

THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHA

The Path to Enlightenment

Revealing The Hidden



The Buddha's Way

Volume 10

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The author is donating 100% of all his proceeds from this book to charitable work to share The Teachings of Gotama Buddha.

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Learn The Teachings of Gotama Buddha that lead to a stable, calm, and peaceful mind. A more peaceful and loving world where all beings have care and compassion for each other.

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THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHA

The Path to Enlightenment Revealing The Hidden

Volume 1

Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment

Volume 2

Walking The Path with The Buddha

Volume 3

Foundation in The Teachings

Volume 4

Exploring The Path to Enlightenment

Volume 5

The First Stage of Enlightenment
(Stream-Enterer)

Volume 6

The Natural Law of Kamma

Volume 7

Breathing Mindfulness Meditation

Volume 8

The Foremost Householders

Volume 9

The Six Sense Bases

Volume 10

The Buddha's Way

Volume 11

The Realms of Existence

Volume 12

Lowly Arts

Volume 13

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The Buddha's Way (Volume 10)

Journey through The Words of The Buddha from the beginning of his first Teaching until his “last words” prior to death.

The book, “The Buddha's Way” is select Teachings from The Buddha organized from the largest and most complete collection of The Buddha's Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment - The Pāli Canon.

The Pāli Canon, or The Pāli Text, comprises forty-five (45) large volumes of books where Students from the lifetime of The Buddha captured his Teachings. The discourses of The Buddha in The Pāli Canon represent the largest and most complete collection we have of The Buddha's Teachings in his own words. The Buddha's Teachings are scattered over multiple volumes of books in The Pāli Canon making it challenging for the average Practitioner to glean the benefit of his Teachings.

The Words of The Buddha book series, has consolidated and organized his Teachings into a series of books, based on specific topics, with explanations of The Teachings from a dedicated Practitioner and Teacher.

You will find books such as Breathing Mindfulness Meditation (Volume 7) that are the consolidated Teachings in The Words of The Buddha related to meditation. The Natural Law of Kamma (Volume 6) provides Teachings directly from The Buddha related to the important topic of Kamma. The Foremost Householders (Volume 8) shares Teachings specifically for Household Practitioners who are pursuing The Path to Enlightenment where the mind is peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently.

The Words of The Buddha book series will provide a beginning, middle, and end with detailed Teachings to develop your life practice and the ability to seek guidance with the author of the book series. Learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings of The Buddha, in his own words, with guidance from a Teacher - offered openly and freely to “all beings”.

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Note from Author

This book shares Teachings from Gotama Buddha to guide Practitioners on The Path to Enlightenment.

In various settings, Gotama Buddha is sharing Teachings with either a male or a female - a husband or a wife.

As you learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings from Gotama Buddha, you should consider The Teachings shared as multi-gendered. So while Gotama Buddha may be using a specific gender of he/she, male/female, or a specific title of husband/wife, son/daughter you can apply these same Teachings to all genders and roles of the opposite of which he was addressing his Teachings to in the setting in which The Teachings were originally shared, or use a gender-neutral pronoun.

If Gotama Buddha is sharing Teachings with a man of how to be a wholesome husband, you can relate this same Teaching for a female of how to be a wholesome wife. If he is sharing a Teaching with a male of how to be a wholesome son, you can relate this same Teaching for a female of how to be a wholesome daughter. You have the freedom to apply these Teachings using all genders and titles in use today.

Additionally, Gotama Buddha never used rebirth in the heavenly realm nor rebirth in the lower realms of hell, animal, or afflicted spirits as a way to guilt, shame, fear, or otherwise motivate people to learn and practice his Teachings.

When you come to understand Teachings shared by Gotama Buddha related to these potential future destinations upon rebirth, he is sharing the truth of what will or will not occur based on specific Teachings based on The Natural Laws of Existence. The truth he discovered, observed, and experienced as The Perfectly Enlightened One.

One should in no way consider these Teachings he shared as a way to guilt, shame, or fear one into learning and practicing his Teachings but instead, consider that he is sharing the truth of what will or will not occur ensuring that Practitioners understand the truth related to The Natural Laws of Existence. Gotama Buddha's Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment involve, among other things, the elimination of guilt, shame, and fear. He would not use guilt, shame, or fear to motivate someone to learn and practice his Teachings because his most core and central Teaching of The Four Noble Truths, and everything else he taught, makes it clear that the objective is to eliminate discontent feelings such as guilt, shame, and fear.

Gotama Buddha shared The Teachings as guidance for anyone who chooses to learn and practice without forceful influence. Through learning, reflecting, and practicing his Teachings, one comes to understand the truth as the condition of the mind and the condition of one's life gradually improve.

It is not possible to forcefully influence one to attain Enlightenment and that approach was never employed by The Perfectly Enlightened One, and should never be employed by anyone else. Learning and practicing these Teachings is through personal free will choice.

A Buddha only points the way, everyone else must strive.

While this book series contains "The Words of The Buddha" as the foundation and focus of study, the author has provided you content in which to understand and reflect on his thoughts related to The Teachings shared by The Buddha.

A reader and, thus, Practitioner should not rely solely on the author's content in their reflection on The Teachings from Gotama Buddha. The author's content is to provide you guidance towards understanding but it is you, the Practitioner, who needs to deeply investigate "The Words of The Buddha" to determine the truth for yourself. You should not be limited to only what the author has provided by way of meaning and understanding of "The Words of The Buddha". Instead, learn, reflect, practice, and seek guidance from a Teacher to support you in gaining wisdom. The mind is liberated through wisdom.

To gain the most benefit from "The Words of The Buddha" book series, it is suggested that you start with (Volume 1), "Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment". That book will provide a framework to understand all of Gotama Buddha's Teachings in the entire book series. Without reading that book first, a Practitioner will find it very challenging to start with learning from "The Words of The Buddha".

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The Problem - The Wisdom of Enlightenment Has Been Lost

Gotama Buddha lived over 2,500 years ago sharing The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment.

During his lifetime, it was well known to people who were learning, reflecting, and practicing with him as their Teacher, exactly what Enlightenment is and how to attain it.

This wisdom remained for 500 years after the death of The Buddha. But thereafter, this wisdom has gradually declined and diminished to the point where we are today, 2,500 years later. Gotama Buddha predicted this would occur.

The vast majority of the world does not understand what Enlightenment is and how to attain it. The Path to Enlightenment, while once was strong and vibrant during the lifetime of The Buddha, has now practically disappeared.

There are very few beings in existence today who understand what Enlightenment is and how to attain it.

The Universal Truth of Impermanence has drastically affected humanity's understanding of The Path to Enlightenment.

This occurred through the lack of focus and diligence to maintain The Teachings of The Buddha as vibrantly as existed during his lifetime. People gradually and slowly mixed and blended various traditions and thoughts into The Buddha's Teachings which, while perhaps well intended, have only served to dilute humanity's understanding of The Path to Enlightenment and, thus, have made it extremely difficult for countless beings to experience Enlightenment.

Enlightenment is a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy that is permanent. The Enlightened mind no longer experiences any discontent feelings. All discontentedness such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc., has been completely eliminated from the Enlightened mind.

Gotama Buddha's objective is for his Teachings to be shared worldwide so that all beings can experience the Enlightened mental state. However, during his lifetime, it was impossible to share his Teachings worldwide. It has now come to us to be able to actively learn, reflect, and practice his Teachings, in such a way, that they are restored and shining in the world so that countless

individuals can attain Enlightenment today and in multiple generations to come.

But, in order to accomplish this goal, we will need to stay determined, dedicated, and diligent to learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings of The Buddha that he shared over 2,500 years ago. We will need to be diligent to ensure that we are not diluting his Teachings through mixing various traditions and practices that are not part of The Path to Enlightenment.

Every Practitioner will need to decide, are they interested in being part of the problem or part of the solution.

The solution takes time, effort, energy, and resources to be committed enough to restoring The Buddha's Teachings back into humanity, in such a way, that is highly beneficial to countless individuals today and long into the future.

Remaining part of the problem requires no time, effort, energy, or resources. It just requires continued complacency and lack of attention to the active learning, reflecting, and practicing of "The Words of The Buddha". I suggest it would be unwise to remain part of the problem as one will continue to experience discontentedness and the suffering it causes.

The Solution - Restoring The Buddha's Teachings Back into Humanity

If you would like to be part of the solution, I would like to encourage you to actively learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings of The Buddha, in such a way, that does not include the diluting or mixing of his Teachings with other traditions. It is The Teachings of The Buddha that lead to Enlightenment, not those that are blended and mixed that only serve to dilute The Path to Enlightenment for all those who aspire to experience Enlightenment.

The primary obstacle or obstruction that hinders Practitioners from the attainment of Enlightenment is ignorance (unknowing of true reality). This is a taint/pollution of mind where the Practitioner lacks wisdom to understand the true Path to Enlightenment. This unknowing of true reality creates an obstacle or obstruction that keeps the mind trapped in the unEnlightened state continuing to experience continued discontentedness and the suffering it causes. The only way to remove this hindrance is to seek guidance with a Teacher in the true Teachings of The Buddha using The Words of The Buddha. It is The Teachings of The Buddha that will awaken the mind to Enlightenment through independent verification of his Teachings to acquire wisdom, thus, removing this obstruction to Enlightenment.

Through dedication to restoring The Teachings of The Buddha within your own life practice by acquiring wisdom using The Words of The Buddha, you are doing your part to contribute to restoring his Teachings back into humanity for the benefit of countless beings that exist now and long into the future. All of humanity can evolve so that everyone can attain Enlightenment creating the most peaceful world we have ever imagined. It will be like “heaven on earth”.

You are invited to join this Community to only learn and practice “The Words of The Buddha”, in such a way, that leads to your Enlightenment and the restoration of The Buddha’s Teachings so that you and countless beings can experience the peacefulness, liberation of mind, and complete elimination of discontentedness and the suffering it causes, known as Enlightenment.

The Words of The Buddha Book Series

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“Thank you” for choosing to learn and practice Gotama Buddha’s Teachings.

You are making the world a better place through developing your life practice based on “The Words of The Buddha”.

Continue to read and understand “The Words of The Buddha - The Path to Enlightenment - Revealing The Hidden” book series that has been laid out for all of us to achieve a better way of life.

You can connect to a group of people in a supportive environment for discussion, sharing, and learning through the Facebook group.

