. In the fourth place, he dies unconfused. In the fifth place, after death, at the breaking-up of the body, he arises in a good place, a heavenly world. These are the five advantages to one of good morality, and of success in morality.’

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

11.11 (1) Mahānāma (1)

... (9) “Again, Mahānāma, you should recollect your own virtuous behavior as unbroken, flawless, unblemished, unblotched, freeing, praised by the wise, ungrasped, leading to concentration. When a noble disciple recollects his virtuous behavior, on that occasion his mind is not obsessed by lust, hatred, or delusion; on that occasion his mind is simply straight, based on virtuous behavior. A noble disciple whose mind is straight gains inspiration in the meaning, gains inspiration in the Dhamma, gains joy connected with the Dhamma. When he is joyful, rapture arises. For one with

a rapturous mind, the body becomes tranquil. One tranquil in body feels pleasure. For one feeling pleasure, the mind becomes concentrated. This is called a noble disciple who dwells in balance amid an unbalanced population, who dwells unafflicted amid an afflicted population. As one who has entered the stream of the Dhamma, he develops recollection of virtuous behavior.

Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planning to attend at www.MeetUp.com. Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at www.google.com/maps.

Activities of the Meditation Center

- Sitting meditation is held everyday at 6:30AM and 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com on the days and time you would like to participate.
- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).
- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
- There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
- Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
- Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
- For more additional information please send an email to mittameditation@gmail.com. We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its' mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.
- Giving alms during alms-round.
- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com.

- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyana-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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March 2024 Newsletter



Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter: The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī),
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī),
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī),
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī),
5. Energy (vīrya pāramī),
6. Patience (khanti pāramī),
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī),
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī),
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī), and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī).

The subject of this newsletter is on the Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī). The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī) is discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter and the Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī) is discussed in the February 2024 Newsletter. The next seven newsletters will discuss the remaining perfections.

Renunciation is the mind's wholesome intention to reject, disown or relinquish something unwholesome. The skilled and wholesome mind is committed to the training that leads to liberation from attachment to sensual desires and cravings because attachment to possessions and sensual pleasures result in suffering (dukkha) and detachment from them will result in freedom from suffering. Renunciation is letting go of whatever keeps the mind bound by the defilements (kilesa) of ignorance (avijjā), greed (lobha), and hatred (dosā); and relinquishes that which continues to cause suffering and existence in the cycle of birth, ageing, sickness, death, and rebirth (saṃsāra).

All things in the world, whether they be material or immaterial, are impermanent (anicca) and the mind that clings to or identifies with anything that is impermanent will suffer due to the item's changing, decaying and disappearing nature. Material items are the sense organs, objects of the senses and the associated pleasures; these items are impermanent, they are born, change and disappear. Immaterial items are views, concepts, opinions, thoughts, emotions, feelings, and perceptions; these items are also impermanent, they are born, change and disappear. The virtue of renunciation is cultivated by not clinging to or identifying with any material or immaterial item. Freedom from craving and clinging to that which is impermanent results in liberation from suffering and the realization of nibbāna.

Due to the impermanent nature of sensual pleasures and also due to the unwholesome mind's addiction to pleasures, the mind is never satisfied with available pleasures and is constantly searching for more and more pleasures. The sense of lack, not having enough pleasure causes the mind to perpetually search for greater pleasures. The temporary pleasurable experiences results in the urge to seek even more pleasures, and to try in vain to possess and protect those experiences. The experience of lack and fear of loss drives the mind to madness and suffers greatly. Renunciation is the antidote to the madness.

In addition to renouncing the addiction to sensual pleasures, the wholesome mind also renounces the concept of a self or ego which results in liberating wisdom that uproots the defilements. The Buddha defined a self as that which is permanent and not impermanent, and a self must also have complete control and power over that which is perceived to be a self. The teaching of not-self (anattā) is the understanding that the personality is composed of the Five Clinging Aggregates which are all impermanent and there is no complete control and power over the aggregates, therefore the aggregates are not a self. The Five Clinging Aggregates (pañcupādānakkhandhā) are the components that make up the experience of self and the world.

1. Material form (rūpa khandha) is the physical aspect of existence, the body and the external world perceived through the senses.
2. Feeling (vedanā khandha) is the sensations that are experienced in response to sensual stimuli. Feelings can be pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.
3. Perception (saññā khandha) is recognition and labeling of the sense objects that also include mental phenomena. Perception identifies and categorizes objects based on past knowledge and conditioning.
4. Mental formations (saṅkhāra khandha) include thoughts, emotions, volitions, and any mental construct. Mental formations encompasses everything that arises in the mind, including desires, intentions, and reactions.
5. Sense consciousness (viññāṇa khandha) is the awareness or cognizance of sensory experiences.

There are three levels of renunciation.

1. External renunciation is a mind that lets go of, does not hold on to, objects of the senses, sensual pleasures, and possessions.
2. Internal renunciation is a mind free of craving, clinging, attachment and identification with external sense objects.
3. Liberating renunciation is a mind free of defilements and the wrong view (micchādiṭṭhi) related to the personality or ego as being a self, this wisdom (paññā) is developed through insight meditation (vipassanā). The mind that is in the process of purification of defilements will hold onto right views (sammādiṭṭhi) but not wrong views; right views are the raft that takes the mind across the river of saṃsāra, once on the other side, the raft (right views) is also let go of.

The practice of renunciation is not to deny the necessities for physical and emotional survival but rather to develop contentment and non-attachment towards the basic necessities. The cultivation of contentment is being satisfied with the possessions that one already has, and the understanding that peace and happiness doesn't come from accumulating material possessions or chasing after sensual pleasures. A simple and minimalist lifestyle may help in developing contentment with basic needs.

The development of mental and emotional detachment is the process of observing thoughts and emotions (contents of consciousness) without getting entangled in them through understanding their impermanent and not-self nature. Contents of consciousness, the Five Aggregates, are like clouds passing through the mind. When the clouds (contents) settle down, the radiant and luminosity of the sun (consciousness) will be able to appear without obstruction.

Sincerity and committing to the training of mind for the liberation from suffering is to prioritize the development of virtues defined by the Ten Perfections (pāramī) over material gain, fame, praise or sensual pleasures. By perfecting the virtue of renunciation, the mind grows in freedom from the cycle of suffering (saṃsāra) by gradually reducing the influence of craving, clinging and attachments. The perfection of renunciation is a condition that develops a mind that is tranquil, compassionate, and concentrated on the goal of liberation (nibbāna).

Renunciation is one of the three kinds of Right Intention (sammā-saṅkappa), the second link of the Noble Eightfold Path. Right Intention are wholesome thoughts, defined in negative terms:

1. thoughts of renunciation and detachments to sense pleasures (nekkhamma vitakka),
2. thoughts of non-ill will (abyāpāda vitakka), and
3. thoughts of non-cruelty (avihiṃsā vitakka).

Renunciation leads naturally to generosity, Right Intention defined in positive terms:

1. thoughts of generosity (dāna vitakka),
2. thoughts of loving-kindness (metta vitakka), wishing others well and
3. thoughts of providing protection to living beings and radiating compassion (karunā vitakka).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

... 25. "And what, friends, is right intention? Intention of renunciation, intention of non-ill will, and intention of non-cruelty — this is called right intention.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
19 Dvedhāvitakka Sutta

... 3. "As I abided thus, diligent, ardent, and resolute, a thought of sensual desire arose in me. I understood thus: 'This thought of sensual desire has arisen in me. This leads to my own affliction, to others' affliction, and to the affliction of both; it obstructs wisdom, causes difficulties, and leads away from Nibbāna.' When I considered: 'This leads to my own affliction,' it subsided in me; when I considered: 'This leads to others' affliction,' it subsided in me; when I considered: 'This leads to the affliction of both,' it subsided in me; when I considered: 'This obstructs wisdom, causes difficulties, and leads away from Nibbāna,' it subsided in me. Whenever a thought of sensual desire arose in me, I abandoned it, removed it, did away with it.

... 6. "Bhikkhus, whatever a bhikkhu frequently thinks and ponders upon, that will become the inclination of his mind. If he frequently thinks and ponders upon thoughts of sensual desire, he has abandoned the thought of renunciation to cultivate the thought of sensual desire, and then his mind inclines to thoughts of sensual desire. If he frequently thinks and ponders upon thoughts of ill will... upon thoughts of cruelty, he has abandoned the thought of non-cruelty to cultivate the thought of cruelty, and then his mind inclines to thoughts of cruelty.

The Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections.

- Renunciation (nekkhamma) is balanced by the perfection of patience (khanti) because patience allows the mind to endure and manage the challenges that arise when relinquishing attachments.
- Selflessness and letting go of impermanent phenomena, supreme states of the Noble Ones, are developed with the renunciation of attachments and the Perfection of Generosity (dāna pāramī). Renunciation is letting go and generosity is sharing, together they form a skill to tame the ignorant ego into submission, and to cultivate selflessness and not-self. The motivation in renunciation is to let go with nothing expected in return is also necessary to perfect generosity.
- Renunciation must be guided by the Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī) in order to avoid aversion to the world. Renunciation is balanced with wisdom through the understanding that the wholesome mind can engage with the world without attachment or identification.

Without wisdom, renunciation may be driven by negative emotions like fear, frustration, or disappointment. Escape mentality is to push away the world without understanding the dangers inherent in the world. Aversion creates internal conflict, making renunciation difficult to maintain in the long run. The mind that lacks sufficient wisdom craves what it repels, leading to frustration and potential relapse.

- An unwise mind will reject all sensual pleasures, possessions, or relationships and try to exist in total isolation due to the wrong view that happiness and peace will be experienced when there is absolutely no relationship with anything or anyone; such a mind is paranoid and has a fear of the world. The wise mind will instead engage in the world with wisdom, partakes of sensual pleasures, possessions and relationships without craving, attachment, grasping, holding on or identifying with those items.

- An unwise mind that is experiencing challenges of daily life, stress, conflicts, and disappointments will attempt to escape from the suffering by withdrawing through radical renunciation and not engaging with life. The wise mind engages with both uncomfortable and comfortable feelings with the understanding that they arise, change and fall away due to impermanent conditions, and the wise mind does not hold onto or identify with any feelings.

- An unwise mind that is disappointed with failure to gain material possessions, fame or recognition will renounce the world in order to avoid depression associated with the loss of identifying with

those items and the deterioration of the ego. The wise mind does not identify with material possessions, fame or recognition and is not disappointed when they fail to arise or when they disappear.

- The unwise mind does not understand the gradual process that is inherent of the path towards liberation from suffering, nibbāna, and will renounce the world too quickly and to a degree that results in an unhealthy and unbalanced mind, which is an obstacle in transversing the path. The wise mind understands the training to be gradual, and knows when and what to renounce; the trainee will consult with spiritual friends who have experience with renunciation.
- The unwise mind will attempt to practice extreme asceticism and renounce the body, jeopardizing physical survival is a wrong understanding of renunciation. The wise mind understands the Buddha's teaching of the Middle Way and not train with extreme asceticism nor indulge in sensual gratification. The Middle Way is to balance renunciation with engagement in the world.
- The unwise mind that is seeking radical transformation or a dramatic break from their past, a desire for a profound shift in identity and lifestyle, will practice extreme renunciation. The wise mind rests in the understanding of not-self, stillness, silence, and peace, and does not seek any identity.

Renunciation is a conscious choice, releasing the mind from the grip of craving and clinging, resulting in freedom and liberation, based on understanding the impermanence and unsatisfactoriness of worldly phenomena, without denying and punishing the mind or withdrawing from the world.

With wisdom, the mind develops the Perfection of Equanimity (*upekkhā pāramī*), an evenness of mind towards pleasant and unpleasant experiences. Aversion gives way to understanding and compassion for the inevitable suffering inherent in existence.

The presence of wisdom enables the mind to understand the benefits of renunciation and also to know what, when and how to let go. The world is not seen as an enemy, but an opportunity for practicing wisdom and compassion. Cultivating wisdom is the guiding light for renunciation: wisdom transforms renunciation from a negative act of avoidance into a positive path towards liberation.

The following sutta passages are some teachings by the Buddha related to renunciation.

The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom translated by Acharya Buddhārakkhita

181. Those wise ones who are devoted to meditation and who delight in the calm of renunciation – such ones, Supreme Buddhas, even the gods hold dear.

290. If by renouncing a lesser happiness one may realize a greater happiness, let the wise man renounce the lesser, having regard for the greater happiness.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
6.63 (9) Penetrative

... (1) "When it was said: 'Sensual pleasures should be understood; the source and origin of sensual pleasures should be understood; the diversity of sensual pleasures should be understood; the result of sensual pleasures should be understood; the cessation of sensual pleasures should be understood; the way leading to the cessation of sensual pleasures should be understood,' for what reason was this said?

"There are, bhikkhus, these five objects of sensual pleasure: forms cognizable by the eye that are wished for, desired, agreeable, pleasing, connected with sensual pleasure, tantalizing; sounds cognizable by the ear ... odors cognizable by the nose ... tastes cognizable by the tongue ... tactile objects cognizable by the body that are wished for, desired, agreeable, pleasing, connected with sensual pleasure, tantalizing. However, these are not sensual pleasures; in the Noble One's discipline, these are called 'objects of sensual pleasure.' A person's sensual pleasure is lustful intention.

"They are not sensual pleasures, the pretty things in the world:

a person's sensual pleasure is lustful intention;

the pretty things remain just as they are in the world,

but the wise remove the desire for them.

"And what, bhikkhus, is the source and origin of sensual pleasures? Contact is their source and origin.

"And what is the diversity of sensual pleasures? Sensual desire for forms is one thing, sensual desire for sounds is another, sensual desire for odors still another, sensual desire for tastes still another, and sensual desire for tactile objects still another. This is called the diversity of sensual pleasures.

"And what is the result of sensual pleasures? One produces an individual existence that corresponds with whatever [sense pleasures] one desires and which may be the consequence either of merit or demerit.¹⁴¹³ This is called the result of sensual pleasures.

“And what is the cessation of sensual pleasures? With the cessation of contact there is cessation of sensual pleasures.

“This noble eightfold path is the way leading to the cessation of sensual pleasures, namely, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

“When, bhikkhus, a noble disciple thus understands sensual pleasures, the source and origin of sensual pleasures, the diversity of sensual pleasures, the result of sensual pleasures, the cessation of sensual pleasures, and the way leading to the cessation of sensual pleasures, he understands this penetrative spiritual life to be the cessation of sensual pleasures.