Daily Wisdom - Walking The Path with The Buddha

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/DailyWisdom999/>

All members are accepted without judgment. It is a healthy place to talk, discuss, learn, and grow. There are resources to help you further on this Path to Enlightenment accessible online through a Group Learning Program.

Group Learning Program: LIVE Interactive Online Classes, Books, Audiobooks, Videos, Podcast and Personal Guidance are available for you.

Preface

The Buddha's Way

This book is dedicated to “you” and the complete elimination, destruction, and cessation of suffering or “discontentedness” of the mind. Thus, this book is dedicated to the elimination of discontentedness and the suffering that it causes in the entire world.

The Teachings in this book series, with some effort on your part, will lead you to everlasting peace - a peaceful mind and a peaceful life. It's your personal choices, with these Teachings serving as a guide, that will bring you these results.

We are all walking towards the darkness or towards the light. Which direction you walk is completely your choice.

This book and Teachings are meant to guide you in learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings of The Perfectly Enlightened Buddha who lived over 2,500 years ago.

The Teachings of The Buddha are timeless, meaning they are just as applicable today as they were 2,500 years ago.

Gotama Buddha's Teachings are not a religion but instead, a “better way of life”. Through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to independently verify the truth, the mind will acquire wisdom awakening to Enlightenment.

It is suggested that you first read “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1) of this same book series while seeking guidance from a Teacher. It is that book that provides a Practitioner with a solid foundation in developing a life practice that will lead to the Enlightened mind.

In order to progress on The Path to Enlightenment, a Practitioner will need a Teacher to receive guidance. One would not be able to only read a book and attain the results of an Enlightened mind.

Nothing in Gotama Buddha's Teachings is based on belief. A Buddha has already done the hard work of figuring out how to attain Enlightenment. You just need to learn and practice his Teachings to improve the condition of the mind and your life.

All his Teachings can be learned and practiced to independently observe the truth as the mind “gradually” acquires wisdom through independent verification of his Teachings and through practice of his Teachings.

This new found wisdom “gradually” improves the way the mind functions in the world through eliminating discontentedness of mind. The mind can completely eliminate all discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc. on The Path to Enlightenment.

Through learning and practicing Gotama Buddha’s Teachings with guidance, the mind becomes Enlightened in that you can observe the improvement in the condition of the mind as you eliminate all discontent feelings where the mind can reside peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. You are not believing The Teachings wishing for a positive outcome at some point in the future or after death. Instead, you are observing the improvements to the condition of the mind right now - in the present moment.

Only a Buddha would be able to attain Enlightenment on their own without Teachers. These are some of the criteria that make a Buddha a Buddha is that they discover The Teachings on their own attaining Enlightenment without help from a Teacher, shares their independently discovered Teachings to guide countless others to Enlightenment during the remaining time of their life, and they leave their Teachings in a condition that they guide countless others to Enlightenment after their death.

The last Buddha currently known to the world existed over 2,500 years ago.

That means you and everyone else will need Teachers on this Path to Enlightenment.

Your journey to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings is significantly improved through making the choice to learn directly with “The Words of The Buddha”.

Today, there are many resources for Teachings described as Buddhist or originating with The Buddha. But, it is only when a Practitioner chooses to investigate “The Words of The Buddha” being sourced directly from the original source, The Pāli Canon, that a Practitioner will come to understand the truth of what The Buddha actually taught and be able to implement these Teachings into your daily life to experience the results of Enlightenment.

Through learning and practicing Gotama Buddha's Teachings, in his own words, The Perfectly Enlightened One's wisdom can penetrate the mind and you can experience the breakthrough to realizing the Enlightened mind.

I have significant gratitude, appreciation, admiration, and respect for Master Teacher Gotama Buddha as his Teachings lead exactly where he said they would. To a steady, calm, stable, and unshakable mind, known as Enlightenment.

There are countless unknown and unnamed individuals who are responsible for these Teachings reaching you in this book series. These Teachings have been preserved throughout history over the last 2,500 years through the tireless efforts of Ordained and Household Practitioners. These Teachings have been preserved and shared from one generation to the next because they work.

It is now up to us to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to experience the Enlightened mind, so that we may benefit from an improved existence while also preserving these Teachings for future generations in our hearts and minds.

While books are an outstanding tool to capture The Teachings and share them worldwide, there is nothing more significant than having massive numbers of Enlightened beings in the world who can directly share these Teachings with those who choose to seek guidance in developing their life practice on The Path to Enlightenment. Each of us individually and collectively, are just one link in a long chain of Practitioners and Teachers spanning over 2,500 years.

What we choose to do in this time and place will determine how vibrant and sustaining these Teachings are for future generations. It is our work and effort to seek our own Enlightenment that we will experience results for our own mind and lay the groundwork for countless more beings after us to experience the same freedom of mind that you are now choosing to pursue.

Many people are interested in improving the world, but do not know how. It is only when we are dedicated to improving our own wisdom, moral conduct, and mental discipline that we will improve the world. Through improving our own life practice through learning "The Words of The Buddha" then, we will have collectively improved the world.

The problem that the unEnlightened mind is experiencing is not the outside world, but the inner world. Training the mind, the inner world, is what produces a peaceful existence. You can't control other people and what they

do. You can only decide to train your own mind to be unaffected by what others do.

It is a real struggle to exist in a world that the mind does not understand. It is “The Words of The Buddha” that explains The Natural Laws of Existence guiding the mind to acquire deep wisdom to make better free will decisions through a purified mind.



**Master Teacher Gotama Buddha
(The Tathāgata)**

Chapter 1

Right and Wrong Refuge

They go to many a refuge, to mountains and forests, to parks and tree shrines: people threatened with danger.

That's not the secure refuge,
Not the supreme refuge,
That's not the refuge, having gone to which,
You gain release from all discontentedness and stress.

But when, having gone to The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community for refuge, you see with right wisdom The Four Noble Truths — stress, the cause of stress, the transcending of stress, and The Noble Eight Fold Path, the way to the stilling of stress:

That's the secure refuge, that's,
The supreme refuge,
That is the refuge, having gone to which,
You gain release from all discontentedness and stress.

(Reference: DHP 188-192)

Refuge: Shelter or protection from danger or distress. A place that provides shelter or protection. Something to which one has recourse in difficulty.

Buddha: A being who has attained Enlightenment on their own without the assistance of Teachers to independently discover Teachings that leads to their own Enlightenment, with the ability to share their independently discovered Teachings that leads others to Enlightenment. The last Buddha currently known to the world existed 2,500 years ago, who I refer to as Master Teacher Gotama Buddha or Gotama Buddha. (You will see other ways people refer to him.)

Teachings: The Teachings of Gotama Buddha based on The Natural Laws of Existence that lead to awakening of the mind, to Enlightenment.

Community: The entire community of Practitioners to include Ordained Practitioners and anyone who has attained one (1) of The Four Stages of Enlightenment, this includes Household Practitioners. These are the Teachers who can guide others to attain Enlightenment through The Teachings of Gotama Buddha.

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that when the mind experiences fear from danger people retreat “to mountains and forests, to parks and tree shrines”. However, the real danger that beings are experiencing is that of discontentedness and The Cycle of Rebirth caused by their own lack of wisdom, moral conduct, and mental discipline.

The mountains, forests, parks, nor tree shrines will protect the mind from discontentedness and The Cycle of Rebirth. But instead, it is a Practitioner who seeks protection with confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community. As a being who seeks refuge or protection through having confidence in The Buddha, access to his Teachings, and being a member of The Community, then, one can learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings to liberate the mind from the true danger - discontentedness and The Cycle of Rebirth.

It is important to understand that Gotama Buddha never used guilt, shame, or fear to motivate or encourage people to learn his Teachings. Instead, his Teachings are to guide beings to the elimination of such discontent feelings as guilt, shame, and fear. Gotama Buddha’s Teachings are to eliminate these discontent feelings and others, so he would not see the use of guilt, shame, and fear as beneficial to eliminate guilt, shame, and fear.

So, Gotama Buddha is using the term “danger” because it is a feeling that the unEnlightened mind is familiar with and can relate to. He is redirecting one’s mind to understand the true dangers in the world which may not be easily observed through less illuminating language.

He then goes on to explain that this protection of the mind, this refuge, starts with The Four Noble Truths leading to The Eight Fold Path. It is these two Teachings that are the most fundamental and core Teachings that comprise what is needed for a Practitioner to deeply understand and practice to train the mind towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

It is through experiencing Enlightenment that one “transcends stress” and “stills stress”, The Four Noble Truths and The Eight Fold Path are the “supreme refuge” (protection) which will gain “release from all discontentedness and stress” it is not the mountains, forests, parks and tree shrines as through seeking protection there, the mind is still fearful.

It is only through the elimination of fear that one experiences a true refuge or true protection, not hiding from that which the mind fears. Avoiding and hiding from that which the mind fears only allows the mind to hold on to the fear continuing to experience the same fear over and over through countless cycles.

But, through training the mind to release the fear by the elimination of craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) the mind will then reside in the secure and permanent refuge or protection of The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community.

Chapter 2

Beings Are Few Who Are Reborn Among Human Beings or Heavenly Beings Because They Have Not Seen The Four Noble Truths

Then The Perfectly Enlightened One took up a little bit of soil in his fingernail and addressed the Monks thus: What do you think, Monks, which is more: the little bit of soil in my fingernail or the great earth?

‘Venerable Sir, the great earth is more. The little bit of soil that The Perfectly Enlightened One has taken up in his fingernail is insignificant. Compared to the great earth, that little bit of soil is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction.’

So too, Monks, those beings are few who, when they pass away as human beings, are reborn among human beings. But those beings are more numerous who, when they pass away as human beings, are reborn in hell... in the animal realm ... in the realm of afflicted spirits ...

For what reason?

Because, Monks, they have not seen The Four Noble Truths.

What four?

The noble truth of discontentedness, the noble truth of the cause of discontentedness, the noble truth of the elimination of discontentedness, the noble truth of the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.

Therefore, Monks, an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the cause of discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the elimination of discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.’

What do you think, Monks, which is more: the little bit of soil in my fingernail or the great earth?

‘Venerable Sir, the great earth is more. The little bit of soil that The Perfectly Enlightened One has taken up in his fingernail is insignificant. Compared to the great earth, the little bit of soil that The Perfectly Enlightened One has taken up in his fingernail is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction.

So too, Monks, those beings are few who, when they pass away as human beings, are reborn among the heavenly beings. But those beings are more numerous who, when they pass away as human beings, are reborn in hell ... in the animal realm ... in the realm of afflicted spirits...

For what reason?

Because, Monks, they have not seen The Four Noble Truths.

What four?

The noble truth of discontentedness, the noble truth of the cause of discontentedness, the noble truth of the elimination of discontentedness, the noble truth of the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.

Therefore, Monks, an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the cause of discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the elimination of discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.’

(Reference: SN 56.51)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that there “are few who are reborn among human beings” and there “are more numerous who, when they pass away as human beings, are reborn in hell... in the animal realm ... in the realm of afflicted spirits ...” due to beings not having understood The Four Noble Truths. The Buddha shares a similar Teaching related to how there “are few who are reborn among heavenly beings” and there “are more numerous who, when they pass away as human beings, are reborn in hell... in the animal realm ... in the realm of afflicted spirits ...” due to beings not having understood The Four Noble Truths.

It is The Four Noble Truths that helps a Practitioner to breakthrough to understanding discontentedness, the cause of discontentedness, the elimination of discontentedness, and the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness (i.e. The Eight Fold Path).

Without this understanding and practice, a being would have no opportunity to acquire the wisdom of why their mind experiences discontentedness and how to eliminate it, thus, they would not be able to attain Enlightenment.

It is through learning, reflecting, and practicing The Four Noble Truths that a Practitioner can make the breakthrough to understanding they cause their own discontent feelings to establish Right View and then have the ability to eliminate all discontentedness from the mind.

The Buddha uses an analogy to describe just how few beings are reborn among human beings and heavenly beings.

The soil of the entire earth represents all the beings that exist while the amount of soil under The Buddha’s fingernail represents the number of beings who are reborn as human beings or heavenly beings with the opportunity to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to attain Enlightenment.

The Buddha explains “those beings are few who are reborn among human beings” or “heavenly beings”. But “are more numerous who, when they pass away as human beings, are reborn in hell... in the animal realm ... in the realm of afflicted spirits ...” due to beings not having understood The Four Noble Truths.

He then encourages Students who are to make an effort to breakthrough to The Four Noble Truths with this Teaching. “Therefore, Monks, an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the cause of discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the elimination of discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness’”.

A Teacher can support and encourage Students to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings but it is the Student who will need to apply the effort and energy through determination, dedication, and diligence to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to experience the results of a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy - permanently. The mind can completely and entirely eliminate 100% of all discontentedness through applying effort towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

Every Practitioner will need to do the work to experience the results.

Chapter 3

Noble Truth is Not Impossible to Know The Noble Ones Are Plenty

There are **not only one hundred**, Vaccha, or two or three or four or five hundred, but far more **male Ordained Practitioners, my disciples, who by realizing for themselves with direct knowledge (experience)** here and now enter upon and reside in the liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.

There are **not only one hundred**, Vaccha, or two or three or four or five hundred, but far more **female Ordained Practitioners, my disciples, who by realizing for themselves with direct knowledge (experience)** here and now enter upon and reside in the liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.

There are **not only one hundred**, Vaccha, or two or three or four or five hundred, but far more **male Household Practitioners**, my disciples, clothed in white leading lives of celibacy who, with the destruction of the five lower fetters, **will reappear spontaneously in the heavenly realm** and there attain Final Nibbāna (Final Enlightenment) without ever returning from that world.

There are **not only one hundred**, Vaccha, or two or three or four or five hundred, but far more **male Household Practitioners**, my disciples, clothed in white enjoying sensual pleasures, **who carry out my instruction, respond to my advice, have gone beyond doubt**, become free from confusion, gained courage, and become independent of others in the Teacher's Teachings.

There are **not only one hundred**, Vaccha, or two or three or four or five hundred, but far more **female Household Practitioners**, my disciples, clothed in white leading lives of celibacy who, with the destruction of the five lower fetters, **will reappear spontaneously in the heavenly realm** and there attain Final Nibbāna (Final Enlightenment) without ever returning from that world.

There are **not only one hundred**, Vaccha, or two or three or four or five hundred, but far more **female Household Practitioners**, my disciples, clothed in white enjoying sensual pleasures, **who carry out my instruction, respond to my advice, have gone beyond doubt**, become free of confusion, gained courage, and become independent of others in the Teacher's Teachings.

(Reference: MN 73)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how the Practitioners who are practicing his Teachings closely and experiencing results are plentiful and numerous.

Being questioned by Vaccha, The Buddha provides answers that The Community of Practitioners who are learning with him are accomplishing results through developing their life practice.

The Buddha describes “not only one hundred, Vaccha, or two or three or four or five hundred, but far more” male and female Ordained Practitioners “who by realizing for themselves with direct knowledge (experience) here and now enter upon and reside in the liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints”.

This is The Buddha explaining that male and female Ordained Practitioners who are deeply learning, reflecting, and practicing his Teachings are attaining Enlightenment.

This is an important Teaching to understand because there is a myth in some parts of the world that claim females are unable to attain Enlightenment. This is not true as a male and female mind functions in exactly the same way and they are faced with the same challenges, thus, the same solutions from The Buddha's Teachings will resolve them producing Enlightenment.

Here you can see in “The Words of The Buddha” that he is describing female Practitioners who have attained Enlightenment, therefore, you can understand that women are 100% capable of attaining Enlightenment just like a man. If anyone should share otherwise, you can conclude that person has misunderstood The Teachings of The Buddha.

The Buddha is also explaining in this Teaching that there are numerous male and female Household Practitioners who have accomplished significant attainments through learning, reflecting, and practicing his Teachings. He explains that male and female Household Practitioners have attained the third Stage of Enlightenment through “destruction of the five lower fetters” which would make them a Non-Returner. They would be reborn into the heavenly realm and attain Enlightenment from there without ever returning to another rebirth.

Household Practitioners attained Enlightenment during the lifetime of The Buddha and can attain Enlightenment today. But, this specific Teaching is not explaining that instead, he is focusing on the topics of discussion shared here answering specific questions from Vaccha. I would share that Household Practitioners have a much better opportunity to attain Enlightenment today than during the lifetime of The Buddha.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, Household Practitioners were involved in a significant amount of work and effort just to sustain life. Food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical care was not as readily and easily accessible for Household Practitioners as it is today. Household Practitioners spent an enormous amount of time just to sustain their life through farming and other tasks to acquire the necessities to sustain life. Today, the necessities to sustain life are more readily available with the opportunity for Household Practitioners to focus on learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings rather than spending enormous amounts of time to acquire the necessities of life.

Today, some Household Practitioners have so much time available to them that we tend to fill up our extra time with unbeneficial activities that are meaningless and unproductive. If we move away from these unbeneficial activities and instead, focus on learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to include study of texts, learning in classes, seeking personal guidance with Teachers, watching videos, listening to podcasts, and other activities on The Path to Enlightenment such as meditation, Household Practitioners will find they have significant amounts of time that they can devote to developing their life practice towards the attainment of Enlightenment. Household Practitioners have a much better opportunity to attain Enlightenment today than during the lifetime of Gotama Buddha. The Path to Enlightenment requires determination, dedication, and diligence. If you are willing to do the work, you will experience results.

Lastly, Gotama Buddha explains that there are numerous male and female Household Practitioners “who carry out my instruction, respond to my advice, have gone beyond doubt, become free from difficulties gained courage, and become independent of others in the Teacher’s Teachings”.

This means that they have seen enough of the truth of The Buddha’s Teachings that they know he is sharing The Path to Enlightenment and have confidence in The Teachings. They have left from other Teacher’s and chose to join him to learn, reflect, and practice his Teachings.

Chapter 4

With The Teachings and Yourself as Your Refuge

But have I not already declared, Ānanda, that we must be parted, separated, and severed from all who are dear and agreeable to us?

How, Ānanda, is it to be obtained here: May what is born, come to be, conditioned, and subject to disintegration not disintegrate? That is impossible.

It is just as if the largest branch would break off a great tree standing possessed of heartwood: so too, Ānanda, in the great Monk Community standing possessed of heartwood, Sāriputta has attained Final Nibbāna (Final Enlightenment).

How, Ānanda, is it to be obtained here: May what is born, come to be, conditioned, and subject to disintegration not disintegrate? That is impossible.

Therefore, **Ānanda, reside with yourselves as your own island, with yourselves as your own refuge, with no other refuge; reside with The Teachings as your island, with The Teachings as your refuge, with no other refuge.**

And how, Ānanda, does a Monk reside with himself as his own island, with himself as his own refuge, with no other refuge; with The Teachings as his island, with The Teachings as his refuge, with no other refuge?

Here, Ānanda, a Monk resides **reflecting on the body as body**, dedicated, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed craving and displeasure in regard to the world. **He resides reflecting on feelings as feelings ... mind as mind ... mental objects as mental objects**, dedicated, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed craving and displeasure in regard to the world.

Those Monks, Ānanda, either now or after I am gone, who reside with themselves as their own island, with themselves as their own refuge, with no other refuge; who reside with The Teachings as their island, with The Teachings as their refuge, with no other refuge, it is these Monks; Ānanda, who will be for me topmost of those determined on the training.

(Reference: SN 47.13)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how all conditioned objects are impermanent. This means that there is nothing that we can maintain permanently in this material world, therefore, why hold on to it allowing it to cause the mind discontentedness due to craving/desire/attachment?

He advises one of his closest Students Ānanda to reside with The Teachings as his refuge or protection.

Refuge: Shelter or protection from danger or distress. A place that provides shelter or protection. Something to which one can receive help in difficulty.

The Teachings of The Buddha are what will protect the mind from all discontentedness. Through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to experience the results of attaining Enlightenment, a Practitioners mind is fully protected and will never experience discontentedness ever again.

When one learns and practices these Teachings with guidance from Teachers, the mind can reside permanently peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy. The mind is unshakable because on this path you will know the “truth” and have deep wisdom. The mind will be unshakable meaning nothing and no one can ever cause the mind to be angry, frustrated, irritated, annoyed, or have even the slightest stress or discontentedness.

The mind will be protected from these and all other discontent feelings like boredom, loneliness, guilt, shame, fear, shyness, jealousy, resentment, anxiety, etc. Absolutely nothing will ever negatively affect the mind once it is experiencing Enlightenment. The Enlightened mind is fully protected.