“When it was said: ‘Sensual pleasures should be understood ... the way leading to the cessation of sensual pleasures should be understood,’ it is because of this that this was said.

Note:1413: Mp: “One desiring celestial sensual pleasures, by fulfilling good conduct, is reborn in the deva world [and acquires] an individual existence that is a consequence of merit. By engaging in misconduct, one is reborn in the plane of misery [and acquires] an individual existence that is a consequence of demerit.”

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi 9.41 (10) Tapussa

... (1) “Before my enlightenment, while I was just a bodhisatta, not yet fully enlightened, it occurred to me too: ‘Good is renunciation, good is solitude.’ Yet my mind did not launch out upon renunciation and become placid, settled, and liberated in it, though I saw it as peaceful. It occurred to me: ‘Why is it that my mind does not launch out upon renunciation and become placid, settled, and liberated in it, though I see it as peaceful?’ Then it occurred to me: ‘I have not seen the danger in sensual pleasures and have not cultivated that [insight]; I have not achieved the benefit in renunciation and have not pursued it. Therefore my mind does not launch out upon renunciation and become placid, settled, and liberated in it, though I see it as peaceful.’

“Then, Ānanda, it occurred to me: ‘If, having seen the danger in sensual pleasures, I would cultivate that [insight], and if, having achieved the benefit in renunciation, I would pursue it, it is then possible that my mind would launch out upon renunciation and become placid, settled, and liberated in it, since I see it as peaceful.’ Sometime later, having seen the danger in sensual pleasures, I cultivated that [insight], and having achieved the benefit in renunciation, I pursued it. My mind then launched out upon renunciation and became placid, settled, and liberated in it, since I saw it as peaceful.

“Sometime later, Ānanda, secluded from sensual pleasures ... I entered and dwelled in the first jhāna. While I was dwelling in this state, perception and attention accompanied by sensuality occurred in me and I felt it as an affliction. Just as pain might arise for one feeling pleasure only to afflict him, so too, when perception and attention accompanied by sensuality occurred in me, I felt it as an affliction.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi 5.200 (10) Escape

... (1) “Here, when a bhikkhu is attending to sensual pleasures, his mind does not launch out upon them, and become placid, settled, and focused on them. But when he is attending to renunciation, his mind launches out upon it and becomes placid, settled, and focused on it. His mind is well departed, well developed, well emerged, well liberated, and well detached from sensual pleasures. And he is freed from those taints, distressful and feverish, that arise with sensual pleasures as condition. He does not feel that kind of feeling. This is declared to be the escape from sensual pleasures.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi 14 Cūḷadukkhakkhandha Sutta: The Shorter Discourse on the Mass of Suffering

... 4. “Even though a noble disciple has seen clearly as it actually is with proper wisdom that sensual pleasures provide little gratification, much suffering and despair, and that the danger in them is still more, as long as he still does not attain to the rapture and pleasure that are apart from sensual pleasures, apart from unwholesome states, or to something more peaceful than that, he may still be attracted to sensual pleasures.²⁰⁸ But when a noble disciple has seen clearly as it actually is with proper wisdom that sensual pleasures provide little gratification, much suffering and despair, and that the danger in them is still more, and he attains to the rapture and pleasure that are apart from sensual pleasures, apart from unwholesome states, or to something more peaceful than that, then he is no longer attracted to sensual pleasures.

Note 208: The “rapture and pleasure that are apart from sensual pleasures” are the rapture and pleasure pertaining to the first and second jhānas; the states “more peaceful than that” are the higher jhānas. From this passage it seems that a disciple may attain even to the second path and fruit without possessing mundane jhāna.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi 55.37 (7) Mahānāma

... “Here, Mahānāma, a lay follower dwells at home with a mind devoid of the stain of stinginess, freely generous, open-handed, delighting in relinquishment, one devoted to charity, delighting in giving and sharing. In that way a lay follower is accomplished in generosity.”

Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planing to attend at www.MeetUp.com. Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at www.google.com/maps.

Activities of the Meditation Center

- Sitting meditation is held everyday at 6:30AM and 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com on the days and time you would like to participate.
- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).
- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
- There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
- Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
- Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
- For more additional information please send an email to mittameditation@gmail.com. We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its' mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.
- Giving alms during alms-round.
- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com.
- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyana-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the

support page of the website www.mittameditation.com and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.



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April 2024 Newsletter



Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter: The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī),
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī),
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī),
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī),
5. Energy (vīrya pāramī),
6. Patience (khanti pāramī),
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī),
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī),
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī), and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī).

The subject of this newsletter is on the Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī). The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī) is discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter, the Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī) is discussed in the February 2024 Newsletter, and the Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) is discussed in the March 2024 Newsletter. The next six newsletters will discuss the remaining perfections.

Wisdom is the understanding of reality as taught in the Noble Four Truths (ariya catusacca). The Noble Truths are statements concerning the nature of existence and the path to liberation from suffering.

1. The Noble Truth of Suffering (dukkha) acknowledges the existence of suffering, the reality of dissatisfaction and unsatisfactoriness in the cycle of birth, aging, sickness, death and rebirth (saṃsāra). This truth is discussed in the February 2023 Newsletter.
2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (samudaya) is craving (taṇhā), attachment and identification with that which is impermanent. This truth is discussed in the March 2023 Newsletter.
3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (nirodha) is the elimination of the causes for suffering and the result is nibbāna, the escape from saṃsāra. This truth is discussed in the April 2023 Newsletter.
4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (magga) is training in the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga) that leads to nibbāna. This truth is discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
48.10 (10) Analysis (2)

"And what, bhikkhus, is the faculty of wisdom? Here, bhikkhus, the noble disciple is wise; he possesses wisdom directed to arising and passing away, which is noble and penetrative, leading to the complete destruction of suffering. He understands as it really is: 'This is suffering.' He understands as it really is: 'This is the origin of suffering.' He understands as it really is: 'This is the cessation of suffering.' He understands as it really is: 'This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering.' This is called the faculty of wisdom.

Wisdom is developed by insight (vipassanā) and is cultivated with observations and investigations of the arising and passing away of the Five Aggregates (pañca khandhā) and the conditional nature of the world.

The Five Aggregates are the components of the personality or ego:

1. material form (rūpa khandha),
2. mental formations (saṅkhāra khandha),
3. perceptions (saññā khandha),
4. feelings (vedanā khandha), and
5. sense consciousness (viññāṇa khandha).

The conditional nature of the world refers to each and every object is composed of parts that are dependent on each other, where the behavior of each part influences the functioning of the whole. The understanding that everything is interconnected in the world is a fundamental principle of wisdom.

The components of the personality and the conditional nature of the world are investigated in accordance to the Three Characteristics of Existence (tilakkhaṇa) while developing wisdom. The Three Characteristics of Existence are:

1. impermanence (anicca),
2. suffering (dukkha), and the
3. absence of a permanent self (anatta).

See the October 2023 Newsletter for a discussion on the cultivation of insight.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
22.45 (3) Impermanent (1)

At Sāvattṭhi. “Bhikkhus, form is impermanent. What is impermanent is suffering. What is suffering is nonself. What is nonself should be seen as it really is with correct wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’ When one sees this thus as it really is with correct wisdom, the mind becomes dispassionate and is liberated from the taints by nonclinging.

“Feeling is impermanent.... Perception is impermanent.... Volitional formations are impermanent.... Consciousness is impermanent. What is impermanent is suffering. What is suffering is nonself. What is nonself should be seen as it really is with correct wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’ When one sees this thus as it really is with correct wisdom, the mind becomes dispassionate and is liberated from the taints by nonclinging.

“If, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu’s mind has become dispassionate towards the form element, it is liberated from the taints by nonclinging. If his mind has become dispassionate towards the feeling element ... towards the perception element ... towards the volitional formations element ... towards the consciousness element, it is liberated from the taints by nonclinging.

“By being liberated, it is steady; by being steady, it is content; by being content, he is not agitated. Being unagitated, he personally attains Nibbāna. He understands: ‘Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being.’”

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translation by Bhikkhu Bodhi
3.136 (4) Arising

- (1) “Bhikkhus, whether Tathāgatas arise or not, there persists that law, that stableness of the Dhamma, that fixed course of the Dhamma: ‘All conditioned phenomena are impermanent.’ A Tathāgata awakens to this and breaks through to it, and then he explains it, teaches it, proclaims it, establishes it, discloses it, analyzes it, and elucidates it thus: ‘All conditioned phenomena are impermanent.’
- (2) “Bhikkhus, whether Tathāgatas arise or not, there persists that law, that stableness of the Dhamma, that fixed course of the Dhamma: ‘All conditioned phenomena are suffering.’ A Tathāgata awakens to this and breaks through to it, and then he explains it, teaches it, proclaims it, establishes it, discloses it, analyzes it, and elucidates it thus: ‘All conditioned phenomena are suffering.’
- (3) “Bhikkhus, whether Tathāgatas arise or not, there persists that law, that stableness of the Dhamma, that fixed course of the Dhamma: ‘All phenomena are non-self.’ A Tathāgata awakens to this and breaks through to it, and then he explains it, teaches it, proclaims it, establishes it, discloses it, analyzes it, and elucidates it thus: ‘All phenomena are non-self.’”

Wisdom is developed with knowledge (ñāṇa):

1. knowledge based on thinking (cintāmayā paññā),
2. knowledge based on learning (sutamayā paññā), and

3. knowledge based on mental development (bhāvanāmayā paññā).

The development of wisdom through knowledge based on thinking (cintāmayā paññā) involves intellectual understanding and contemplation.

- Wisdom that arises through reflective thinking includes contemplation upon the Dhamma, and applying intellectual analysis to understand the Dhamma's meaning and implications.
- Wisdom is closely linked to ethical conduct (sīla). A virtuous and ethical life provides a foundation for the development of wisdom, as a clear, calm, blameless, and guilt-free mind is able to engage in reflective thinking and contemplation.

The development of wisdom through knowledge based on learning (sutamayā paññā) has the following characteristics:

- Wisdom begins with studying, learning and understanding the teachings of the Buddha recorded in the scriptures (tipiṭaka).
- Wisdom is an understanding of the Four Noble Truths (ariya catusacca). Reflecting on these truths the mind develops insight into the nature of existence.
- Contemplation of the Three Characteristics of Existence (tilakkhaṇa) is another aspect of developing wisdom. This is the understanding that all phenomena are impermanent, subject to suffering, and devoid of a permanent self, leads to insight into the nature of conditional existence.
- Wisdom is cultivated through an understanding of Dependent Origination (paṭicca samuppāda): the interdependence of phenomena and the origination of suffering (dukkha). This chain of causation explains how suffering arises and ceases, providing insight into the nature of existence. See the July 2023 Newsletter for a discussion of Dependent Origination.

The development of wisdom through knowledge based on mental development (bhāvanāmayā paññā) includes the following:

- Practicing insight meditation (vipassanā) is a condition for developing wisdom. By observing the arising and passing away of mental and physical phenomena, the mind acquires experiential knowledge of impermanence and the other Characteristics of Existence. See the October 2023 Newsletter for a discussion on Insight Meditation.
- Mindfulness meditation is also a condition for developing wisdom. Mindfulness (sati) is cultivated, for example, by practicing the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna): mindfulness of the body, feelings, mind, and mind objects. Through concentration (samādhi) and mindfulness, the mind acquires insight into the nature of these four subjects of contemplation, leading to an understanding of impermanence, suffering, and not-self. See the October 2023 Newsletter for a discussion on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya translated by Maurice O'C Walshe

33 Sangīti Sutta: The Chanting Together

1.10

(42) 'Three kinds of wisdom: of the learner [sekhā], of the non-learner, of the one who is neither (sekho puggalo, asekho puggalo, n'eva sekho nāsekho puggalo).

(43) 'Three more kinds of wisdom: based on thought, on learning [hearing], on mental development [meditation] (cintāmayā paññā, sutamayā paññā, bhāvanāmayā paññā).

Note for the above sutta excerpt: The "learner" (sekhā) or "one in training" is a noble disciple (ariya puggala) who has not yet attained arahantship. A 'noble learner' is a disciple in higher training, i.e. one who pursues the three kinds of training (sikkhā):

1. training in higher morality (adhisīla-sikkhā)
2. training in higher mentality (adhicitta-sikkhā)
3. training in higher wisdom (adhipaññā-sikkhā)

The Path of Purification: Visuddhimagga by Bhaddanta Cariya Buddhaghosa

CHAPTER XIV THE AGGREGATES (Khandha-niddesa)

[A. UNDERSTANDING]

14. 7. ... understanding acquired without hearing from another is that consisting in what is reasoned because it is produced by one's own reasoning. Understanding acquired by hearing from another is that consisting in what is heard,

because it is produced by hearing. Understanding that has reached absorption, having been somehow produced by (meditative) development, is that consisting in development.

Wisdom and faith balance each other in the Five Powers (pañca-balāni):

1. the power of faith (saddhā) is unshakeable by faithlessness (unbelief),
2. the power of energy (virīya) is unshakeable by laziness,
3. the power of mindfulness (sati) is unshakeable by forgetfulness,
4. the power of concentration (samādhi) is unshakeable by distractedness, and
5. the power of wisdom (paññā) is unshakeable by ignorance (avijjā).

The balance between faith and wisdom is required in order to efficiently train the mind. Faith is the initial inspiration and driving force to practice the Noble Eightfold Path. However, blind faith acts to bypass the investigative quality of wisdom, and it is wisdom that provides the discernment and insight necessary for training the mind, and wisdom is what uproots the defilements.

Faith without wisdom may lead to superstition or dogmatism, while wisdom without faith may result in a lack of inspiration and motivation to train the mind. The harmonious interplay of faith and wisdom is necessary for the cultivation of a balanced mind that trains for purification of defilements.

The statement that the power of wisdom is unshakeable by ignorance emphasizes the transformative and liberating nature of wisdom. Once a mind attains wisdom through insight meditation and understanding, the mind will then uproot ignorance that conditions the cycle of suffering (saṃsāra). The stable and unshakeable power of wisdom is not swayed or undermined by delusion.

Wisdom (paññā) is balanced by concentration (samādhi) because the development of a focused mind is necessary for the arising of insights and understanding. Concentration sharpens the mind for introspection, while wisdom provides insights gained through focused awareness.

The Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections.

- The Perfection of Generosity (dāna pāramī) helps support the cultivation of wisdom by creating favorable conditions for learning and practice. Through acts of generosity, the mind creates wholesome kammic conditions that will contribute to a conducive environment for the development of wisdom.
- The Perfection of Morality (sīla pāramī) promotes wholesome behavior that is essential for a stable and concentrated mind. By observing ethical principles, the mind creates a foundation for concentration and mental clarity, which are required for the cultivation of wisdom.
- The Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) reduces the distractions and obstacles that hinder the development of wisdom. Letting go of worldly desires allows for the concentrated mind to understand the nature of reality.
- The Perfection of Wisdom requires diligent effort in studying, contemplating, and meditating on the Dhamma. The Perfection of Energy (virīya pāramī) supports the sustained concentration needed for the cultivation of wisdom, the commitment for continuous practice, and overcoming obstacles on the path.
- Wisdom requires patience and perseverance. The Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī) allows the mind to navigate challenges and setbacks without becoming discouraged and allows for a calm and composed mind that is able to understand the Dhamma.
- The Perfection of Truthfulness (sacca pāramī) is fundamental and required in the pursuit of wisdom. Understanding the truth of existence and reality is an aspect of wisdom.
- The Perfection of Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) supports the unwavering commitment to the cultivation of wisdom.
- The Perfection of Loving-kindness (mettā pāramī) creates a wholesome and compassionate state of mind. Cultivating a heart with love and compassion contributes to a wholesome and balanced approach to the pursuit of wisdom.
- The Perfection of Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) maintains a balanced mind in the face of both pleasant and unpleasant feelings and perceptions, and prevents attachment or aversion to

impermanent phenomena. Equanimity allows the mind to have an impartial and objective observation of the contents of experience which results in clear and objective wisdom.

Mahāyāna Buddhism emphasizes wisdom (paññā) and compassion (karuṇā) as the two pillars of practice. Theravāda Buddhism recognizes the importance of cultivating both wisdom and compassion in order to realize nibbāna. The virtue of wisdom understands the nature of reality and the virtue of compassion works to alleviate the suffering of others.

The following sutta excerpts provide additional advise for the cultivation of wisdom.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
135 Cūḷakammavibhanga Sutta: The Shorter Exposition of Action

17. “Here, student, some man or woman does not visit a recluse or a brahmin and ask: ‘Venerable sir, what is wholesome? What is unwholesome? What is blameable? What is blameless? What should be cultivated? What should not be cultivated? What kind of action will lead to my harm and suffering for a long time? What kind of action will lead to my welfare and happiness for a long time?’ Because of performing and undertaking such action... he reappears in a state of deprivation... But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is stupid. This is the way, student, that leads to stupidity, namely, one does not visit a recluse or brahmin and ask such questions.

18. “But here, student, some man or woman visits a recluse or a brahmin and asks: ‘Venerable sir, what is wholesome?... What kind of action will lead to my welfare and happiness for a long time?’ Because of performing and undertaking such action... he reappears in a happy destination... But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is wise. This is the way, student, that leads to **wisdom**, namely, one visits a recluse or brahmin and asks such questions.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
4.115 (5) Deeds

“Bhikkhus, there are these four cases of deeds. What four? (1) There is a deed that is disagreeable to do which will prove harmful. (2) There is a deed that is disagreeable to do which will prove beneficial. (3) There is a deed that is agreeable to do which will prove harmful. (4) There is a deed that is agreeable to do which will prove beneficial.

(1) “Bhikkhus, take first the case of the deed that is disagreeable to do which will prove harmful. One considers that this deed should not be done on both grounds: because it is disagreeable to do and because it will prove harmful. One considers that this deed should not be done on both grounds.

(2) “Next, take the case of the deed that is disagreeable to do which will prove beneficial. It is in this case that one can understand who is a fool and who is a **wise** person in regard to manly strength, manly energy, and manly exertion. The fool does not reflect thus: ‘Although this deed is disagreeable to do, still it will prove beneficial.’ So he does not do that deed, and his refraining from it proves harmful. But the **wise** person does reflect thus: ‘Although this deed is disagreeable to do, still it will prove beneficial.’ So he does that deed, and it proves beneficial.

(3) “Next, take the case of the deed that is agreeable to do which will prove harmful. It is in this case, too, that one can understand who is a fool and who is a **wise** person in regard to manly strength, manly energy, and manly exertion. The fool does not reflect thus: ‘Although this deed is agreeable to do, still it will prove harmful.’ So he does that deed, and it proves harmful. But the **wise** person does reflect thus: ‘Although this deed is agreeable to do, still it will prove harmful.’ So he does not do that deed, and his refraining from it proves beneficial.

(4) “Next, take the case of the deed that is agreeable to do which will prove beneficial. This deed is considered one that should be done on both grounds: because it is agreeable to do and because it proves beneficial. This deed is considered one that should be done on both grounds. “These, bhikkhus, are the four cases of deeds.”

Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planing to attend at www.MeetUp.com. Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at www.google.com/maps.

Activities of the Meditation Center

- Sitting meditation is held everyday at 6:30AM and 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com on the days and time you would like to participate.

- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).
- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
- There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
- Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
- Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
- For more additional information please send an email to mittameditation@gmail.com. We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its' mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.
- Giving alms during alms-round.
- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com.
- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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May 2024 Newsletter



Perfection of Energy (vīriya pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter: The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī),
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī),
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī),
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī),
5. Energy (vīriya pāramī),
6. Patience (khanti pāramī),
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī),
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī),
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī), and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī).

The subject of this newsletter is on the Perfection of Energy (vīriya pāramī). The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī) is discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter, the Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī) is discussed in the February 2024 Newsletter, the Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) is discussed in the March 2024 Newsletter, and the Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī) is discussed in the April 2024 Newsletter. The next five newsletters will discuss the remaining perfections.

The Perfection of Energy is the practice of diligent and persistent effort to purify the mind of defilements (kilesa) and is related to Right Effort (sammā vāyāma), the sixth factor of the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga). The Noble Eightfold Path is discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter - The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering. The function of Right Effort is to diminish and eliminate unwholesome (akusala) contents of mind, and to encourage the emergence and maintenance of wholesome (kusala) contents of mind. Right Effort is the arousal of energy (vīriya) to purify the mind of the root defilements: ignorance (avijjā), hatred (dosā) and greed (lobha). Energy (vīriya) is identical with effort (padhāna). Right Effort consists of generating the following four states of mind.

1. The effort to avoid unwholesome states of mind from arising (saṃvara padhāna).
2. The effort to overcome unwholesome states of mind that have arisen (pahāna padhāna).
3. The effort to cultivate wholesome states of mind (bhāvanā padhāna).
4. The effort to maintain wholesome states of mind that have arisen (anurakkhaṇa padhāna).

The following are examples of unwholesome states of mind.

• Wrong Views (micchādiṭṭhi)

1. Eternalism (sassatadiṭṭhi) asserts the existence of an eternal and unchanging self or soul, as well as the following beliefs:
 - Eternalism is the belief in the existence of a self, ego-entity, soul, or a personality existing independently of those physical and mental processes stated as the Five Aggregates (pañcakkhandhā) of Existence, and continuing after death eternally. The Five Aggregates are the following.

- i. Material Form (rūpa khandha),
- ii. Mental Formations (saṅkhāra khandha),
- iii. Perceptions (saññā khandha),
- iv. Feelings (vedanā khandha), and
- v. Sense Consciousness (viññāṇa khandha).
- Eternalism is also the belief in a permanent heaven or hell, where souls will be rewarded or punished.
- Creationism (Issara nimmāna diṭṭhi) is the view that a creator god exists and is responsible for the creation and control of the universe. This view contradicts the Buddha's teachings on causality (idappaccayatā) and Dependent Origination (paticcasamuppāda). Dependent Origination is discussed in the July 2023 Newsletter.
- 2. Annihilationism (ucchedadiṭṭhi) asserts that death results in the complete annihilation of the self, ego-entity or personality, denying any form of continued existence after death. This view denies the cycle of birth, aging, sickness, death and rebirth (saṃsāra).
- 3. Personality Belief (sakkāyadiṭṭhi or sakkāyavāda) is one aggregate or a combination of all Five Aggregates is a permanent entity or self (atta or atman). The Personality Belief or Ego Illusion (attadiṭṭhi) is of two kinds: Eternalism and Annihilationism.
- 4. Wrong Views with Fixed Evil Destiny (niyatamicchādiṭṭhi)
 - Moral Nihilism (natthikadiṭṭhi or natthikavāda) is the view that all moral values are baseless, there are no corresponding result of wholesome or unwholesome actions; that after death no further life would follow, that the Five Aggregates at death would become dissolved into the elements; that nothing is knowable or can be communicated; and that life itself is meaningless. This view is closely aligned with Materialism (sāṃsārikadiṭṭhi), the view that physical existence and material possessions are the ultimate reality, and there is no transcendental dimension or significance to life.
 - Inefficacy of Action (akiriyadiṭṭhi or akiriyavāda) is the view that denies the efficacy of moral actions, asserting that ethical conduct has no impact on one's well-being or future existence; no effort or striving is necessary for spiritual progress, suggesting that liberation can be achieved without practicing the Noble Eightfold Path. This view holds the belief that there is no such thing as kamma, the law of cause and effect.
 - Fatalism (ahetukadiṭṭhi or ahetukavāda) is the view that existence happens due to fate, destiny or external forces; there is no cause for the unwholesome and wholesome states of mind. This view undermines the importance of moral conduct and personal responsibility.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translation by Bhikkhu Bodhi

Note 165 ... It seems, though, that the term micchādiṭṭhi is used in the Nikāyas solely in relation to three views: moral nihilism, the doctrine of non-doing, and the doctrine of non-causality (natthikavāda, akiriyavāda, ahelikavāda).

- Delusion (moha) is ignorance (avijjā) or confusion about the true nature of reality and is an unwholesome state of mind.
 - Ignorance of The Four Noble Truths (ariya catusacca):
 1. The Noble Truth of Suffering (dukkha) is discussed in the February 2023 Newsletter.
 2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (samudaya) is discussed in the March 2023 Newsletter.
 3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (nirodha) is discussed in the April 2023 Newsletter.
 4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (magga) is discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter
 - Ignorance of The Three Characteristics of Existence (tilakkhaṇa):
 1. Impermanence (anicca),

2. Unsatisfactoriness (dukkha), and

3. Not-self (anatta).

The Three Characteristics of Existence is discussed in the October 2023 Newsletter - Insight Meditation (vipassanā).

- The Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā) are obstacles for concentration and a peaceful mind, and are unwholesome states of mind.

1. Sensual Desire (kāmacchanda),

2. Ill Will (vyāpāda),

3. Sloth and Torpor (thīnamiddha),

4. Restlessness and Remorse (uddhaccakukkucca), and

5. Doubt (vicikicchā).

See the September 2023 Newsletter-Tranquility Meditation (samatha) and The Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā) for a detailed discussion.

- The Ten Fetters (samyojana) that tie beings to the cycle of existence (saṃsāra) and prevent the realization of the transcendental reality nibbāna, and are unwholesome states of mind.

1. Personality Belief (sakkāya diṭṭhi),

2. Doubt (vicikicchā),

3. Clinging to Rites and Rituals (sīlabbata parāmāsa),

4. Sensual Desire (kāma rāga),

5. Ill Will (vyāpāda),

6. Craving for Existence in the Form World, fine material existence (rūpa rāga),

7. Craving for Existence in the Formless World, immaterial existence (arūpa rāga),

8. Conceit (māna),

9. Restlessness (uddhacca), and

10. Ignorance (avijjā).

The Four Noble Disciples (ariya-sāvaka) have realized to some extent the transcendental reality nibbāna.

1. Streamwinner (sotāpanna) is free from fetters 1-3.

2. Once Returner (sakadāgāmi) is free from fetters 1-3 and has overcome 4 and 5 in their grosser form.

3. Non-Returner (anāgāmi) is free from fetters 1-5.

4. Perfect Holy One (arahat) is free from all 10 fetters.

- The Ten Kammically Unwholesome Actions (akusala kamma or akusala kammapatha) result in suffering for oneself and others, and are unwholesome states of mind.

1. Killing (pāṇātipātā),

2. Stealing (adinnādānā),

3. Sexual Misconduct and unwholesome conduct in regard to sense pleasures (kāmesu micchācārā),

4. Lying (musāvādā),

5. Slandering Speech (pisuṇāya vacāya),

6. Harsh Speech (pharusāya vacāya),

7. Idle Chatter (samphappalāpā),

8. Covetousness (anabhijjhā),

9. Ill Will (abyāpāda), and

10. Wrong Views (micchādiṭṭhi).

- Wrong Intention (micchā-saṅkappa) are unwholesome states of mind.

1. Thoughts of craving and attachment to sense pleasures,

2. Thoughts of ill will, and

3. Thoughts of cruelty.

See the May 2023 Newsletter - The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering for a discussion of Right Intention (sammā-saṅkappa).

- Shamelessness (ahirika) is lack of shame or lack of moral conscience and a disregard for the consequences of unskillful and unwholesome actions; the absence of disgust at physical or verbal misconduct. Shamelessness is an unwholesome state of mind.
- Fearlessness of Wrongdoing (anottappa) is the absence of moral apprehension or fear of the consequences of unskillful and unwholesome actions. Fearlessness of Wrongdoing is an unwholesome state of mind.
- Attachment to Rituals and Observances (sīlabbata parāmāsa) is the view that rituals (animal sacrifices, ablutions, chanting, etc.), belief in a god (issara nimmāna) that responds to requests, and observing the external form of moral precepts without internalizing them (i.e., moral precepts are not ingrained in the mind's nature), will result in liberation nibbāna. The Buddha taught that wisdom (paññā) is the most important quality that purifies the mind of defilements (kilesa) which results in the realization of nibbāna. Attachment to Rituals and Observances is an unwholesome state of mind.
- Envy (issa) is jealousy or resentment towards others' achievement, success, wealth, or good fortune. Envy is an unwholesome state of mind.
- Stinginess or Miserliness (macchariya) is being possessive or selfish, unwilling to share or be generous. Stinginess is an unwholesome state of mind.

The following are examples of wholesome states of mind.