The Buddha’s Teachings are oftentimes misunderstood and then due to those misperceptions, Practitioners create hindrances for themselves to attain Enlightenment. The following sentence is sometimes misunderstood to imply that The Buddha is sharing that one does not need anyone to attain Enlightenment and that they do not need a Teacher or a Community of Practitioners to seek guidance but instead, they can attain Enlightenment on their own.

“Therefore, Ānanda, reside with yourselves as your own island, with yourselves as your own refuge, with no other refuge; reside with The Teachings as your island, with The Teachings as your refuge, with no other refuge”.

This Teaching is guiding Students to focus on learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings, not advising that one does not need a Teacher to attain Enlightenment. If Practitioners did not need a Teacher to attain Enlightenment, why would The Buddha have taught for forty-five (45) years sharing these Teachings? Why not just awaken to Enlightenment and say, “Ok, I did it on my own; now you can too, good luck”?

The Buddha did not say that when he awoke to Enlightenment. Instead, he dedicated forty-five (45) years, the remaining time of his life, to sharing these Teachings with countless Students. Since the death of The Buddha, his Teachings have reached countless people providing wisdom to help guide their life.

To attain Enlightenment, a Practitioner will need guidance from Teachers but one should always keep in mind that this is an independent journey. You will need to actively work towards the attainment of Enlightenment through your own determination, dedication, and diligence to learn, reflect, and practice. Without the guidance of a Teacher, a Practitioner would have no ability to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to experience progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

There is only one type of individual that can attain Enlightenment on their own without the guidance of a Teacher. That is a Buddha.

In order to progress on The Path to Enlightenment, a Practitioner will need a Teacher to receive guidance. One would not be able to only read a book and attain the results of an Enlightened mind.

Nothing in Gotama Buddha's Teachings is based on belief. All his Teachings can be learned and practiced to independently observe the truth as the mind "gradually" acquires wisdom through independent verification of his Teachings through practice of his Teachings. It is a real struggle to exist in a world that the unEnlightened mind does not understand.

This new found wisdom gradually improves the way the mind functions in the world through eliminating discontentedness of mind. The mind can completely eliminate all discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc. on The Path to Enlightenment.

Through actively learning and practicing Gotama Buddha's Teachings with guidance, the mind becomes Enlightened in that you can observe the improvement in the condition of the mind as you eliminate all discontent feelings where the mind can reside peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. You are not believing The Teachings wishing for a positive outcome at some point in the future or after death. Instead, you are observing the improvements to the condition of the mind right now - in the present moment.

Only a Buddha would be able to attain Enlightenment on their own without Teachers. These are some of the criteria that make a Buddha a Buddha is that they discover The Teachings on their own attaining Enlightenment without help from a Teacher, share their independently discovered Teachings to guide countless others to Enlightenment during the remaining time of their life, and they leave their Teachings in a condition that they guide countless others to Enlightenment after their death.

The last Buddha currently known to the world existed over 2,500 years ago.

That means you and everyone else will need Teachers on this Path to Enlightenment. A Buddha has already done the hard work of figuring out how to attain Enlightenment. You just need to learn and practice his Teachings to improve the condition of the mind and your life.

Lastly, The Buddha provides guidance directing Students to learn, reflect, and practice The Four Foundations of Mindfulness when he shares “Here, Ānanda, a Monk resides reflecting on the body as body, dedicated, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed craving and displeasure in regard to the world. He resides reflecting on feelings as feelings ... mind as mind ... mental objects as mental objects, dedicated, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed craving and displeasure in regard to the world”.

The Buddha considered those who resided with The Teachings are their refuge to “be for me topmost of those determined on the training”. Students who are residing in The Teachings are, for The Buddha, those who are actively progressing towards Enlightenment and the ideal Practitioners who may actually attain Enlightenment.

Attaining Enlightenment is the best thing you could ever do for your life, those close to you, and all of humanity. Through eliminating the harm you are causing in the world through your intentions, speech, and actions, not only is the condition of the mind and your life going to improve but, you are also improving the world.

Chapter 5

Liberation of Mind is the Heartwood

So this holy life, Monks, does not have gain, honor, and praise for its benefit, or the attainment of virtue (moral conduct) for its benefit, or the attainment of concentration for its benefit, or wisdom and vision for its benefit. But it is this unshakeable liberation of mind that is the goal of this holy life, its heartwood, and its end.

Suppose a man needing heartwood, seeking heartwood, wandering in search of heartwood, came to a great tree standing possessed of heartwood, and cutting off only its heartwood, he would take it away knowing it was heartwood.

Then a man with good sight, seeing him, might say: This good man knew the heartwood, the sapwood, the inner bark, the outer bark, and the twigs and leaves. Thus, while needing heartwood, seeking heartwood, wandering in search of heartwood, he came to a great tree standing possessed of heartwood, and cutting off only its heartwood, he took it away knowing it was heartwood. Whatever it was this good man had to make with heartwood, his purpose will be served.

(Reference: MN 30)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how the goal of The Path to Enlightenment is “unshakeable liberation of mind”. An “unshakeable liberation of mind” is the way Gotama Buddha described Enlightenment.

As a Practitioner trains the mind to attain Enlightenment, it is no longer possible for the mind to be shaken up by anything. All discontentedness is eliminated, and the being will no longer experience any discontent feelings.

Instead, the mind will be peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. The mind will be relaxed and calm yet attentive and alert at all times.

The mind will have deeply understood and be practicing The Natural Laws of Existence, the truth. In understanding the truth, a Practitioner can no longer be misled or convinced otherwise because they have already seen the truth and know the truth. The mind is unshakable.

There are multiple topics in your life where you might have seen the truth, and no one could convince you otherwise. For example, you have seen the truth of The Natural Law of Gravity. You know it exists and that it affects everyone and everything on planet earth. There is no one that could convince you otherwise that this natural law does not exist.

You have fallen down, dropped items, and otherwise been affected by this natural law too many times that you have seen the truth and acquired the wisdom that this natural law exists. There is no way to convince you otherwise, the mind is unshakeable on this topic.

A Practitioner who learns, reflects, and practices The Natural Laws of Existence that Gotama Buddha shared in his Teachings will come to understand these natural laws through his Teachings in the same way. Through learning, reflecting, and practicing, a Practitioner deeply observes the truth through their own independent verification and experiences to acquire wisdom. That wisdom liberates the mind where belief no longer exists in the mind.

With belief, an individual does not know if it is true or false, therefore, the mind can waver and be shaken up. But, once a Practitioner has learned and independently verified these Teachings describing The Natural Laws of Existence, it is impossible for the mind to be shaken up because it knows the truth and has profound wisdom being deeply trained to no longer experience any discontentedness.

Gotama Buddha makes it clear that The Path to Enlightenment is not for gain, honor, and praise. While many people may choose to praise you for various aspects of your life, it is important to remain unaffected by the admiration, always remaining humble. Gain, honor, and praise will pollute the mind encouraging arrogance and pride (i.e. conceit). A Practitioner will need to eliminate the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as “conceit” to attain Enlightenment. So it is highly important that one trains the mind to eliminate 100% of all conceit to attain Enlightenment.

Conceit (Arrogance, pride, judging, measuring or comparing as superior or inferior to others.)

The Buddha further describes that The Path to Enlightenment (i.e. holy life) is not for the attainment of virtue (moral conduct), concentration, or wisdom. These are all benefits that a Practitioner will experience as part of The Path to Enlightenment but, that is not the primary goal.

The “heartwood” is the center core of a well grown and matured tree. The heartwood is the highest quality of wood the tree produces. The most elegant and highest quality products are made from the “heartwood”. The heartwood is the most admirable aspect of the tree.

The Buddha uses this analogy of the tree, the heartwood, to describe the center and core of The Path to Enlightenment is liberation of mind, or Enlightenment.

While there will be plenty of benefits along the way as a Practitioner’s mind nears closer and closer to Enlightenment, those benefits are quite noticeable and beneficial. However, if a Practitioner gets attached to those benefits, they will not experience the ultimate goal “liberation of mind” or Enlightenment - the heartwood.

Chapter 6

Anyone Can Produce Nibbāna (Enlightenment)

And what, Ānanda, are the six classes?

- (1) Here, someone of the black class produces a black state.
- (2) Someone of the black class produces a white state.
- (3) Someone of the black class produces Nibbāna (Enlightenment), which is neither black nor white.
- (4) Then, someone of the white class produces a black state.
- (5) Someone of the white class produces a white state.
- (6) And someone of the white class produces Nibbāna (Enlightenment), which is neither black nor white.

— — — — —

(1) And how is it, Ānanda, that someone of the black class produces a black state?

Here, someone has been reborn in a low family - a family of Candālas, hunters, bamboo workers, cart makers, or flower scavengers - one that is poor, with little food and drink, that subsists with difficulty, where food and clothing are obtained with difficulty; and he is ugly, unsightly, ill proportion, with much illness - blind, crippled, lame, or paralyzed. He does not obtain food, drink, clothing, and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting.

He engages in misconduct by body, speech, and mind. In consequence, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell.

It is in such a way that someone of the black class produces a black state.

(2) And how is it, Ānanda, that someone of the black class produces a white state?

Here, someone has been reborn in a low family - a family of Candālas, hunters, bamboo workers, cart makers, or flower scavengers - one that is poor, with little food and drink, that subsists with difficulty, where food and clothing are obtained with difficulty; and he is ugly, unsightly, ill proportion, with much illness - blind, crippled, lame, or paralyzed. He does not obtain food, drink, clothing, and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting.

He engages in wholesome conduct by body, speech, and mind. In consequence, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world. It is in such a way that someone of the black class produces a white state.

(3) And how is it, Ānanda, that someone of the black class produces Nibbāna (Enlightenment), which is neither black nor white?

Here, someone has been reborn in a low family - a family of Candālas, hunters, bamboo workers, cart makers, or flower scavengers - one that is poor, with little food and drink, that subsists with difficulty, where food and clothing are obtained with difficulty; and he is ugly, unsightly, ill proportion, with much illness - blind, crippled, lame, or paralyzed. He does not obtain food, drink, clothing, and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting.

Having shaved off his hair and beard, he puts on ochre robes and goes forth from the household life into homelessness. When he has thus gone forth, he abandons The Five Hindrances, defilements of the mind, things that weaken wisdom; and then, with his mind well established in The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, he correctly develops The Seven Factors of Enlightenment and produces Nibbāna (Enlightenment), which is neither black nor white.