- Affirmation of Existence (atthikadiṭṭhi or atthikavāda) is the view that moral values exist in the cycle of existence (saṃsāra), there are corresponding results for wholesome or unwholesome actions; and that after death there is rebirth for those who have not realized nibbāna. Affirmation of Existence is a wholesome state of mind.
- Right View (sammā-diṭṭhi) is a factor of the Noble Eightfold Path defined as the realization of the Four Noble Truths (ariya catusacca) and is a wholesome state of mind.
 1. The Noble Truth of Suffering (dukkha),
 2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (samudaya),
 3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (nirodha), and
 4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (magga).

See the May 2023 Newsletter - The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering for a discussion on this path factor.
- The Ten Kammically Wholesome Actions (kusala kamma or kusala kammamagga) result in wholesome states of mind.
 1. Generosity (dāna maya),
 2. Morality (sīla maya),
 3. Meditation (bhāvanā maya),
 4. Respectfulness (apacāyana),
 5. Service (veyyāvacca),
 6. Sharing of Merit (patti dāna),
 7. Rejoicing in the Merit of Others (pattānumodana),
 8. Listening to the Dhamma (dhamma savana),
 9. Teaching the Dhamma (dhamma desanā), and
 10. Straightening of Views (diṭṭhi'jju kamma).
- Right Intention (sammā-saṅkappa) is a factor of the Noble Eightfold Path and are wholesome states of mind.
 1. Thoughts of renunciation and detachments to sense pleasures (nekkhamma vitakka),
 2. Thoughts of non-ill will (abyāpāda vitakka), and
 3. Thoughts of non-cruelty (avihiṃsā vitakka).

See the May 2023 Newsletter - The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering for a discussion on this path factor.
- Right Mindfulness (sammā-sati) is a factor of the Noble Eightfold Path, is a wholesome state of mind, and may be developed in the following four contemplations.

1. Mindful contemplation of the body (kāyānupassanā),
 2. Mindful contemplation of feelings (vedanā sañña),
 3. Mindful contemplation of the mind (citta sañña), and
 4. Mindful contemplation of mind-objects or dhammas (dammā sañña).
- See the May 2023 Newsletter - The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering for a discussion on this path factor.
- Right Concentration (sammā-samādhi) is a factor of the Noble Eightfold Path defined as the four stages of absorption (rupa jhāna) and are wholesome states of mind. See the May 2023 Newsletter - The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering for a discussion on this path factor.
 - Seven Factors of Enlightenment (bojjhaṅga) are wholesome states of mind.
 1. Mindfulness (sat),
 2. Investigation of Dhamma (dhamma-vicaya),
 3. Energy (vīriya),
 4. Joy (pīti),
 5. Tranquility (passaddhi),
 6. Concentration (sāmādhi), and
 7. Equanimity (upekkhā).
 - Four Divine Abodes (brahmavihāra) are wholesome states of mind and have been discussed in the September 2023 Newsletter - Tranquility Meditation (samatha) and The Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā).
 1. Loving-kindness (mettā) is the cultivation of unconditional love and goodwill towards all beings.
 2. Compassion (karuṇā) is empathy with others in their suffering; actively seeking ways to alleviate the pain and struggles of sentient beings.
 3. Sympathetic Joy (muditā) is the ability to rejoice in the success and happiness of others; their virtues and success. Sympathetic joy counters envy and jealousy, promoting a selfless and appreciative attitude towards the well-being of others.
 4. Equanimity (upekkhā) is maintaining mental balance and stability in the face of both pleasant and unpleasant experiences; an attitude of detached impartiality towards beings (not apathy or indifference).
 - Generosity (dāna) is the practice of giving freely without attachment or expecting anything in return. Practicing generosity contributes to the reduction of the egoic personality, selfish desires and supports the experience of interconnectedness with others. Generosity is a wholesome state of mind and, has been discussed in the August 2022 Newsletter - The Practice of Generosity (dāna) and in the January 2024 Newsletter - Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī).
 - Virtue (sīla) is adhering to ethical conduct and moral principles that does not cause harm to others, and results in a clear conscience and a peaceful mind. Virtue is a wholesome state of mind and, has been discussed in the November 2023 Newsletter - Peace (santi) and in the February 2024 Newsletter - Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī).
 - Wisdom (paññā) is the cultivation of an understanding of the nature of reality. Wisdom arises through insight meditation (vipassanā) and contemplation on the Three Characteristics of Existence (tilakkhaṇa): impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha), and not-self (anatta). Wisdom is a wholesome state of mind and has been discussed in the October 2023 Newsletter - Insight Meditation (vipassanā).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

29. "And what, friends, is right effort? Here a bhikkhu awakens zeal for the non-arising [anuppādāya] of unarisen evil unwholesome states, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives. He awakens zeal for the abandoning [pahānāya] of arisen evil unwholesome states, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives. He awakens zeal for the arising [uppādāya] of unarisen wholesome states, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives. He awakens zeal for the continuance [thitīyā], non-disappearance, strengthening, increase,

and fulfillment by development of arisen wholesome states, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives. This is called right effort.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
48.10 (10) Analysis (2)

“And what, bhikkhus, is the faculty of energy? Here, bhikkhus, the noble disciple dwells with energy aroused for the abandoning of unwholesome states and the acquisition of wholesome states; he is strong, firm in exertion, not shirking the responsibility of cultivating wholesome states. He generates desire for the nonarising of unarisen evil unwholesome states; he makes an effort, arouses energy, applies his mind, and strives. He generates desire for the abandoning of arisen evil unwholesome states; he makes an effort, arouses energy, applies his mind, and strives. He generates desire for the arising of unarisen wholesome states; he makes an effort, arouses energy, applies his mind, and strives. He generates desire for the maintenance of arisen wholesome states, for their nondecay, increase, expansion, and fulfillment by development; he makes an effort, arouses energy, applies his mind, and strives. This is called the faculty of energy.

The following sutta describes the importance of cultivating a ‘balance of energy’ and an ‘evenness of the spiritual faculties’. The Five Spiritual Faculties (indriya) are the following.

1. Faith (saddhā),
2. Energy (vīriya),
3. Mindfulness (sati),
4. Concentration (samādhi), and
5. Wisdom (paññā).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
6.55 (1) Soṇa

“Soṇa, when you were alone in seclusion, didn’t the following course of thought arise in your mind: ‘I am one of the Blessed One’s most energetic disciples, yet my mind has not been liberated from the taints by non-clinging. Now there is wealth in my family, and it is possible for me to enjoy my wealth and do meritorious deeds. Let me then give up the training and return to the lower life, so that I can enjoy my wealth and do meritorious deeds?’”

“Yes, Bhante.”

“Tell me, Soṇa, in the past, when you lived at home, weren’t you skilled at the lute?”

“Yes, Bhante.”

“What do you think, Soṇa? When its strings were too tight, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?”

“No, Bhante.”

“When its strings were too loose, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?”

“No, Bhante.”

“But, Soṇa, when its strings were neither too tight nor too loose but adjusted to a balanced pitch, was your lute well tuned and easy to play?”

“Yes, Bhante.”

“So too, Soṇa, if energy is aroused too forcefully this leads to restlessness, and if energy is too lax this leads to laziness. Therefore, Soṇa, resolve on a balance of energy, achieve evenness of the spiritual faculties, and take up the object there.”

“Yes, Bhante,” the Venerable Soṇa replied.

When the Blessed One had finished giving the Venerable Soṇa this exhortation, just as a strong man might extend his drawn-in arm or draw in his extended arm, he disappeared in the Cool Grove and reappeared on Mount Vulture Peak. Then, some time later, the Venerable Soṇa resolved on a balance of energy, achieved evenness of the spiritual faculties, and took up the object there. Then, dwelling alone, withdrawn, heedful, ardent, and resolute, in no long time the Venerable Soṇa realized for himself with direct knowledge, in this very life, that unsurpassed consummation of the spiritual life for the sake of which clansmen rightly go forth from the household life into homelessness, and having entered upon it, he dwelled in it. He directly knew: “Destroyed is birth, the spiritual life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming back to any state of being.” And the Venerable Soṇa became one of the arahants.

The following sutta reveals the importance of energy or exertion in training the mind and equanimity (upekkhā) for the eradication of suffering.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
101 Devadaha Sutta: At Devadaha

... 23. “And how is exertion fruitful, bhikkhus, how is striving fruitful? Here, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu who is not overwhelmed with suffering does not overwhelm himself with suffering; and he does not give up the pleasure that accords with Dhamma, yet he is not infatuated with that pleasure.⁹³² He knows thus: ‘When I strive with determination, this particular source of suffering fades away in me because of that determined striving; and when I look on with equanimity, this particular source of suffering fades away in me while I develop equanimity.’⁹³³ He strives with determination in regard to that particular source of suffering which fades away in him because of that determined striving; and he develops

equanimity in regard to that particular source of suffering which fades away in him while he is developing equanimity. When he strives with determination, such and such a source of suffering fades away in him because of that determined striving; thus that suffering is exhausted in him. When he looks on with equanimity, such and such a source of suffering fades away in him while he develops equanimity; thus that suffering is exhausted in him.

Notes:

932 This is a formulation of the Buddha's Middle Way, which avoids the extreme of self-mortification without falling into the other extreme of infatuation with sensual pleasure.

933 MA explains the source of suffering to be craving, so called because it is the root of the suffering comprised in the five aggregates. The passage shows two alternative approaches toward overcoming craving — one employing energetic striving, the other detached equanimity. The “fading away” of the source is identified by MA with the supramundane path. The passage is said to illustrate the practice of one who progresses on a pleasant path with quick direct knowledge (sukhapaṭipadā khippābhiññā).

The Perfection of Energy (vīriya pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections. The following are some examples in how energy is balanced.

- Effort (vīriya) is balanced by the Perfection of Truthfulness (sacca pāramī) as being truthful to oneself and with others generates the motivation and energy to continue on the path.
- Effort is balanced by the Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī), which helps endure challenges and setbacks without losing motivation, becoming discouraged or giving up. Patience allows individuals to sustain their efforts over the long term.

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- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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June 2024 Newsletter



Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter: The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī) discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter,
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī) discussed in the February 2024 Newsletter,
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) discussed in the March 2024 Newsletter,
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī) discussed in the April 2024 Newsletter,
5. Energy (vīriya pāramī) discussed in the May 2024 Newsletter,
6. Patience (khanti pāramī) is discussed in this Newsletter,
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī) will be discussed in the July 2024 Newsletter,
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) will be discussed in the August 2024 Newsletter,
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) will be discussed in the September 2024 Newsletter, and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) will be discussed in the October 2024 Newsletter.

The Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī) is a mind trained in tolerance, forbearance, and to endure difficulties, hardships, setbacks, and challenging situations without anger, aversion, resentment, irritation, frustration, or negativity. Patience is not merely the absence of frustration or irritation but a positive quality actively cultivated through mindfulness, concentration, loving-kindness, and an understanding of impermanence. Patience is an important virtue on the path to liberation from suffering, nibbāna; if the mind never gives up on the training, no matter how many setbacks are encountered, then success is assured.

- The mind with patience has forbearance, endures physical and mental discomfort without reacting negatively. This includes enduring physical pain, discomfort, illness, or challenging situations without giving in to aversion or frustration but instead the mind rests in equanimity.
- The patient mind is tested when faced with criticism, insults, or negative behavior from others. Rather than reacting with anger or defensiveness, the trained mind responds with wisdom and compassion.
- The quality of patience lets go of grudges and forgives others for perceived wrongs. Holding onto resentment will hinder the mind's purification of defilements, and forgiveness frees the mind from the burden of negative emotions.
- Training in mindfulness of thoughts and emotions, without immediate reaction but instead the mind maintain awareness and wisdom for an informed reaction. Through mindfulness, the mind will have the awareness and the opportunity to choose a skillful response, which is how patience is practiced in challenging situations.
- The practice of loving-kindness (metta) is a mind with boundless and unconditional love towards oneself and others. Loving-kindness is a condition for forgiveness, and will enhance patience and endurance.
- Understanding the impermanence of all things, including difficult situations, is a condition for a patient mind to accept for the moment 'what is', knowing that the next moment will be different. The trained mind recognizes that challenges are temporary and not to react impulsively, which allows the mind to rest in equanimity.

- The mind that cultivates equanimity, or even-mindedness, is an essential aspect of patience. This involves maintaining balance and composure in the face of life's ups and downs, not getting overly elated by success or unduly discouraged by failure.
- Practicing internal solitude and contemplation allows the mind to develop inner strength and patience. In the silence and stillness of meditation, the mind observe thoughts and emotions, and learns to respond to challenges with patience and wisdom.
- Practicing patience is aided with the understanding of the law of kamma, that wholesome actions result in wholesome circumstances, thereby the trained mind cultivates wholesome intentions while refraining from unwholesome intentions.

The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom translated by Acharya Buddharakkhita

184. Enduring patience is the highest austerity. "Nibbāna is supreme," say the Buddha. He is not a true monk who harms another, nor a real renunciate who oppresses others.

399. He who without resentment endures abuse, beating, and punishment, whose power, real might, is patience – him do I call a holy man.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
IV.164 (4) Patient (1)

... (1) "And what, bhikkhus, is the impatient practice? Here, someone insults one who insults him, scolds one who scolds him, and argues with one who picks an argument with him. This is called the impatient practice.

(2) "And what is the patient practice? Here, someone does not insult one who insults him, does not scold one who scolds him, and does not argue with one who picks an argument with him. This is called the patient practice.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
IV.165 (5) Patient (2)

... (1) "And what, bhikkhus, is the impatient practice? Here, someone does not patiently endure cold and heat; hunger and thirst; contact with flies, mosquitoes, wind, the burning sun, and serpents; rude and offensive ways of speech; he is unable to bear up with arisen bodily feelings that are painful, racking, sharp, piercing, harrowing, disagreeable, sapping one's vitality. This is called the impatient practice.

(2) "And what is the patient practice? Here, someone patiently endures cold and heat ... rude and offensive ways of speech; he is able to bear up with arisen bodily feelings that are painful, racking, sharp, piercing, harrowing,

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
V.215 (5) Impatience (1)

"Bhikkhus, there are these five dangers in impatience. What five? One is displeasing and disagreeable to many people; one has an abundance of enmity; one has an abundance of faults; one dies confused; with the breakup of the body, after death, one is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. These are the five dangers in impatience.

"Bhikkhus, there are these five benefits in patience. What five? One is pleasing and agreeable to many people; one does not have an abundance of enmity; one does not have an abundance of faults; one dies unconfused; with the breakup of the body, after death, one is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world. These are the five benefits in patience."

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
V.216 (6) Impatience (2)

"Bhikkhus, there are these five dangers in impatience. What five? One is displeasing and disagreeable to many people; one is violent; one is remorseful; one dies confused; with the breakup of the body, after death, one is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. These are the five dangers in impatience.

"Bhikkhus, there are these five benefits in patience. What five? One is pleasing and agreeable to many people; one is not violent; one is without remorse; one dies unconfused; with the breakup of the body, after death, one is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world. These are the five benefits in patience."

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi
I.7.3 (3) Asurindaka

... [The Blessed One:]

619 "The fool thinks victory is won

When, by speech, he bellows harshly;

But for one who understands,

Patient endurance is the true victory.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

I.10.12 Āḷavaka

... [The Blessed One:]

854 “Come now, ask others as well,
The many ascetics and brahmins,
Whether there is found here anything better
Than truth, self-control, generosity, and patience.”

The following are examples of how the Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections.

- The Perfection of Patience is balanced by the Perfection of Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) because cultivating loving-kindness helps in maintaining a patient and compassionate attitude towards oneself and others.
- Patience allows the mind to endure challenges without reacting negatively, while the Perfection of Energy (virīya pāramī) fuels the effort needed to overcome obstacles and directly reinforces patience.

The following sutta excerpts provide additional teachings on patience.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

21 Kakacūpama Sutta: The Simile of the Saw

... 11. “Bhikkhus, there are these five courses of speech that others may use when they address you: their speech may be timely or untimely, true or untrue, gentle or harsh, connected with good or with harm, spoken with a mind of loving-kindness or with inner hate. When others address you, their speech may be timely or untimely; when others address you, their speech may be true or untrue; when others address you, their speech may be gentle or harsh; when others address you, their speech may be connected with good or with harm; when others address you, their speech may be spoken with a mind of loving-kindness or with inner hate. Herein, bhikkhus, you should train thus: ‘Our minds will remain unaffected, and we shall utter no evil words; we shall abide compassionate for their welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate. We shall abide pervading that person with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, and starting with him, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.’ That is how you should train, bhikkhus.

... 20. “Bhikkhus, even if bandits were to sever you savagely limb by limb with a two-handled saw, he who gave rise to a mind of hate towards them would not be carrying out my teaching. Herein, bhikkhus, you should train thus: ‘Our minds will remain unaffected, and we shall utter no evil words; we shall abide compassionate for their welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate. We shall abide pervading them with a mind imbued with loving-kindness; and starting with them, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.’ That is how you should train, bhikkhus.

21. “Bhikkhus, if you keep this advice on the simile of the saw constantly in mind, do you see any course of speech, trivial or gross, that you could not endure?” — “No, venerable sir.” — “Therefore, bhikkhus, you should keep this advice on the simile of the saw constantly in mind. That will lead to your welfare and happiness for a long time.”

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

2 Sabbāsava Sutta: All the Taints

... 18. “What taints, bhikkhus, should be abandoned by enduring? Here a bhikkhu, reflecting wisely, bears cold and heat, hunger and thirst, and contact with gadflies, mosquitoes, wind, the sun, and creeping things; he endures ill-spoken, unwelcome words and arisen bodily feelings that are painful, racking, sharp, piercing, disagreeable, distressing, and menacing to life. While taints, vexation, and fever might arise in one who does not endure such things, there are no taints, vexation, or fever in one who endures them. These are called the taints that should be abandoned by enduring.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

62 Mahārāhulovāda Sutta: The Greater Discourse of Advice to Rāhula

... 13. “Rāhula, develop meditation that is like the earth; for when you develop meditation that is like the earth, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain. Just as people throw clean things and dirty things, excrement, urine, spittle, pus, and blood on the earth, and the earth is not repelled, humiliated, and disgusted because of that, so too, Rāhula, develop meditation that is like the earth; for when you develop meditation that is like the earth, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

14. “Rāhula, develop meditation that is like water; for when you develop meditation that is like water, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain. Just as people wash clean things and dirty

things, excrement, urine, spittle, pus, and blood in water, and the water is not repelled, humiliated, and disgusted because of that, so too, Rāhula, develop meditation that is like water; for when you develop meditation that is like water, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

15. “Rāhula, develop meditation that is like fire; for when you develop meditation that is like fire, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain. Just as people burn clean things and dirty things, excrement, urine, spittle, pus, and blood in fire, and the fire is not repelled, humiliated, and disgusted because of that, so too, Rāhula, develop meditation that is like fire; for when you develop meditation that is like fire, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

16. “Rāhula, develop meditation that is like air; for when you develop meditation that is like air, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain. Just as the air blows on clean things and dirty things, on excrement, urine, spittle, pus, and blood, and the air is not repelled, humiliated, and disgusted because of that, so too, Rāhula, develop meditation that is like air; for when you develop meditation that is like air, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

17. “Rāhula, develop meditation that is like space; for when you develop meditation that is like space, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain. Just as space is not established anywhere, so too, Rāhula, develop meditation that is like space; for when you develop meditation that is like space, arisen agreeable and disagreeable contacts will not invade your mind and remain.

Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planing to attend at www.MeetUp.com. Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at www.google.com/maps.

Activities of the Meditation Center

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July 2024 Newsletter



Perfection of Truthfulness (saccā pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter: The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

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7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī) discussed in this Newsletter,
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) will be discussed in the August 2024 Newsletter,
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) will be discussed in the September 2024 Newsletter, and
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The Perfection of Truthfulness is honesty in thinking thoughts that are true, speaking true speech, and performing true actions.

True thoughts are aligned with:

- Right View (sammā-ditṭhi) and Right Intention (sammā-saṅkappa), components of the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga). The Noble Eightfold Path is discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter - The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering.
- The understanding of the Three Characteristics of Existence (tilakkhaṇa):
 1. impermanence (anicca),
 2. suffering or unsatisfactoriness (dukkha), and
 3. not-self (anattā).

For a discussion of the Three Characteristics of Existence see the October 2023 Newsletter - Insight Meditation (vipassanā).

- The understanding of Dependent Origination (paṭicca samuppāda), discussed in the July 2023 Newsletter.

True thoughts arise from a mind that is wholesome (kusala vitakka), mindful (sati), concentrated (samādhi), and free from delusion (avijjā). Through the practice of meditation, the mind cultivates the ability to observe all thoughts without attachment or aversion and to see them as they truly are: impermanent, unsatisfactory, and not-self. True thoughts are those that are in harmony with the principles of wisdom (paññā), compassion (karuṇā), and non-attachment (virāga), leading to liberation from suffering and the realization of nibbāna.

The practice of truthfulness is particularly important in the context of Right Speech, a component of the Noble Eightfold Path. Right Speech is wholesome speech that is true, gentle, beneficial and encourages harmony; and the guidelines for the practice are the following:

1. abstain from false speech, lying (musāvāda veramaṇī),
2. abstain from malicious speech, slanderous speech, divisive tale-bearing speech that incites one against another (pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī),
3. abstain from harsh speech and rude talk (pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī), and

4. abstain from idle speech, useless chatter, foolish babble, vain talk and gossip (samphappalāpā veramaṇī).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

... 26. "And what, friends, is right speech? Abstaining from false speech, abstaining from malicious speech, abstaining from harsh speech, and abstaining from idle chatter — this is called right speech.

The First Discourse of the Buddha: Turning the Wheel of Dhamma by Dr. Rewata Dhamma; 1997; p. 35

"As one progressively attains the stages of sainthood, one gradually uproots mental defilements which are the cause of wrong speech. It is said that the first stage of sainthood (sotāpanna) dispels false speech or telling lies; the third stage of sainthood (anāgāmi) dispels slandering and abusive language; the fourth and final stage of sainthood (arahant) dispels frivolous talk or useless chatter."

The performance of true actions are in alignment with Right Action and Right Livelihood, components of the Noble Eightfold Path; and refers to moral behavior that are in alignment with the Five Precepts (pañca sīla), which are basic ethical guidelines. The Five Precepts are the following:

1. abstain from destroying living beings (pāṇātipātā veramaṇī),
2. abstain from stealing or taking that which is not freely given (adinnādānā veramaṇī),
3. abstain from sexual misconduct (kamesu micchacara veramaṇī),
4. abstain from false speech (musāvāda veramaṇī), and
5. abstain from intoxicants that cause carelessness and cloud the mind (surā meraya majja pamādatthāna veramaṇī).

Practicing true actions goes beyond just following these precepts; it also involves cultivating the virtues, such as loving-kindness (mettā), compassion (karunā), generosity (dāna), service (atthacariyā or sevā) and mindfulness (sati) in daily life. By acting in accordance with the Five Precepts and virtues, the mind will reduce suffering for themselves and others and cultivate inner peace and wisdom.

The purification of mind, the removal of defilements (kilesa) that results in nibbāna, requires a commitment to truth; avoiding falsehood, deceit, and dishonesty. Living with, valuing and abiding by truth is a condition for success in purifying and training the mind. Dhamma is a synonym for truth and Dhamma practice is synonymous with living a life of truth.

Truth (saccā) and wisdom (paññā) are interconnected and are necessary on the path that results in liberation from suffering, nibbāna. The relationship between truth and wisdom is found in the Four Noble Truths (ariya catusacca) and the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga).

The Four Noble Truths are fundamental truths about the nature of existence and suffering. Recognizing and understanding these truths is required for developing wisdom. The Four Noble Truths are:

1. The Noble Truth of Suffering (dukkha) acknowledges the existence of suffering, the reality of dissatisfaction and unsatisfactoriness in the cycle of birth, aging, sickness, death and rebirth (saṃsāra). This truth is discussed in the February 2023 Newsletter.
2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (samudaya) is craving (taṇhā), attachment and identification with that which is impermanent. This truth is discussed in the March 2023 Newsletter.
3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (nirodha) is the elimination of the causes for suffering and the result is nibbāna, the escape from saṃsāra. This truth is discussed in the April 2023 Newsletter.
4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (magga) is training in the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga) that leads to nibbāna. This truth is discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter.

The Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga) is composed of eight factors:

1. Right View (sammā-diṭṭhi),

2. Right Intention (sammā-saṅkappa),
3. Right Speech (sammā-vācā),
4. Right Action (sammā-kammanta),
5. Right Livelihood (sammā-ājiva),
6. Right Effort (sammā-vāyāma),
7. Right Mindfulness (sammā-sati), and
8. Right Concentration (sammā-samādhi).

The Noble Eightfold Path is described in terms of three aspects:

1. Moral Conduct (sīla). The morality division includes the path factors Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood.
2. Meditation (samādhi). The meditation division includes the path factors Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.
3. Wisdom (paññā). The wisdom division includes the path factors Right View and Right Intention.

The following are examples on how the Perfection of Truthfulness (saccā pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections.

- The Perfection of Truthfulness is balanced by the Perfection of Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) as determination provides the strength and resolve to adhere to truthfulness even in challenging circumstances.
- The Perfection of Truthfulness is balanced by the Perfection of Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī), which ensures that truthful behavior is performed with kindness and avoiding unnecessary harm to others.

The following sutta excerpts are teachings in cultivating truth.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

61 Ambalaṭṭhikārahulovāda Sutta: Advice to Rāhula at Ambalaṭṭhikā

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Sanctuary.

2. Now on that occasion the venerable Rāhula was living at Ambalaṭṭhikā.⁶³⁷ Then, when it was evening, the Blessed One rose from meditation and went to the venerable Rāhula at Ambalaṭṭhikā. The venerable Rāhula saw the Blessed One coming in the distance and made a seat ready and set out water for washing the feet. The Blessed One sat down on the seat made ready and washed his feet. The venerable Rāhula paid homage to him and sat down at one side.

3. Then the Blessed One left a little water in the water vessel and asked the venerable Rāhula: "Rāhula, do you see this little water left in the water vessel?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Even so little, Rāhula, is the recluseship of those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie."

4. Then the Blessed One threw away the little water that was left and asked the venerable Rāhula: "Rāhula, do you see that little water that was thrown away?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Even so, Rāhula, those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie have thrown away their recluseship."

5. Then the Blessed One turned the water vessel upside down and asked the venerable Rāhula: "Rāhula, do you see this water vessel turned upside down?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Even so, Rāhula, those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie have turned their recluseship upside down."

6. Then the Blessed One turned the water vessel right way up again and asked the venerable Rāhula: "Rāhula, do you see this hollow, empty water vessel?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Even so hollow and empty, Rāhula, is the recluseship of those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie."

7. "Suppose, Rāhula, there were a royal tusker elephant with tusks as long as chariot poles, full-grown in stature, high-bred, and accustomed to battle. In battle he would perform his task with his forefeet and his hindfeet, with his forequarters and his hindquarters, with his head and his ears, with his tusks and his tail, yet he would keep back his trunk. Then his rider would think: 'This royal tusker elephant with tusks as long as chariot poles... performs his task in battle with his forefeet and his hindfeet... yet he keeps back his trunk. He has not yet given up his life.' But when the royal tusker elephant... performs his task in battle with his forefeet and his hindfeet, with his forequarters and his hindquarters, with his head and his ears, with his tusks and his tail, and also with his trunk, then his rider would think: 'This royal tusker elephant with tusks as long as chariot poles... performs his task in battle with his forefeet and his hindfeet... and also with his trunk. He has given up his life. Now there is nothing this royal tusker elephant would not do.' So too, Rāhula, **when one is not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie, there is no evil, I say, that one would not do. Therefore, Rāhula, you should train thus: 'I will not utter a falsehood even as a joke.'**

8. "What do you think, Rāhula? What is the purpose of a mirror?"

"For the purpose of reflection, venerable sir."

"So too, Rāhula, an action with the body should be done after repeated reflection; an action by speech should be done after repeated reflection; an action by mind should be done after repeated reflection."

9. “Rāhula, when you wish to do an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: ‘Would this action that I wish to do with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?’ When you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I wish to do with the body would lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it is an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results,’ then you definitely should not do such an action with the body. But when you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I wish to do with the body would not lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it is a wholesome bodily action with pleasant consequences, with pleasant results,’ then you may do such an action with the body.