It is in such a way that someone of the black class produces Nibbāna, which is neither black nor white.

(4) And how is it, Ānanda, that someone of the white class produces a black state?

Here, someone has been reborn in a high family - an affluent Khattiya family, an affluent Brāhmin family, or an affluent Householder family — one that is rich, with great wealth and property, abundant gold and silver, abundant treasures and commodities, abundant wealth and grain; and he is handsome, attractive, graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion.

He obtains food, drink, clothing, and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting.

He engages in misconduct by body, speech, and mind. In consequence, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell.

It is in such a way that someone of the white class produces a black state.

(5) And how is it, Ānanda, that someone of the white class produces a white state?

Here, someone has been reborn in a high family - an affluent Khattiya family, an affluent Brāhmin family, or an affluent Householder family — one that is rich, with great wealth and property, abundant gold and silver, abundant treasures and commodities, abundant wealth and grain; and he is handsome, attractive, graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion. He obtains food, drink, clothing, and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting.

He engages in wholesome conduct by body, speech, and mind. In consequence, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world.

It is in such a way that someone of the white class produces white state.

(6) And how is it, Ānanda, that someone of the white class produces Nibbāna (Enlightenment), which is neither black nor white?

Here, someone has been reborn in a high family - an affluent Khattiya family, an affluent Brāhmin family, or an affluent Householder family — one that is rich, with great wealth and property, abundant gold and silver, abundant treasures and commodities, abundant wealth and grain; and he is handsome, attractive, graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion. He obtains food, drink, clothing, and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting.

Having shaved off his hair and beard, he puts on ochre robes and goes forth from the household life into homelessness. When he has thus gone forth, he abandons The Five Hindrances, defilements of the mind, things that weaken wisdom; and then, with his mind well established in The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, he correctly develops The Seven Factors of Enlightenment and produces Nibbāna (Enlightenment), which is neither black nor white.

It is in such a way that someone of the white class produces Nibbāna (Enlightenment), which is neither black nor white.

These, Ānanda, are the six classes.

(Reference: AN 6.57)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares guidance similar to Chapter 36 in the book “The Natural Law of Kamma” (Volume 6) of this same book. In this Teaching, The Buddha goes beyond what was shared in that Chapter describing that anyone can attain Enlightenment no matter what your background.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, there was a murderer who had murdered 999 people. He aspired to murder The Buddha but instead, was met with a peaceful and calm Teacher who guided him to understand the error of his ways. He became an Ordained Practitioner seeking guidance with The Buddha and ultimately attained Enlightenment.

The understanding that this individual attained Enlightenment can help you to understand that no matter what you have done in the past, you can overcome those decisions through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings making wise wholesome decisions from this point forward in your life. While you will not be able to practice these Teachings to perfection in the snap of a finger, you can gradually train the mind to experience gradual progress reaching the ultimate goal of Enlightenment.

I am sure you have not murdered 999 people, therefore, no matter what you have done in the past, you can employ gradual training and gradual practice to experience gradual progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

Not only does The Buddha highlight the importance of making wholesome decisions to improve one’s bodily, verbal, and mental conduct to attain Enlightenment, but he also shares how one will need to “abandon The Five Hindrances, defilements of the mind, things that weaken wisdom; and then, with his mind well established in The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, he correctly develops The Seven Factors of Enlightenment and produces Nibbāna (Enlightenment)”.

The Five Hindrances are five (5) aspects of the mind that need to be eliminated to attain Enlightenment as they are obstacles to the attainment of Enlightenment. Ignorance (unknowing of true reality) is the primary hindrance or obstacle that all unEnlightened beings experience, there are other obstacles that one needs to overcome as well. The Five Hindrances are sensual desire, ill will, complacency, restlessness and worry, and doubt.

You can investigate The Five Hindrances and how to eliminate them using this online class.

(Youtube)

(Group Learning Program) - The Five Hindrances to Enlightenment & The Seven Factors of Enlightenment

<https://youtu.be/mY8xw5wPRiQ>

(Podcast)

Ep. 290 - (Group Learning Program) - The Five Hindrances to Enlightenment & The Seven Factors of Enlightenment

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--290---Group-Learning-Program---The-Five-Hindrances-to-Enlightenment--The-Seven-Factors-of-Enlightenment-e1gduid>

Defilements of the mind are pollution of the mind such as craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) referred to as The Three Poisons, The Three Unwholesome Roots, or The Three Fires. These need to be eliminated from the mind because they “weaken wisdom”.

Detailed explanation of The Three Poisons is available in this same book series found in Chapter 8 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness will help you to develop awareness of mind of arising wholesome and unwholesome qualities of mind. Then, a Practitioner will need to apply Right Effort to eliminate the unwholesome qualities and arise the wholesome qualities to produce Enlightenment.

Detailed explanation of The Four Foundations of Mindfulness is available in this same book series found in Chapter 5 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

The Seven Factors of Enlightenment will help you train the mind to reside in “the middle”.

Detailed explanation of The Seven Factors of Enlightenment is available in this same book series found in Chapter 3 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

Chapter 7

The Humble

Now, Cunda, here humbleness should be practiced by you:

Others will be cruel; we shall not be cruel here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will kill living beings; we shall abstain from killing living beings here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will take what is not given; we shall abstain from taking what is not given here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be uncelibate; we shall be celibate here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will speak falsehood; we shall abstain from false speech here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will speak maliciously; we shall abstain from malicious speech here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will speak harshly; we shall abstain from harsh speech here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will gossip; we shall abstain from gossip here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be craving; we shall not crave here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will have anger; we shall be without anger here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong view (ignorance); we shall be of Right View here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong intention; we shall be of Right Intention here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong speech; we shall be of Right Speech here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong action; we shall be of Right Action here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong livelihood; we shall be of Right Livelihood here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong effort; we shall be of Right Effort here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong mindfulness; we shall be of Right Mindfulness here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong concentration; we shall be of Right Concentration here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong wisdom; we shall be of Right Wisdom here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of wrong liberation; we shall be of Right Liberation here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be overcome by complacency; we shall be free from complacency here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be restless and worry; we shall not be restless and worried here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be doubters; we shall go beyond doubt here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will have ill will; we shall not have ill will here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be revengeful; we shall not be revengeful here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be insulting and disrespectful; we shall not be insulting and disrespectful here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be domineering; we shall not be domineering here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be jealous; we shall not be jealous here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be materialistic; we shall not be materialistic here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be dishonorable; we shall not be dishonorable here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be untrustworthy; we shall not be untrustworthy here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be stubborn; we shall not be stubborn here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be arrogant; we shall not be arrogant here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be difficult to guide; we shall be easy to guide here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will have unwholesome friends; we shall have wholesome friends here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be negligent; we shall be diligent here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be without confidence; we shall have confidence here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will see no danger of wrongdoing; we shall see the danger of wrongdoing here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be of little learning; we shall be of great learning here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be lazy; we shall be energetic here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will be unmindful; we shall be established in mindfulness here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will lack wisdom; we shall possess wisdom here: humbleness should be practiced thus.

Others will adhere to their own views, hold on to them forcefully, and relinquish (let go of) them with difficulty: we shall not adhere to our own views or hold on to them forcefully, but shall relinquish them easily: humbleness should be practiced thus.

(Reference: MN 8)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares a long list of qualities that he encourages his Students to eliminate and practice humbleness.

This list of unwholesome mental qualities is followed by the wholesome qualities to cultivate in the mind to attain Enlightenment.

He is essentially providing a detailed list of qualities of mind to eliminate and those to cultivate while practicing humbleness.

A wise Practitioner would be attentive to this list and ensure they are actively practicing to eliminate the unwholesome qualities and cultivate the wholesome qualities in the mind.

Doing so, a Practitioner will move the mind closer to Enlightenment.

Chapter 8

The Discontentedness of Heavenly Beings and Humans

Monks, heavenly beings and humans **seek excitement in forms**, have excitement in forms, excite in forms. With the change, fading away, and elimination of forms, **heavenly beings and humans dwell in discontentedness**.

(In the case of sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects, the discourses are similar to that of forms.)

But, Monks, The Tathāgata, the Arahant, The Perfectly Enlightened One, has understood as they really are the cause and the disappearance, the gratification, the danger, and the escape in the case of forms. He does not seek excitement in forms, does not have excitement in forms, does not excite in forms. With the change, fading away, and elimination of forms, The Tathāgata resides joyful.

(In the case of sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects, the discourses are similar to that of forms.)

(Reference: SN 35.136)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares a quality of mind that he has cultivated in the attainment of Enlightenment so that the Students could then actively apply effort to cultivate that same mental quality.

It is very challenging for an unEnlightened mind to understand the experience of Enlightenment and understand how to attain this mental state. Through The Buddha describing his own qualities of mind, Students can then more readily learn, reflect, and practice to experience the same results. Gotama Buddha sharing that he “does not have excitement in forms” would help Students to understand they will need to cultivate these same qualities of mind to experience Enlightenment.

Through the elimination of the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as sensual desire, a Practitioner will be able to eliminate all discontent feelings including pleasant feelings.

Pleasant feelings are unsatisfactory because they are temporary, they are impermanent.

As long as the mind welcomes and invites in impermanent pleasant feelings, it will experience painful feelings and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant.

If the mind is unwilling to let go of impermanent conditioned happiness, excitement, elation, etc. (i.e. pleasant feelings), it will never experience permanent unconditioned joy.

The permanent joy of the Enlightened mind exists because the Practitioner has eliminated all the conditions that create impermanent feelings to arise. All conditions that create discontentedness have been eliminated.

The conditions that cause discontentedness are described in The Buddha's Teaching on Dependent Origination.

While it is The Four Noble Truths that provides a concise description of exactly what causes discontentedness, it is Dependent Origination that describes the overall problems of the unEnlightened mind. Understanding Dependent Origination a Practitioner can fully eliminate all the conditions that are causing discontentedness to arise and remain.

Detailed explanation of Dependent Origination is available in this same book series found in Chapter 14 of the book "The First Stage of Enlightenment (Stream-Enterer)" (Volume 5).

With beings continuing to "seek excitement in forms", sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects, the mind will continuously experience discontentedness. The Buddha singles out his discussion regarding this topic related to "heavenly beings and humans".

It is heavenly beings and humans who are capable of attaining Enlightenment. While all beings in The Cycle of Rebirth experience discontentedness, it is only heavenly beings and humans who are capable of eliminating discontentedness by attaining Enlightenment. But, as long as the mind chases after the objects of its affection attempting to create inner feelings based on impermanent conditions, the mind will never experience peacefulness.

The impermanent conditions that cause pleasant feelings are temporary. Due to the mind basing its inner feelings on impermanent conditions seeking excitement (i.e. pleasant feelings), the mind cannot reside permanently peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy. The unEnlightened mind cannot experience permanent pleasant feelings as long as its basing its inner feelings on impermanent conditions.

To understand "the cause and the disappearance, the gratification, the danger, and the escape in the case of forms. He does not seek excitement in forms", sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects, see Chapter 6 and 42 of the book "The Six Sense Bases" (Volume 9) of this same book series.

Cause: craving/desire/attachment

Disappearance: The Universal Truth of Impermanence

Gratification: The unEnlightened mind's fetter/taint/pollution of "sensual desire"

Danger: The Universal Truth of Discontentedness

Escape: The Eight Fold Path

Chapter 9

Discontentedness Because of The Six Sense Bases

Monks, heavenly beings and humans seek excitement in forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, mental objects.

Have excitement in forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, mental objects;

Excite in forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, mental objects.

With the change, fading away, and elimination of forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, mental objects, heavenly beings and humans dwell in discontentedness.

(Reference: SN 35.136)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how the mind of unEnlightened beings chases after the objects of their affection through “seeking excitement in forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, mental objects”.

Because beings “have excitement in forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, mental objects” and “excite in forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, mental objects”, the mind will experience discontentedness.

By the mind craving/desiring pleasant feelings through The Six Sense Bases and because the conditions that create the pleasant feelings are not permanent, “with the change, fading away, and elimination of forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, mental objects, heavenly beings and humans dwell in discontentedness”.

It is through eliminating craving/desire/attachment through The Six Sense Bases (i.e. eliminating the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as sensual desire) that with the complete elimination of The Ten Fetters, the mind will experience freedom from strong feelings, liberation, peace, and Enlightenment.

Chapter 10

Consideration to Go Forth into Homelessness

Monks, before my Enlightenment, while I was still unawakened, not yet fully Enlightened, **I too, being myself subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement; sought what was also subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I sought what was also subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement.**

And what may be said to be subject birth, to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, defilement?

Wife and children are subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, defilement; **men and women slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses and mares, gold and silver** are subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, defilement. These objects of attachment are subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, defilement; and **one who is tied to these things**, obsessed with them, and entirely craving them, being himself subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, defilement, seeks what is also subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, defilement.

Then I considered thus: Why, being myself subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, defilement, do I seek what is also subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, defilement?

Suppose that, being myself subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I seek the unborn, unaging, unailing, deathless (Enlightenment), sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

Later, while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with youthfulness, in the prime of life, though my mother and father wished otherwise and wept with tearful faces, I shaved off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and went forth from the home life into homelessness.

Here, Bhāradvāja, before my Enlightenment, while I was still unawakened, not yet fully Enlightened, I considered thus:

Household life is crowded and dusty; life gone forth is wide open. It is not easy while living in a home to lead the holy life entirely perfect and pure as a polished shell.

Suppose I shave off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness.

(Reference: MN 26)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how prior to his Enlightenment he also sought out impermanent conditions to create inner feelings. He “sought what was also subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement”. This is describing impermanence.

He then shares several objects that are impermanent such as: “wife and children are subject to birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, defilement, men and women slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses and mares, gold and silver”.

Because all these and others are impermanent, if the mind is craving and obsessed with them, then there will be discontentedness. The being will continue to be trapped in The Cycle of Rebirth because its continuing to crave/desire (i.e. hold on) to these things in the world.

But, through actively training the mind on The Path to Enlightenment, the mind can be trained to let go no longer seeking pleasure in these impermanent conditions. In doing so, a mind that is liberated will still experience much fun and joy. In fact, an Enlightened mind will experience even more fun and joy than in the unEnlightened state.

The Enlightened mind will not experience the displeasure and dissatisfaction of temporary pleasant feelings, painful feelings, and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant. Instead, there will be unconditioned joy that fills the mind.

The Buddha chose to leave the household life “going forth from the home life into homelessness” as a roaming and wandering Ascetic. He observed how difficult and challenging it was to let go while living a household life. But, not everyone will need to leave the household life to attain Enlightenment.

As described previously in this book, attaining Enlightenment in the household life now is much more likely than during the lifetime of Gotama Buddha. While Practitioners did attain Enlightenment in the household lifestyle during the lifetime of The Buddha, it was very challenging, so many people did choose to ordain.

Today, we have the wisdom that will help a Household Practitioner attain Enlightenment through applying determination, dedication, and diligence to developing their life practice in The Buddha’s Way.

Attaining Enlightenment in the ordained or household life is a challenge. But, through focusing on just one step at a time, a Practitioner can actively move towards Enlightenment.

The mountain always looks tall when you are standing at the bottom. It is not until you are on your way up or standing at the top that you realize the mountain was not so tall after all. You do not need to climb the mountain all in one day. It takes time. There is support for you along the way.

Anything good takes time. If The Path to Enlightenment was easy, everyone would already be Enlightened. But it is also not difficult either. At times there will be struggles that are well worth the results, and there will be times where it is quite enjoyable. This is the final struggle of all struggles. Once the mind faces the challenges through being trained to attain Enlightenment, all other struggles are eliminated.

The human mind can take an enormous amount of pain, suffering, and trauma. With the proper Teachings, Teachers, dedication and commitment the mind can repair itself but you need to pursue the learning and growth.

The Path to Enlightenment is to heal the mind in order to attain complete peace and serenity of mind. These Teachings and practices are the solution to the struggles that we have experienced our entire life.

The Path to Enlightenment is the solution to the challenges we experience in the world and the solutions of how to heal from what hurt us so that we never need to hurt again.

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha's Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 1-10)

<https://youtu.be/kKxSavOffUA>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 325 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha's Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 1-10)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--325---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Buddhas---Volume-10---Chapter-1-10-e1jgbai/a-a826ikm>

Chapter 11

Five Future Dangers in the Way for Consideration

Monks, there are these five future dangers in the way of reflecting on which the diligent, dedicated, determined Monk, forest-gone, ought to live just to attain the unattained, to master the unmastered, to realize the unrealized.

What five?

(1) Take the case of a Monk who reflects thus:

I am now young, a mere youth, black-haired and endowed with the beauty of youth, in the prime of life; but there will come a time when old age shall touch this body: and when grown old and overcome by age, it is not easy to attend to The Buddha's Teachings, it is not easy to retreat to the forest wilderness. Before that comes to me - unwished for, undesirable, disagreeable condition comes upon me, let me in advance arouse energy for the attainment of the unattained, to master the unmastered, to realize the unrealized. Then when I am in that condition, I will reside at ease even though I am old. This is the first future danger to consider which is enough for a Monk to reside diligent, dedicated, determined...for the attainment of the unattained.

(2) Again he reflects: I have health and well-being, a good digestion which is neither too cold nor too heated, but moderate and suitable for striving; but there will come a time when sickness shall touch this body, and sick and ill, it is not easy to attend to The Buddha's Teachings, it is not easy to retreat to the forest wilderness. Before that comes to me - unwished for, undesirable, disagreeable condition comes upon me, let me in advance arouse energy for the attainment of the unattained, to master the unmastered, to realize the unrealized. Then when I am in that condition, I will reside at ease even though I am sick. This is the second future danger to consider which is enough for a Monk to reside diligent, dedicated, determined...for the attainment of the unattained.

(3) Again he reflects: Food is now plentiful, there has been a good harvest and food is easy to get and it is easy to keep oneself going by gathering; but there will come a time when there is famine, bad harvest, and difficulty in getting food, when it will be hard to keep oneself going by gathering; and in a time of famine people will move to where there is plentiful food and there one will dwell in living conditions that are congested and crowded, it is not easy to attend to The Buddha's Teachings, it is not easy to retreat to the

forest wilderness. Before that comes to me - unwished for, undesirable, disagreeable condition comes upon me, let me in advance arouse energy for the attainment of the unattained, to master the unmastered, to realize the unrealized. Then when I am in that condition, I will reside at ease even though food is not plentiful. This is the third future danger to consider which is enough for a Monk to reside diligent, dedicated, determined...for the attainment of the unattained.

(4) Again he reflects: Now men reside in friendly fellowship together, blending like milk and water, without disputes, but viewing each other with eyes of affection; but there will come a time of fear, fear of robbers, and the people of the countryside will mount their vehicles and flee. Fear-stricken men will move away to where there is safety, and there one will dwell in living conditions that are congested and crowded, it is not easy to attend to The Buddha's Teachings, it is not easy to retreat to the forest wilderness. Before that comes to me - unwished for, undesirable, disagreeable condition comes upon me, let me in advance arouse energy for the attainment of the unattained, to master the unmastered, to realize the unrealized. Then when I am in that condition, I will reside at ease even in a time of fear. This is the fourth future danger to consider which is enough for a Monk to reside diligent, dedicated, determined...for the attainment of the unattained.

(5) Moreover, Monks, the Monk reflects thus: Now The Community lives in friendly fellowship together, finding comfort in one Teaching: but the time will come when The Community will be fractured: and when that happens, it is not easy to attend to The Buddha's Teachings, it is not easy to retreat to the forest wilderness. Before that comes to me - unwished for, undesirable, disagreeable condition comes upon me, let me in advance arouse energy for the attainment of the unattained, to master the unmastered, to realize the unrealized. Then when I am in that condition, I will reside at ease even though The Community is fractured. This is the fifth future danger to consider which is enough for a Monk to reside diligent, dedicated, determined...for the attainment of the unattained.

Monks, there are these five future dangers in the way to consider which the diligent, dedicated, determined Monk, forest-gone, ought to live just to attain the unattained, to master the unmastered, to realize the unrealized.

(Reference: AN 5.78)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares details of how a Practitioner should not delay or push off the responsibility to train the mind, thus, not allowing the mind to become complacent as this is dangerous to one's progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

While certain aspects of life may be comfortable for you now, that might not always be the case due to The Universal Truth of Impermanence. The Buddha provides five (5) situations, or dangers, to consider that will happen in the future that could inhibit one from being able to learn and practice these Teachings to acquire the results of an Enlightened mind.