10. “Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: ‘Does this action that I am doing with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?’ When you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I am doing with the body leads to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it is an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results,’ then you should suspend such a bodily action. But when you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I am doing with the body does not lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it is a wholesome bodily action with pleasant consequences, with pleasant results,’ then you may continue in such a bodily action.

11. “Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: ‘Did this action that I did with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Was it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?’ When you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I did with the body led to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it was an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results,’ then you should confess such a bodily action, reveal it, and lay it open to the Teacher or to your wise companions in the holy life. Having confessed it, revealed it, and laid it open, you should undertake restraint for the future. But when you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I did with the body did not lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it was a wholesome bodily action with pleasant consequences, pleasant results,’ you can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

12. “Rāhula, when you wish to do an action by speech... (complete as in §9, substituting “speech” for “body”)... you may do such an action by speech.

13. “Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action by speech... (complete as in §10, substituting “speech” for “body”) ... you may continue in such an action by speech.

14. “Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action by speech... (complete as in §11, substituting “speech” for “body”)... you can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

15. “Rāhula, when you wish to do an action by mind... (complete as in §9, substituting “mind” for “body”) ... you may do such an action by mind.

16. “Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action by mind... (complete as in §10, substituting “mind” for “body”)... you may continue in such a mental action.

17. “Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action by mind... (complete as in §11, substituting “mind” for “body”)... you can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

18. “Rāhula, whatever recluses and brahmins in the past purified their bodily action, their verbal action, and their mental action, all did so by repeatedly reflecting thus. Whatever recluses and brahmins in the future will purify their bodily action, their verbal action, and their mental action, all will do so by repeatedly reflecting thus. Whatever recluses and brahmins in the present are purifying their bodily action, their verbal action, and their mental action, all are doing so by repeatedly reflecting thus. Therefore, Rāhula, you should train thus: ‘We will purify our bodily action, our verbal action, and our mental action by repeatedly reflecting upon them.’”

That is what the Blessed One said. The venerable Rāhula was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words. Notes 637: Rāhula was the only son of the Buddha, born on the day his father left the palace to seek enlightenment. At the age of seven he was ordained as a novice by Ven. Sāriputta on the occasion of the Buddha’s first return visit to Kapilavatthu after his enlightenment. The Buddha declared him the foremost disciple among those desirous of training. According to MA, this discourse was taught to Rāhula when he was seven years old, thus very shortly after his ordination. At MN 147 he attains arahantship after listening to a discourse by the Buddha on the development of insight.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi 4.183 (3) Heard

... (1) “I do not say, brahmin, that everything seen should be spoken about, nor do I say that nothing seen should be spoken about. (2) I do not say that everything heard should be spoken about, nor do I say that nothing heard should be spoken about. (3) I do not say that everything sensed should be spoken about, nor do I say that nothing sensed should be spoken about. (4) I do not say that everything cognized should be spoken about, nor do I say that nothing cognized should be spoken about.

(1) “For, brahmin, if, when one speaks about what one has seen, unwholesome qualities increase and wholesome qualities decline, I say that one should not speak about what one has seen. But if, when one speaks about what one has seen, unwholesome qualities decline and wholesome qualities increase, I say that one should speak about what one has seen.

(2) “If, when one speaks about what one has heard, unwholesome qualities increase and wholesome qualities decline, I say that one should not speak about what one has heard. But if, when one speaks about what one has heard, unwholesome qualities decline and wholesome qualities increase, I say that one should speak about what one has heard.

(3) “If, when one speaks about what one has sensed, unwholesome qualities increase and wholesome qualities decline, I say that one should not speak about what one has sensed. But if, when one speaks about what one has sensed, unwholesome qualities decline and wholesome qualities increase, I say that one should speak about what one has sensed.

(4) “If, when one speaks about what one has cognized, unwholesome qualities increase and wholesome qualities decline, I say that one should not speak about what one has cognized. But if, when one speaks about what one has cognized, unwholesome qualities decline and wholesome qualities increase, I say that one should speak about what one has cognized.”

Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planning to attend at www.MeetUp.com. Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at www.google.com/maps.

Activities of the Meditation Center

- Sitting meditation is held everyday at 6:30AM and 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com on the days and time you would like to participate.
- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).
- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
- There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
- Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
- Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
- For more additional information please send an email to mittameditation@gmail.com. We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its’ mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.

- Giving alms during alms-round.
- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com.
- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyana-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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August 2024 Newsletter



Perfection of Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter - The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī) discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter,
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī) discussed in the February 2024 Newsletter,
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) discussed in the March 2024 Newsletter,
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī) discussed in the April 2024 Newsletter,
5. Energy (vīriya pāramī) discussed in the May 2024 Newsletter,
6. Patience (khanti pāramī) discussed in the June 2024 Newsletter,
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī) discussed in the July 2024 Newsletter,
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) is discussed in this Newsletter,
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) will be discussed in the September 2024 Newsletter, and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) will be discussed in the October 2024 Newsletter.

The Perfection of Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) is unwavering resolve and commitment to purify the mind of defilements (kilesa) and train the mind to overcome obstacles on the path towards liberation from suffering, nibbāna. The virtue of determination is the single-minded decision to persevere through difficulties, doubts, and distractions in order to attain liberation.

Practicing determination involves maintaining a steadfast and unshakeable determination to follow the path of virtue (sīla), meditation (samādhi), and wisdom (paññā); i.e., the Noble Eightfold Path discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter. As well as the commitment to cultivate the other perfections (pāramīs). By perfecting determination, the mind remains focused with an ongoing and sustained effort, dedicated, and undeterred in the pursuit of nibbāna.

The commentary A Treatise on the Pāramīs states that determination is utilized to practice The Thirty-Seven Aids to Enlightenment (bodhipakkhiyā dhammā), also known as the Requisites of Enlightenment which constitute the entire teaching of the Buddha. The Thirty-Seven Aids to Enlightenment consist of seven groups comprising a total of thirty-seven elements.

- I. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness (cattāro satipaṭṭhānā) are discussed in the October 2023 Newsletter - Insight Meditation (vipassanā).
 1. contemplation of the Body (kāyānupassanā),
 2. contemplation of Feeling (vedanā sañña),
 3. contemplation of Mind (citta sañña), and
 4. contemplation of Mind-Objects (dammā sañña).
- II. The Four Right Strivings (cattāro sammappadhānā) or The Four Right Efforts (cattāro sammā vāyāma) are discussed in the May 2024 Newsletter - Perfection of Energy (vīriya pāramī).
 5. the effort to avoid unwholesome states of mind from arising (saṃvara-padhāna),
 6. the effort to overcome unwholesome states of mind that have arisen (pahāna-padhāna),
 7. the effort to develop wholesome states of mind (bhāvanā-padhāna), and
 8. the effort to maintain wholesome states of mind that have arisen (anurakkhaṇa-padhāna).
- III. The Four Bases for Spiritual Power (cattāro iddhipādā) is mentioned in SN 51.2 (2) Neglected.

9. possesses concentration due to desire (chanda samādhi) and volitional formations of striving (padhāna saṅkhārasamannāgata),
 10. possesses concentration due to energy (virīya samādhi) and volitional formations of striving,
 11. possesses concentration due to mind (citta samādhi) and volitional formations of striving, and
 12. possesses concentration due to investigation (vīmaṃsa samādhi) and volitional formations of striving.
- IV. The Five Spiritual Faculties (pañc'indriyāni) is mentioned in SN 48.1 (1) Simple Version.
13. faith (saddhā),
 14. energy (virīya),
 15. mindfulness (sati),
 16. concentration (samādhi), and
 17. wisdom (paññā).
- V. The Five Powers (pañca balāni) is mentioned in SN 50.1 (1)-12 (12) The River Ganges—Eastward, Etc.
18. power of faith (saddhā) is unshakeable by faithlessness (unbelief),
 19. power of energy (virīya) is unshakeable by laziness,
 20. power of mindfulness (sati) is unshakeable by forgetfulness,
 21. power of concentration (samādhi) is unshakeable by distractedness, and
 22. power of wisdom (paññā) is unshakeable by ignorance.
- VI. The Seven Factors of Enlightenment (satta-bojjhaṅgā) is mentioned in SN 46. Bojjhaṅgasamyutta.
23. mindfulness (sati sambojjhaṅga),
 24. discrimination of phenomena (dhammavicaya sambojjhaṅga),
 25. energy (virīya sambojjhaṅga),
 26. rapture, joy (pīti sambojjhaṅga),
 27. tranquillity (passaddhi sambojjhaṅga),
 28. concentration (samādhi sambojjhaṅga), and
 29. equanimity (upekkhā sambojjhaṅga).
- VII. The Noble Eightfold Path (ariya-aṭṭhangika-magga) is discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter- Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering.
30. Right View (sammādiṭṭhi),
 31. Right Intention (sammāsaṅkappa),
 32. Right Speech (sammāvācā),
 33. Right Action (sammākammanta),
 34. Right Livelihood (sammāājīva),
 35. Right Effort (sammāvāyāma),
 36. Right Mindfulness (sammāsati), and
 37. Right Concentration (sammāsamādhi).

A Treatise on the Pāramīs by Ācariya Dhammapāla translated from the pāli by Bhikkhu Bodhi
v.8

Determination has the characteristic of determining upon the requisites of enlightenment; its function is to overcome their opposites; its manifestation is unshakeableness in that task; the requisites of enlightenment are its proximate cause.

The determinations (adhiṭṭhāna) for nibbāna are practices that serve as foundations for a mind intent on liberation. There are four kinds of determinations or foundations:

1. not neglect wisdom (paññādhīṭṭhāna),
2. preserve truth (saccādhīṭṭhāna),
3. cultivate relinquishment (cāgādhīṭṭhāna), and
4. train for peace (upasamādhīṭṭhāna).

140 Dhātuvibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Elements

... 7. “Bhikkhu, this person consists of six elements, six bases of contact, and eighteen kinds of mental exploration, and he has four foundations. The tides of conceiving do not sweep over one who stands upon these [foundations], and when the tides of conceiving no longer sweep over him he is called a sage at peace. One should not neglect wisdom, should preserve truth, should cultivate relinquishment, and should train for peace. This is the summary of the exposition of the six elements.

... 11. “Bhikkhu, this person has four foundations.’ So it was said. And with reference to what was this said? There are the foundation of wisdom, the foundation of truth, the foundation of relinquishment, and the foundation of peace.¹²⁷⁰ So it was with reference to this that it was said: ‘Bhikkhu, this person has four foundations.’

12. “One should not neglect wisdom, should preserve truth, should cultivate relinquishment, and should train for peace.’¹²⁷¹ So it was said. And with reference to what was this said?

13. “How, bhikkhu, does one not neglect wisdom?¹²⁷² There are these six elements: the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element, the space element, and the consciousness element.

14. “What, bhikkhu, is the earth element? The earth element may be either internal or external. What is the internal earth element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is solid, solidified, and clung-to, that is, head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, intestines, mesentery, contents of the stomach, feces, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is solid, solidified, and clung-to: this is called the internal earth element. Now both the internal earth element and the external earth element are simply earth element. And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’ When one sees it thus as it actually is with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the earth element and makes the mind dispassionate towards the earth element.

15. “What, bhikkhu, is the water element? The water element may be either internal or external. What is the internal water element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is water, watery, and clung-to, that is, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spittle, snot, oil-of-the-joints, urine, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is water, watery, and clung-to: this is called the internal water element. Now both the internal water element and the external water element are simply water element. And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’ When one sees it thus as it actually is with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the water element and makes the mind dispassionate towards the water element.

16. “What, bhikkhu, is the fire element? The fire element may be either internal or external. What is the internal fire element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is fire, fiery, and clung-to, that is, that by which one is warmed, ages, and is consumed, and that by which what is eaten, drunk, consumed, and tasted gets completely digested, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is fire, fiery, and clung-to: this is called the internal fire element. Now both the internal fire element and the external fire element are simply fire element. And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’ When one sees it thus as it actually is with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the fire element and makes the mind dispassionate towards the fire element.

17. “What, bhikkhu, is the air element? The air element may be either internal or external. What is the internal air element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is air, airy, and clung-to, that is, up-going winds, down-going winds, winds in the belly, winds in the bowels, winds that course through the limbs, in-breath and out-breath, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is air, airy, and clung-to: this is called the internal air element. Now both the internal air element and the external air element are simply air element. And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’ When one sees it thus as it actually is with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the air element and makes the mind dispassionate towards the air element.

18. “What, bhikkhu, is the space element? The space element may be either internal or external. What is the internal space element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is space, spatial, and clung-to, that is, the holes of the ears, the nostrils, the door of the mouth, and that [aperture] whereby what is eaten, drunk, consumed, and tasted gets swallowed, and where it collects, and whereby it is excreted from below, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is space, spatial, and clung-to: this is called the internal space element. Now both the internal space element and the external space element are simply space element. And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’ When one sees it thus as it actually is with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the space element and makes the mind dispassionate towards the space element.

19. “Then there remains only consciousness, purified and bright.¹²⁷³ What does one cognize with that consciousness? One cognizes: ‘[This is] pleasant’; one cognizes: ‘[This is] painful’; one cognizes: ‘[This is] neither-painful-nor-pleasant.’ In dependence on a contact to be felt as pleasant there arises a pleasant feeling.¹²⁷⁴ When one feels a pleasant feeling, one understands: ‘I feel a pleasant feeling.’ One understands: ‘With the cessation of that same contact to be felt as pleasant, its corresponding feeling — the pleasant feeling that arose in dependence on that contact to be felt as pleasant — ceases and subsides.’ In dependence on a contact to be felt as painful there arises a painful feeling. When one feels a painful feeling, one understands: ‘I feel a painful feeling.’ One understands: ‘With the cessation of that same contact to be felt as painful, its corresponding feeling — the painful feeling that arose in dependence on that contact to be felt as painful — ceases and subsides.’ In dependence on a contact to be felt as neither-painful-nor-pleasant there arises a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling. When one feels a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, one understands: ‘I feel a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.’ One understands: ‘With the cessation of that same contact to be felt as neither-painful-nor-pleasant, its corresponding feeling — the neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling that arose in dependence on that contact to be felt as neither-painful-nor-pleasant — ceases and subsides.’ Bhikkhu, just as from the

contact and friction of two fire-sticks heat is generated and fire is produced, and with the separation and disjunction of those two fire-sticks the corresponding heat ceases and subsides; so too, in dependence on a contact to be felt as pleasant... to be felt as painful... to be felt as neither-painful-nor-pleasant there arises a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling... One understands: 'With the cessation of that same contact to be felt as neither-painful-nor-pleasant, its corresponding feeling... ceases and subsides.'