1.) Old age can cause challenges for one as the unEnlightened mind will not be as sharp to be able to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings. With living an entire life with a muddled mind, an elderly individual who is struggling with old age will find it a struggle to learn and practice these Teachings. So, The Buddha provides guidance that while one is young it is the ideal time to dedicate time, effort, energy, and resources towards learning and practicing these Teachings.

There is no age that is too old to learn and practice these Teachings but this Teaching is sharing that it would be more wise to choose to learn and practice while one is still young. Do not delay the decision to learn and practice these Teachings any further. The right time to learn and practice is always, right now.

Even if a Student is in the later phases of their life, they can still learn and practice to experience improvement to the condition of the mind possibly attaining Enlightenment during this life or at death.

If a Practitioner chooses to learn and practice these Teachings sooner in life, they will have less conditioning to eliminate. A child, for example, has very little craving and anger compared to an adult. An adult has other attributes that are beneficial and helpful in the pursuit to Enlightenment but there is more pollution of mind to eliminate.

There is no wrong time to begin to learn and practice but choosing to do so earlier in life can produce significant benefit as one will not need to live an entire life with discontentedness and can enjoy the benefits of having made the wise decision to learn and practice these Teachings while still young. If a Practitioner attains Enlightenment early in life, they are then able to enjoy the benefits of an Enlightened mind their entire life rather than experiencing constant struggles and difficulties living with an unEnlightened mind.

2.) Good health is an attribute that makes learning and practicing these Teachings less challenging. If there is bodily sickness, a Practitioner will be busy attending to the needs of the physical body where they will find it more challenging to learn and practice these Teachings.

While there is good health, rather than be complacent with the good health, a wise Practitioner would instead use that to their advantage to learn and practice so that they can get as much work accomplished in training the mind while there is still a healthy body.

3.) Plentiful food allows for a Practitioner to be able to nourish the body maintaining its strength and vitality. When food is easy to acquire, this is not a time to become complacent but instead, a time to use this to your benefit so that you are able to apply time, effort, energy, and resources towards learning and practicing these Teachings to experience the results of an Enlightened mind.

Plentiful food may promote a complacent mind and one should not allow easy access to food to lure the mind into complacency.

4.) Wholesome friends and associates is an important aspect of learning and practicing these Teachings. Making the wise choice to have wholesome friends and associates will positively influence you towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

While there are wholesome friends and associates, this would be the ideal time to actively learn and practice these Teachings instead of allowing the comfort of wholesome friends and associates to produce complacency or any sluggish conditions in the mind.

5.) The Community of Practitioners is highly important for one to develop their mind to Enlightenment. A Practitioner would need to have confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community. Through developing this confidence and having access to The Teachings and The Community, a Practitioner is then able to actively progress towards Enlightenment.

While The Community of Practitioners is strong, this is the ideal time to develop the mind towards Enlightenment rather than becoming complacent that this beneficial situation exists.

All of these things are impermanent. If a Practitioner allows these beneficial attributes to produce complacency rather than use them to their advantage, they could potentially be gone and lost, then a Practitioner would lack these same attributes of youthfulness, health, food, wholesome friends, and a strong Community of Practitioners which are all helpful in one's pursuit to Enlightenment.

It would be dangerous for one to become complacent with certain comforts that exist now to delay applying time, effort, energy, and resources to learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment.

Chapter 12

Do Not Decline Continue the Struggle

Two things, Monks, I have realized: **To never be complacent with skillful qualities; and not to shrink back from the struggle.**

Without shrinking back, Monks, I struggle on thus:

Gladly would I have my skin and sinews and bones wither and my body's flesh and blood dry up, if only I may hold out until I win what may be won by human strength, by human energy, by human striving.

It was by diligence that I achieved awakening, and by diligence that I won the supreme freedom from bondage (Enlightenment).

And you too, Monks, do not decline the contest, **but struggle on, saying to yourselves:** Gladly would I have my skin and sinews and bones wither and my body's flesh and blood dry up, if only I may hold out until I win what may be won by human strength, by human energy, by human striving; then you too, Monks, in no long time shall win that goal for which the Householders rightly leave home for the homeless life, even that unmatched goal of righteous living, realizing it for yourselves even in this very life; and having reached it you shall reside therein.

Wherefore I say unto you, Monks: Thus must you train yourselves: **We will not decline the contest, but will struggle.**

(Reference: AN 2.5)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how it can be a struggle, at times, to attain Enlightenment. But through the struggle, there is much wisdom that is acquired that ultimately liberates the mind.

The Buddha shares “two things” that he realized, or learned, during his journey to Enlightenment.

“To never be complacent with skillful qualities; and not to shrink back from the struggle”.

To never be complacent with skillful qualities: The Buddha explains that one should never allow the mind to become complacent thinking that the skillful qualities acquired are enough. Instead, continue to grow and develop throughout this entire life thinking

“gladly would I have my skin and sinews and bones wither and my body’s flesh and blood dry up, if only I may hold out until I win what may be won by human strength, by human energy, by human striving”.

A Practitioner should never convince the mind that its Enlightened. Instead, continue to grow and progress on The Path to Enlightenment even once all discontentedness is eliminated at which time, you will know the mind is Enlightened. Never convincing the mind it is Enlightened means that you will continue to develop ensuring that you reach the ultimate goal - “the supreme freedom from bondage (Enlightenment)”.

The ego is going to constantly be telling you that you are more Enlightened than you truly are. The ego is not interested in leaving. It is like a bad tenant that does not want to get evicted from the mind. It provides no benefit yet it continues to convince you to stick around.

The ego will continually attempt to convince you that you are Enlightened which can put the mind into a state of complacency. This allows the ego to stick around and inhibits you from progressing to Enlightenment.

If the mind convinces itself that it’s Enlightened, because that’s what the ego is going to attempt to do, then a Practitioner can easily fall short of Enlightenment while thinking and believing they are Enlightened. This is detrimental to one’s life practice and progress to Enlightenment.

Instead, never convince the mind that it is Enlightened and continue to progress further and further on The Path to Enlightenment. As soon as complacency, arrogance, pride, or ego arises in the mind, it’s not Enlightened. So convincing the mind that it is Enlightened, only opens the door for complacency, arrogance, pride, and the ego, thus, defeating you in the ultimate goal of liberation.

A wise Practitioner would continuously reside understanding “to never be complacent with skillful qualities” because then they can continue to grow and progress on The Path to Enlightenment. While we might conclude that a certain Practitioner has attained Enlightenment, if that Practitioner themselves never convinces the mind that it is Enlightened, they can continue to progress experiencing higher degrees and higher qualities of Enlightenment.

While there is the fourth Stage of Enlightenment described as an Arahant, a being who enters and resides in the fourth Stage of Enlightenment as an Arahant can continue to experience increased benefits through never convincing the mind it is Enlightened while staying dedicated to their practice. The danger would be to convince the mind that it is Enlightened, when its really not, and the Practitioner falls short of the ultimate goal to then experience rebirth all over again.

Instead, do “**not shrink back from the struggle**” and continue to be determined, dedicated, and diligent to your growth. For a Practitioner to attain Enlightenment, they would have needed a well developed life practice of continuous improvement. Rather than halting the improvement once the mind experiences the elimination of discontentedness, it will be relatively straight forward and with ease that a Practitioner can continue to focus on development of the mind experiencing continuous benefits as the mind becomes even more focused, concentrated, clear, and wise with deep memory.

While the elimination of discontentedness is the ultimate goal, there are multiple benefits experienced as the mind gradually awakens to Enlightenment. These benefits only heighten as one continues to develop their life practice even once the mind has attained the fourth Stage of Enlightenment as an Arahant.

Attaining Enlightenment is like the beginning of the rest of your life.

All the way up until the mind attains Enlightenment, a Practitioner will have been experiencing discontentedness. In certain times during your life, there might have been significant discontentedness.

But, through determination, dedication, and diligence, a Practitioner who attains Enlightenment will eliminate 100% of all discontentedness. The mind and your life will be completely peaceful where one has fully understood and is fully practicing The Natural Laws of Existence. The mind will have focus, concentration, clarity, wisdom, and deep memory. Therefore, anything that you choose to do in your life can be a resounding success.

No matter what an Enlightened being chooses to do in their life, it will be highly successful. There is nothing holding an Enlightened being back from massive success in their life, whatever success means to you.

Success is not necessarily the accumulation of wealth, but an Enlightened being will already know that. It is possible to be wealthy and Enlightened, but the mind will first need to eliminate its craving/desire/attachment to wealth.

An Enlightened being can embark forward on any aspect of life they choose and with the qualities of mind they have cultivated, they will experience massive success in all parts of their life - both personally and professionally. An Enlightened being is a problem solver who solved the most significant problem they have ever faced throughout countless lives.

They have figured out how to eliminate the discontent feelings that plague the mind. If they can resolve this challenge, there is no challenge they cannot overcome.

Their determination, dedication, and diligence to solving this challenge surpasses all other challenges that they will ever face. An Enlightened being has deep wisdom to face any challenge that presents itself because they know that the challenge is impermanent and its only a matter of applying the appropriate wisdom to overcome the challenge.

Attaining Enlightenment is the beginning of the rest of your life. Your last life. The very best life. The life where all discontentedness is eliminated and the mind resides completely peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently.

Chapter 13

Final Knowledge is Achieved by Gradual Training

Monks, I do not say that final knowledge (wisdom) is achieved all at once. On the contrary, **final knowledge is achieved by gradual training, by gradual practice, by gradual progress.**

And how does there come to be gradual training, gradual practice, gradual progress?

Here;

One **who has confidence** in a Teacher **visits him**;

When he visits him, he **pays respect** to him;

When he pays respect to him, he **gives ear**;

One who gives ear, **hears The Teachings**;

Having heard The Teachings, he **memorizes them**;

He **examines the meaning of The Teachings** he has memorized;

When he examines their meaning, he **gains a reflective understanding of those Teachings**;

When he has gained a reflective understanding of those Teachings, **enthusiasm springs** up in him;

When enthusiasm has sprung up, he **applies his will**;

Having applied his will, he **investigates**;

Having investigated, he **strives**;

Purposely striving, he **realizes** with the ultimate truth and **sees it by penetrating** it with wisdom.

(Reference: MN 70.22)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how Enlightenment is not achieved suddenly or “all at once”. Instead, the attainment of Enlightenment is experienced gradually through gradual training and gradual practice resulting in gradual progress.