20. "Then there remains only equanimity, purified and bright, malleable, wieldy, and radiant.¹²⁷⁵ Suppose, bhikkhu, a skilled goldsmith or his apprentice were to prepare a furnace, heat up the crucible, take some gold with tongs, and put it into the crucible. From time to time he would blow on it, from time to time he would sprinkle water over it, and from time to time he would just look on. That gold would become refined, well refined, completely refined, faultless, rid of dross, malleable, wieldy, and radiant. Then whatever kind of ornament he wished to make from it, whether a golden chain or earrings or a necklace or a golden garland, it would serve his purpose. So too, bhikkhu, then there remains only equanimity, purified and bright, malleable, wieldy, and radiant.

21. "He understands thus: 'If I were to direct this equanimity, so purified and bright, to the base of infinite space and to develop my mind accordingly, then this equanimity of mine, supported by that base, clinging to it, would remain for a very long time.'¹²⁷⁶ If I were to direct this equanimity, so purified and bright, to the base of infinite consciousness... to the base of nothingness... to the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and to develop my mind accordingly, then this equanimity of mine, supported by that base, clinging to it, would remain for a very long time.'

22. "He understands thus: 'If I were to direct this equanimity, so purified and bright, to the base of infinite space and to develop my mind accordingly, this would be conditioned.'¹²⁷⁷ If I were to direct this equanimity, so purified and bright, to the base of infinite consciousness... to the base of nothingness... to the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and to develop my mind accordingly, this would be conditioned.' He does not form any condition or generate any volition tending towards either being or non-being.¹²⁷⁸ Since he does not form any condition or generate any volition tending towards either being or non-being, he does not cling to anything in this world. When he does not cling, he is not agitated. When he is not agitated, he personally attains Nibbāna. He understands thus: 'Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming to any state of being.'¹²⁷⁹

23. "If he feels a pleasant feeling,¹²⁸⁰ he understands: 'It is impermanent; there is no holding to it; there is no delight in it.' If he feels a painful feeling, he understands: 'It is impermanent; there is no holding to it; there is no delight in it.' If he feels a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he understands: 'It is impermanent; there is no holding to it; there is no delight in it.'

24. "If he feels a pleasant feeling, he feels it detached; if he feels a painful feeling, he feels it detached; if he feels a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he feels it detached. When he feels a feeling terminating with the body, he understands: 'I feel a feeling terminating with the body.' When he feels a feeling terminating with life, he understands: 'I feel a feeling terminating with life.'¹²⁸¹ He understands: 'On the dissolution of the body, with the ending of life, all that is felt, not being delighted in, will become cool right here.'¹²⁸² Bhikkhu, just as an oil-lamp burns in dependence on oil and a wick, and when the oil and wick are used up, if it does not get any more fuel, it is extinguished from lack of fuel; so too when he feels a feeling terminating with the body... a feeling terminating with life, he understands: 'I feel a feeling terminating with life.' He understands: 'On the dissolution of the body, with the ending of life, all that is felt, not being delighted in, will become cool right here.'

25. "Therefore a bhikkhu possessing [this wisdom] possesses the supreme foundation of wisdom. For this, bhikkhu, is the supreme noble wisdom, namely, the knowledge of the destruction of all suffering.¹²⁸³

26. "His deliverance, being founded upon truth, is unshakeable. For that is false, bhikkhu, which has a deceptive nature, and that is true which has an undeceptive nature — Nibbāna. Therefore a bhikkhu possessing [this truth] possesses the supreme foundation of truth. For this, bhikkhu, is the supreme noble truth, namely, Nibbāna, which has an undeceptive nature.

27. "Formerly, when he was ignorant, he undertook and accepted acquisitions;¹²⁸⁴ now he has abandoned them, cut them off at the root, made them like a palm stump, done away with them so that they are no longer subject to future arising. Therefore a bhikkhu possessing [this relinquishment] possesses the supreme foundation of relinquishment. For this, bhikkhu, is the supreme noble relinquishment, namely, the relinquishing of all acquisitions.

28. "Formerly, when he was ignorant, he experienced covetousness, desire, and lust; now he has abandoned them, cut them off at the root, made them like a palm stump, done away with them so that they are no longer subject to future arising. Formerly, when he was ignorant, he experienced anger, ill will, and hate; now he has abandoned them, cut them off at the root, made them like a palm stump, done away with them so that they are no longer subject to future arising. Formerly, when he was ignorant, he experienced ignorance and delusion; now he has abandoned them, cut them off at the root, made them like a palm stump, done away with them so that they are no longer subject to future arising. Therefore a bhikkhu possessing [this peace] possesses the supreme foundation of peace. For this, bhikkhu, is the supreme noble peace, namely, the pacification of lust, hate, and delusion.

29. "So it was with reference to this that it was said: 'One should not neglect wisdom, should preserve truth, should cultivate relinquishment, and should train for peace.' ...

Notes:

1270: Paññādhīṭṭhāna, saccādhīṭṭhāna, cāgādhīṭṭhāna, upasamādhīṭṭhāna. Nm, in Ms, had first rendered adhiṭṭhāna as "resolve," and then replaced it with "mode of expression," neither of which seems suitable for this context. MA glosses the word with patiṭṭhā, which clearly means foundation, and explains the sense of the statement thus: "This person who consists of the six elements, the six bases of contact, and the eighteen kinds of mental approach — when he turns away from these and attains arahantship, the supreme accomplishment, he does so established upon these four bases." The four foundations will be individually elucidated by the sequel, §§12–29.

1271 MA: From the start one should not neglect the wisdom born of concentration and insight in order to penetrate through to the wisdom of the fruit of arahantship. One should preserve truthful speech in order to realise Nibbāna, the ultimate truth. One should cultivate the relinquishment of defilements in order to relinquish all defilements by the path of arahantship. From the start one should train in the pacification of defilements in order to pacify all defilements by the path of arahantship. Thus the wisdom, etc., born of serenity and insight are spoken of as the preliminary foundations for achieving the foundations of wisdom, etc. (distinctive of arahantship).

1272 MA: The non-neglecting of wisdom is explained by way of the meditation on the elements.

1273 MA: This is the sixth element, which “remains” in that it has yet to be expounded by the Buddha and penetrated by Pukkusāti. Here it is explained as the consciousness that accomplishes the work of insight contemplation on the elements. Under the heading of consciousness, the contemplation of feeling is also introduced.

1274 This passage shows the conditionality of feeling and its impermanence through the cessation of its condition.

1275 MA identifies this as the equanimity of the fourth jhāna. According to MA, Pukkusāti had already achieved the fourth jhāna and had a strong attachment to it. The Buddha first praises this equanimity to inspire Pukkusāti’s confidence, then he gradually leads him to the immaterial jhānas and the attainment of the paths and fruits.

1276 The sense is: If he attains the base of infinite space and should pass away while still attached to it, he would be reborn in the plane of infinite space and would live there for the full lifespan of 20,000 aeons specified for that plane. In the higher three immaterial planes the lifespan is respectively 40,000 aeons, 60,000 aeons, and 84,000 aeons.

1277 MA: This is said in order to show the danger in the immaterial jhānas. By the one phrase, “This would be conditioned,” he shows: “Even though the lifespan there is 20,000 aeons, that is conditioned, fashioned, built up. It is thus impermanent, unstable, not lasting, transient. It is subject to perishing, breaking up, and dissolution; it is involved with birth, ageing, and death, grounded upon suffering. It is not a shelter, a place of safety, a refuge. Having passed away there as a worldling, one can still be reborn in the four states of deprivation.”

1278 So n’eva abhisankharoti nābhisañcetaṇṇaṃ bhavāya vā vibhavāya. The two verbs suggest the notion of volition as a constructive power that builds up the continuation of conditioned existence. Ceasing to will for either being or non-being shows the extinction of craving for eternal existence and annihilation, culminating in the attainment of arahantship.

1279 MA says that at this point Pukkusāti penetrated three paths and fruits, becoming a non-returner. He realised that his teacher was the Buddha himself, but he could not express his realisation since the Buddha still continued with his discourse.

1280 This passage shows the arahant’s abiding in the Nibbāna element with a residue remaining (of the factors of conditioned existence, sa-upādisesa nibbānadhātu). Though he continues to experience feelings, he is free from lust towards pleasant feeling, from aversion towards painful feeling, and from ignorance about neutral feeling.

1281 That is, he continues to experience feeling only as long as the body with its life faculty continues, but not beyond that.

1282 This refers to his attainment of the Nibbāna-element with no residue remaining (anupādisesa nibbānadhātu) — the cessation of all conditioned existence with his final passing away.

1283 This completes the exposition of the first foundation, which began at §13. MA says that the knowledge of the destruction of all suffering is the wisdom pertaining to the fruit of arahantship.

1284 MA mentions four kinds of acquisitions (upadhi) here: see n.674.

674 Upadhi. MA glosses: For the abandoning of four kinds of upadhi — the aggregates, defilements, volitional formations, and cords of sensual pleasure (khandh’upadhi kiles’upadhi abhisankhār’upadhi kāmagn’upadhi).

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya translated by Maurice O’C. Walshe

33 Sangīti Sutta: The Chanting Together

(27) ‘Four kinds of resolve (adhiṭṭhānāni): [to gain] (a) wisdom, (b) truth (sacca),¹⁰⁷⁰ (c) relinquishment (cāga), (d) tranquillity (upasama).

Note 1070: Truth, i.e. realisation of ‘things as they really are’.

Some examples of how the Perfection of Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections follow:

- The Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) is the letting go of attachments to sensual pleasures and worldly desires. Determination is assisted by renunciation as it reduces distractions and allows the mind to concentrate on the training. A skillful lifestyle will strengthen determination by renouncing external influences that hinder progress in freeing the mind from the defilements.
- The Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī) guides determination by providing an understanding of the nature of reality and the path to liberation. With wisdom, the mind can discern the right goals and make informed decisions on how to achieve them. Determination, when guided by wisdom, is aligned with the ultimate goal of nibbāna.
- The Perfection of Determination and The Perfection of Energy (viriya pāramī) are closely related. Energy provides the necessary effort and perseverance to overcome obstacles on the path. Determination directs energy towards the purification of mind and liberation from suffering. The two work hand in hand to maintain a consistent and vigorous practice.

- The Perfection of Determination requires the Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī), especially in the face of challenges and setbacks. Patience allows the mind to endure difficulties without losing focus or enthusiasm. The combination of determination and patience ensures a steady progression on the path to liberation from suffering and perfect peace.

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September 2024 Newsletter



Perfection of Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter - The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī) discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter,
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī) discussed in the February 2024 Newsletter,
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) discussed in the March 2024 Newsletter,
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī) discussed in the April 2024 Newsletter,
5. Energy (vīriya pāramī) discussed in the May 2024 Newsletter,
6. Patience (khanti pāramī) discussed in the June 2024 Newsletter,
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī) discussed in the July 2024 Newsletter,
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) discussed in the August 2024 Newsletter,
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) is discussed in this Newsletter, and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) will be discussed in the October 2024 Newsletter.

The Perfection of Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) is the cultivation of a boundless and unconditional friendliness, compassion, and goodwill towards all sentient beings, without discrimination or attachment. The mind has a compassionate and loving attitude, wishing happiness, well-being, and freedom from suffering for all sentient beings, including oneself, friends, enemies, strangers, and all life forms. The practice is to train the mind to be constant and continuous in radiating love and compassion, to have an understanding and feeling for the connection with all of life; actively expressing loving actions with kindness, gentleness, generosity, and helpfulness. The trained mind transcends selfishness and self-centeredness, breaks down defensive barriers established by the ego, and cultivates a heart full of love for the welfare of all beings.

The cultivation of loving-kindness requires a focused intention that develops the mental faculties of concentration (samādhi) and mindfulness (sati). The heightened awareness achieved by training the mind with loving-kindness contributes to a stable and balanced mind that is able to ward off ill will and hatred.

Ill will, malice and hostility is the meaning of the Pāli word vyāpāda. This is a mind that has a desire to cause harm to others and has an active wish to inflict suffering or see others suffer. Ill will arises or is born from hatred or aversion; is one of the Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā) that obstruct progress in meditation (bhāvanā) and progress towards liberation from suffering, nibbāna; and is also listed as one of the Ten Fetters (saṃyojana) that bind beings to the cycle of rebirth (saṃsāra). The Five Hindrances are discussed in the September 2023 Newsletter-Tranquility Meditation (samatha) and The Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā) and are listed as follows:

1. sensual desire (kāmacchanda),
2. ill will (vyāpāda),
3. sloth and torpor (thīna middha),
4. restlessness and remorse (uddhaccakukkucca), and
5. doubt (vicikicchā).

The Ten Fetters are discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter-Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering and are listed as follows:

1. sakkāya diṭṭhi: personality belief,
2. vicikicchā: doubt,
3. sīlabbata parāmāsa: clinging to rites and rituals,
4. kāma rāga: sensuous desire,
5. vyāpāda: ill will,
6. rūpa rāga: craving for existence in the Form World, fine material existence,
7. arūpa rāga: craving for existence in the Formless World, immaterial existence,
8. māna: conceit,
9. uddhacca: restlessness, and
10. avijjā: ignorance.

Hatred, aversion, and anger is the meaning of the Pāli word dosā. The mind consumed with hatred has aversion towards people, other sentient beings, objects, or situations; broader in scope than ill will and can include irritation, annoyance, and anger; and not necessarily involving a wish to harm. Hatred is one of the Three Unwholesome Roots (akusala mūla) which are the root causes for suffering (dukkha), unwholesome kamma, unethical behavior and the repeated cycle of rebirth (saṃsāra).

The Three Unwholesome Roots are discussed in the August 2023 Newsletter-kamma and are listed as follows:

1. delusion (moha) = ignorance (avijjā),
2. greed (lobha), and
3. hatred (dosa).

Ill will is more specific and intense than hatred, involving an active intention to cause harm. Hatred, on the other hand, is a broader term that includes a range of aversive feelings from mild irritation to intense hatred. Hatred is like the fertile ground where negative emotions can grow, while ill will is a specific weed that can sprout from that ground.

The loving and kind mind resists, counters and can eventually uproot both ill-will and hatred. When ill will is mentioned, hatred is also implied in the following benefits for cultivating loving-kindness.

- The active and continuous cultivation of love, kindness, and compassion will prevent ill will from arising and will remove ill will that has already arisen.
- Loving-kindness produces a shift in perspective from self-centeredness to a view that welcomes and includes others. The mind extends feelings and thoughts of love and goodwill not only to themselves but also to relatives, friends, acquaintances, strangers, and to others in conflicting relationships. This expanded perspective dissolves the boundaries that fuel ill will.
- Ill will may be a cycle of negativity and reactivity, arising from unwholesome thoughts, judgments, or resentments towards oneself or others. Loving-kindness interrupts this cycle by replacing unwholesome thoughts with wholesome ones, fostering wholesome emotions and perceptions where ill will has no room to thrive. Instead of reacting with hatred or resentment, the mind responds with love and understanding, disrupting the perpetuation of ill will.
- The practice of loving-kindness also develops equanimity: a balanced and non-reactive mind. The mind that creates the habit of radiating loving-kindness will then be able to face challenging situations with a calm and compassionate view, and not react with ill will.
- The mind of loving-kindness is conducive to inner peace and tranquility. As the mind experiences the soothing effects of love and goodwill, the agitations of the mind that contribute to ill will naturally diminish.
- The cultivation of loving-kindness is a means of purifying the mind. As the mind consistently engages in this practice, the defilements (kilesa), including ill will, are gradually uprooted, leading to a wholesome and purified state of mind.

Loving-Kindness is one of the Four Divine Abodes (brahmavihāra), also known as the Four Immeasurables and Sublime Attitudes.

1. Loving-kindness (mettā),

2. Compassion (karuṇā),
3. Altruistic or Sympathetic Joy (muditā), and
4. Equanimity (upekkhā).

The Four Divine Abodes are discussed in the September 2023 Newsletter - Tranquility Meditation (samatha) and The Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā).

See the July 2022 Newsletter - The Practice of Metta (Loving-Kindness) for additional discussion on the development and practice of loving-kindness.

Examples of how the Perfection of Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections follow.

- Loving-kindness is balanced by the Perfection of Generosity (dāna pāramī) as generosity arises from a heart filled with loving-kindness. Practicing generosity creates a sense of goodwill and compassion toward others, laying the foundation for cultivating loving-kindness. When the mind is generous, a positive and benevolent view arise which aligns with the intentions of loving-kindness.
- The Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī) is crucial for the cultivation of loving-kindness, especially when faced with challenges or difficulties. Being patient allows the mind to respond to others with understanding and tolerance, creating an environment conducive to the growth of loving-kindness.
- The Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) aims to reduce and eliminate attachment to personal desires and cravings, thereby the mind will develop a selfless and compassionate attitude. The reduction in selfish desires results in the expansion of loving-kindness towards all beings.
- The Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī) guides the cultivation of loving-kindness by providing insight into the interconnectedness of all beings.

Loving-Kindness is discussed in the following sutta excerpts.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

42.8 The Conch Blower

... “Then, headman, that noble disciple—who is thus devoid of covetousness, devoid of ill will, unconfused, clearly comprehending, ever mindful—dwells pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with lovingkindness, likewise the second quarter, the third quarter, and the fourth quarter. Thus above, below, across, and everywhere, and to all as to himself, he dwells pervading the entire world with a mind imbued with lovingkindness, vast, exalted, measureless, without hostility, without ill will. ...

The Suttanipata: An Ancient Collection of the Buddha's Discourses Together with Its Commentaries translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

I.8 Loving-Kindness (Metta Sutta)

143. This is what should be done by one skilled in the good, having made the breakthrough to that peaceful state: he should be able, upright, and very upright, amenable to advice and gentle, without arrogance. (1)

144. [He should be] content and easily supported, of few duties and a frugal way of living; of peaceful faculties and judicious, courteous, without greed when among families. (2)

145. He should not do anything, however slight, because of which other wise people might criticize him. May all beings be happy and secure; may they be inwardly happy! (3)

146. Whatever living beings there are whether frail or firm, without omission, those that are long or those that are large, middling, short, fine, or gross; (4)

147. whether they are seen or unseen, whether they dwell far or near, whether they have come to be or will come to be, may all beings be inwardly happy! (5)

148. No one should deceive another, nor despise anyone anywhere. Because of anger and thoughts of aversion no one should wish suffering for another. (6)

149. Just as a mother would protect her son, her only son, with her own life, so one should develop toward all beings a state of mind without boundaries. (7)

150. And toward the whole world one should develop loving-kindness, a state of mind without boundaries — above, below, and across — unconfined, without enmity, without adversaries. (8)

151. Whether standing, walking, sitting, or lying down, as long as one is not drowsy, one should resolve on this mindfulness: they call this a divine dwelling here. (9)

152. Not taking up any views, possessing good behavior, endowed with vision, having removed greed for sensual pleasures, one never again comes back to the bed of a womb. (10)

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

11.15 (5) Loving-Kindness

“Bhikkhus, when the liberation of the mind by loving-kindness has been pursued, developed, and cultivated, made a vehicle and basis, carried out, consolidated, and properly undertaken, eleven benefits are to be expected. What eleven?

(1) "One sleeps well; (2) one awakens happily; (3) one does not have bad dreams; (4) one is pleasing to human beings; (5) one is pleasing to spirits; (6) deities protect one; (7) fire, poison, and weapons do not injure one; (8) one's mind quickly becomes concentrated; (9) one's facial complexion is serene; (10) one dies unconfused; and (11) if one does not penetrate further, one fares on to the brahmā world.

"When, bhikkhus, the liberation of the mind by loving-kindness has been repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, made a vehicle and basis, carried out, consolidated, and properly undertaken, these eleven benefits are to be expected."

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October 2024 Newsletter



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6. Patience (khanti pāramī) discussed in the June 2024 Newsletter,
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī) discussed in the July 2024 Newsletter,
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) discussed in the August 2024 Newsletter,
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) discussed in the September 2024 Newsletter, and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) is discussed in this Newsletter.

The Perfection of Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) is to maintain mental balance and impartiality in all situations. The mind with equanimity is balanced and undisturbed by the ups and downs of life represented by The Eight Worldly Concerns (lokadhamma):

1. Hope for gain (lābha) is attachment to gaining material possessions, wealth, and favorable circumstances.
2. Fear of loss (alābha) is aversion to loss, poverty, and unfavorable conditions.
3. Hope for fame (yasa) is attachment to gaining recognition, praise, and popularity.
4. Fear of disrepute (ayasa) is aversion to insignificance and a negative reputation.
5. Hope for praise (pasamsā) is attachment to receiving praise, compliments, and positive feedback.
6. Fear of criticism (nindā) is aversion to criticism, negative feedback, and blame.
7. Hope for pleasure (sukha) is attachment to experiencing pleasure, comfort, and happiness.
8. Fear of pain (dukkha) is aversion to misery, discomfort, and suffering.

The mind with equanimity goes beyond indifference or apathy but is calm and steady under various circumstances. The mind is not disturbed by and is detached from internal or external impermanent phenomena.

Equanimity is a great virtue, as it is a state of mind that is not swayed by the above worldly concerns. The mind is compassionate (karuṇā) and has understanding (paññā) of the impermanence (anicca) and inherent unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) of all conditioned phenomena.

Equanimity is one of the Four Divine Abodes (brahma-vihāra), and one of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (bojjhaṅga). The Four Divine Abodes, also known as the Four Immeasurables and Sublime Attitudes are discussed in the September 2023 Newsletter - Tranquility Meditation (samatha) and The Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā). The Four Divine Abodes are the following:

1. Loving-kindness (mettā),
2. Compassion (karuṇā),
3. Altruistic or Sympathetic Joy (muditā), and
4. Equanimity (upekkhā).

The Seven Factors of Enlightenment are the following:

1. Mindfulness (sati),
2. Investigation of Dhamma (dhamma-vicaya),
3. Energy (virīya),
4. Joy (pīti),
5. Tranquility (passaddhi),
6. Concentration (sāmaḍhi), and
7. Equanimity (upekkhā).

Examples of how the Perfection of Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections follow.

- The Perfection of Generosity (dāna pāramī) provides a foundation for the development of equanimity by reducing attachment to material possessions and fostering a sense of interconnectedness with others.
- The Perfection of Equanimity is supported by the Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī), as the mind will tolerate the ups and downs of life with a clear conscience and a sense of inner stability.
- The Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) supports the development of equanimity by not clinging to worldly pleasures and outcomes, resulting in a mind that is nonreactive to the changing conditions of life, thereby promoting mental balance.
- The Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī) conditions equanimity with insight into the nature of reality, allows the mind to accept the impermanent and conditional nature of all things, leading to a balanced response to life's challenges.
- The Perfection of Equanimity is balanced by the Perfection of Energy (virīya pāramī). Effort is balanced and sustained in practice, meeting difficulties with resilience and patience, and energy applied wisely without the mind overwhelmed with tension and stress.
- The Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī) conditions equanimity by allowing the mind to endure difficulties with calm acceptance and without agitation or resentment.

The following sutta excerpts provide teachings on equanimity.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

118 Ānāpānasati Sutta: Mindfulness of Breathing

... 36. “He closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus concentrated. On whatever occasion a bhikkhu closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus concentrated — on that occasion the equanimity enlightenment factor is aroused in him, and he develops it, and by development it comes to fulfillment in him.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

36.31 (11) Spiritual

... “And what, bhikkhus, is carnal equanimity? There are, bhikkhus, these five cords of sensual pleasure. What five? Forms cognizable by the eye, sounds cognizable by the ear, odors cognizable by the nose, flavors cognizable by the tongue, and tactile objects cognizable by the body that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, tantalizing. These are the five cords of sensual pleasure. The equanimity that arises in dependence on these five cords of sensual pleasure: this is called carnal equanimity.

“And what, bhikkhus, is spiritual equanimity? With the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous passing away of joy and displeasure, a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the fourth jhāna, which is neither painful nor pleasant and includes the purification of mindfulness by equanimity.

“And what, bhikkhus, is equanimity more spiritual than the spiritual? When a bhikkhu whose taints are destroyed reviews his mind liberated from lust, liberated from hatred, liberated from delusion, there arises equanimity. This is called equanimity more spiritual than the spiritual.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

137 Saḷāyatanavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Sixfold Base

... 14. “Herein, what are the six kinds of equanimity based on the household life? On seeing a form with the eye, equanimity arises in a foolish infatuated ordinary person, in an untaught ordinary person who has not conquered his limitations or conquered the results [of action] and who is blind to danger. Such equanimity as this does not transcend the form; that is why it is called equanimity based on the household life.¹²⁴¹

“On hearing a sound with the ear... On smelling an odour with the nose... On tasting a flavour with the tongue... On touching a tangible with the body... On cognizing a mind-object with the mind, equanimity arises in a foolish infatuated ordinary person, in an untaught ordinary person who has not conquered his limitations or conquered the results [of action]

and who is blind to danger. Such equanimity as this does not transcend the mind-object; that is why it is called equanimity based on the household life. These are the six kinds of equanimity based on the household life.

15. "Herein, what are the six kinds of equanimity based on renunciation? When, by knowing the impermanence, change, fading away, and cessation of forms, one sees as it actually is with proper wisdom that forms both formerly and now are all impermanent, suffering, and subject to change, equanimity arises. Such equanimity as this transcends the form; that is why it is called equanimity based on renunciation.¹²⁴²

"When, by knowing the impermanence, change, fading away, and cessation of sounds... of odours... of flavours... of tangibles... of mind-objects, one sees as it actually is with proper wisdom that mind-objects both formerly and now are all impermanent, suffering, and subject to change, equanimity arises. Such equanimity as this transcends the mind-object; that is why it is called equanimity based on renunciation. These are the six kinds of equanimity based on renunciation.

... 17. "There is, bhikkhus, equanimity that is diversified, based on diversity; and there is equanimity that is unified, based on unity.¹²⁴³

18. "And what, bhikkhus, is equanimity that is diversified, based on diversity? There is equanimity regarding forms, sounds, odours, flavours, and tangibles. This, bhikkhus, is equanimity that is diversified, based on diversity.

19. "And what, bhikkhus, is equanimity that is unified, based on unity? There is equanimity regarding the base of infinite space, the base of infinite consciousness, the base of nothingness, and the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. This, bhikkhus, is equanimity that is unified, based on unity.

20. "Here, bhikkhus, by depending and relying on equanimity that is unified, based on unity, abandon and surmount equanimity that is diversified, based on diversity. It is thus this is abandoned; it is thus this is surmounted.¹²⁴⁴

"Bhikkhus, by depending and relying on non-identification,¹²⁴⁵ abandon and surmount equanimity that is unified, based on unity. It is thus this is abandoned; it is thus this is surmounted.

"So it was in reference to this that it was said: 'Therein, by depending on this, abandon that.'

Notes:

1241 MA: This is the equanimity of unknowing that arises in one who has not conquered the limitations imposed by the defilements or the future results (of action). It "does not transcend the form" because it is stuck, fastened to the object like flies to a ball of sugar.

1242 MA: This is the equanimity associated with insight knowledge. It does not become lustful towards desirable objects that come into range of the senses, nor does it become angry because of undesirable objects.

1243 MA says that previously worldly equanimity was discussed, but here the contrast is between the equanimity in differentiated sense experience and the equanimity of the meditative attainments.

1244 MA paraphrases: "By the equanimity of the immaterial attainments, abandon the equanimity of the fine-material attainments; by insight into the immaterial sphere, abandon insight into the fine-material sphere."

1245 MA says that non-identification (atammayatā) here refers to "insight leading to emergence," i.e., the insight immediately preceding the arising of the supramundane path; for this effects the abandonment of the equanimity of the immaterial attainments and the equanimity of insight.

Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planning to attend at www.MeetUp.com. Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at www.google.com/maps.

Activities of the Meditation Center

- Sitting meditation is held everyday at 6:30AM and 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com on the days and time you would like to participate.
- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).
- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also

- be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email mittameditation@gmail.com if you are planning to participate.
 - Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
 - There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
 - Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
 - Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
 - For more additional information please send an email to mittameditation@gmail.com. We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its' mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.
- Giving alms during alms-round.
- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com.
- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyana-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the support page of the website www.mittameditation.com and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.