The Buddha provides guidance of how to attain the wisdom that leads to liberation of the mind. He is providing guidance in “how to learn” and make progress on The Path to Enlightenment by having a Teacher and gradually learning through investigation of The Teachings.

When there is confidence in a Teacher, a Practitioner visits them, pays respect, listens to their Teachings (i.e. gives ear), memorizes The Teachings, examines the meaning of The Teachings, reflects on The Teachings arousing enthusiasm, and applies their will or effort to practice The Teachings. Having investigated The Teachings, a Practitioner will need to strive to independently observe the truth to acquire wisdom.

This is the way one would liberate the mind through seeking guidance with a Teacher.

In order to progress on The Path to Enlightenment, a Practitioner will need a Teacher to receive guidance. One would not be able to only read a book and attain the results of an Enlightened mind.

Nothing in Gotama Buddha's Teachings is based in belief. All his Teachings can be learned and practiced to independently observe the truth as the mind "gradually" acquires wisdom through independent verification of his Teachings through practice of his Teachings. It is a real struggle to exist in a world that the unEnlightened mind does not understand.

This new found wisdom "gradually" improves the way the mind functions in the world through eliminating discontentedness of mind. The mind can completely eliminate all discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc. on The Path to Enlightenment.

Through actively learning and practicing Gotama Buddha's Teachings with guidance, the mind becomes Enlightened in that you can observe the improvement in the condition of the mind as you eliminate all discontent feelings where the mind can reside peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. You are not believing The Teachings wishing for a positive outcome at some point in the future or after death. Instead, you are observing the improvements to the condition of the mind right now - in the present moment.

Only a Buddha would be able to attain Enlightenment on their own without Teachers. These are some of the criteria that make a Buddha a Buddha is that they discover The Teachings on their own attaining Enlightenment without help from a Teacher, shares their independently discovered Teachings to guide countless others to Enlightenment during the remaining time of their life, and they leave their Teachings in a condition that they guide countless others to Enlightenment after their death.

The last Buddha currently known to the world existed over 2,500 years ago.

That means you and everyone else will need Teachers on this Path to Enlightenment. A Buddha has already done the hard work of figuring out how to attain Enlightenment. You just need to learn and practice his Teachings to improve the condition of the mind and your life.

Chapter 14

To Select the Place to Live

Here, Monks, a Monk lives in some jungle thicket. While he is living there his unestablished mindfulness does not become established, his unconcentrated mind does not become concentrated, his undestroyed taints do not come to destruction, he does not attain the unattained supreme security from bondage (Enlightenment); and also the necessities to sustain life that should be obtained by one gone forth robes, almsfood, resting place, and medical care - are hard to come by. That Monk should depart from that jungle thicket that very night or that very day; he should not continue living there.

Here, Monks, a Monk lives in some jungle thicket. While he is living there his unestablished mindfulness does not become established, his unconcentrated mind does not become concentrated, his undestroyed taints do not come to destruction, he does not attain the unattained supreme security from bondage (Enlightenment); yet the necessities to sustain life that should be obtained by one gone forth robes, almsfood, resting place, and medical care - are easy to come by. The Monk should consider thus: However, I did not go forth from the home life into homelessness for the sake of robes, almsfood, resting place, and medicinal care. Having reflected thus, that Monk should depart from that jungle thicket; he should not continue living there.

Here, Monks, a Monk lives in some jungle thicket. While he is living there his unestablished mindfulness becomes established, his unconcentrated mind becomes concentrated, his undestroyed taints come to destruction, he attains the unattained supreme security from bondage (Enlightenment); yet the necessities to sustain life that should be obtained by one gone forth robes, almsfood, resting place, and medical care - are hard to come by. The Monk should consider thus: However, I did not go forth from the home life into homelessness for the sake of robes, almsfood, resting place, and medicinal care. Having reflected thus, that Monk should continue living in that jungle thicket; he should not depart.

Here, Monks, a Monk lives in some jungle thicket. While he is living there his unestablished mindfulness becomes established, his unconcentrated mind becomes concentrated, his undestroyed taints come to destruction, he attains the unattained supreme security from bondage (Enlightenment); and also the necessities to sustain life that should be obtained by one gone forth robes, almsfood, resting place, and medical care - are easy to come by. That Monk should continue living in that jungle thicket as long as life lasts; he should not depart.

(In the case of selecting a certain village, town, city, country, person, similar discourses were spoken.)

(Reference: MN 17)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares Teachings that can help a Practitioner select a place to live.

While this Teaching is shared and described in a way that relates to the ordained lifestyle, this Teaching can be applied to the household lifestyle as well.

The Buddha is essentially helping Practitioners understand that the goal of this life, and especially ordained life, is to develop the mind towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

Gotama Buddha presents four (4) different situations that could exist and provides guidance if one finds themselves in that situation.

(1) If a Practitioner finds they are in a living situation where they are unable to actively develop the mind and the necessities to sustain life are difficult to acquire, The Buddha advises that one should leave that location “that very night or that very day; he should not continue living there”.

The goal of this life should be to develop the mind and in order to accomplish that goal, a Practitioner will need to sustain their life. In this situation, the Practitioner is not able to develop their mind nor sustain their life, thus, The Buddha advises to leave that location immediately.

(2) If a Practitioner finds they are in a living situation where they are unable to actively develop the mind and the necessities to sustain life are easy to acquire, The Buddha advises that one should leave that location. He says, they “should not continue living there”.

The goal of this life should be to develop the mind and in order to accomplish that goal, a Practitioner will need to sustain their life but sustaining life is not the only goal. In this situation, the Practitioner is not able to develop their mind but can easily sustain their life, thus, The Buddha advises that one “should not continue living there” because there is no ability to develop the mind.

You might consider that if you are living with other people who are unsupportive of your journey to Enlightenment, abusive situations, or places where life sustaining resources might be easy to acquire but the environment is not one that is conducive to the development of the mind, this is a living situation that you should leave. Otherwise, you might be sustaining your life but you are unable to cultivate the mind towards the attainment of Enlightenment. The being is trapped and unable to experience liberation because one is choosing to stay stuck in an environment that is mentally unhealthy and unsupportive, so why stay?

Making adjustments to one's life moving towards an environment that is conducive of development on The Path to Enlightenment may take time to obtain. If one's life is being sustained through the resources needed for life, that is a benefit. With that foundation, a Practitioner can then start to look for a different opportunity where they can move to an environment where development of the mind and life sustaining resources are available, like described in option 4.

Choosing where to live is an important and impactful decision that one should closely consider ensuring a wise decision is made. A hasty decision of where to live could result in an unbeneficial outcome. If you realize that you are in a situation that is unconducive to your growth and progress in life, rather than jumping into another situation that is unbeneficial, ensure you take your time making a wise decision that will lead to wholesome outcomes.

Notice The Buddha does not advice to immediately leave this situation but instead, his guidance is that one "should not continue living there" because there is no ability to develop the mind.

(3) If a Practitioner finds they are in a living situation where they are able to actively develop the mind and the necessities to sustain life are not easy to acquire, The Buddha advises that one should continue to live at that location. He says, they should "continue living (there); he should not depart".

The goal of this life should be to develop the mind and in order to accomplish that goal, a Practitioner will need to sustain their life but sustaining life is not the only goal. In this situation, the Practitioner is able to develop their mind but cannot easily acquire the needed supplies to sustain their life, thus, The Buddha advises that one "continue living (there); he should not depart" because there is the ability to develop the mind while obtaining the needed resources to sustain life is more challenging.

The priority is to develop the mind so as long as life sustaining resources are obtainable, one should continue to reside in a location such as this, because the primary goal of developing the mind exists.

So even though life sustaining resources "are hard to come by", The Buddha advises to reside in this location. With that said, a Practitioner should still be interested in moving towards a living situation as described in option 4.

(4) If a Practitioner finds they are in a living situation where they are able to actively develop the mind and the necessities to sustain life are easy to acquire, The Buddha advises that one should continue to live at that location “as long as life lasts; he should not depart”. Essentially, The Buddha advises that this is the ideal location to reside and one should stay at this location the remaining time of their life.

The goal of this life should be to develop the mind and in order to accomplish that goal, a Practitioner will need to sustain their life. In this situation, the Practitioner is able to develop their mind and can easily acquire the needed supplies to sustain their life, thus, The Buddha advises that one should “continue living (there); as long as life lasts; he should not depart”. This is the ideal location to live the rest of this life continuing to develop the mind and live at ease with the needed resources to sustain life while keeping impermanence in mind.

There may come a time when, due to impermanence, living in this location is not possible. Therefore, knowing the attributes that are important to select a location to live, one can then find a new location where development of the mind is the priority and easily acquiring life sustaining resources “are easy to come by”.

A wise Practitioner might choose to employ this same Teaching related to the work environment. The Buddha is describing how to select a location for living but in many ways, our modern day work environment should provide these same attributes as described in this Teaching from Gotama Buddha.

Rather than developing the mind, this can be related to developing one’s career skills. And instead of acquiring the necessities to sustain one’s life, this can be related to the income provided at the job.

(1) If one is not able to develop their career skills and the provided income is low, it would be advisable to leave that position at the soonest possible time.

To excel in life and professional life, one will need to be continuously developing their professional skills. A work environment that does not provide career growth nor a reasonable income is an occupation that might be described as a “dead end job”.

Instead, a wise Practitioner would look for an opportunity where career growth is possible and there is a reasonable income to support your life as described in option 4.

(2) If one is not able to develop their career skills and the provided income is reasonable, it would be advisable to leave that position seeking growth and opportunity which will result in the ability to sustain one’s career over a longer period of time.

If you are in a position where the income is reasonable yet there is no career growth, then one’s career could easily stagnate where you will find yourself lacking the future ability to obtain increased opportunities as life progresses.

To excel in life and professional life, one will need to be continuously developing their professional skills. A work environment that does not provide career growth but does provide a reasonable income is an occupation that might be described as a “stagnating job”. Instead, a wise Practitioner would look for an opportunity where career growth is possible and there is a reasonable income to support your life as described in option 4.

(3) If one is able to develop their career skills but the provided income is low, it would be advisable to stay in that position seeking growth and opportunity which will result in the ability to sustain one's career over a longer period of time with the potential for increased income as one's wisdom increases.

A Practitioner might choose to think of the improved career skills and growth as part of their compensation rather than, having the view that all compensation is through monetary gain. Through acquiring professional positions that support your career growth, especially early in your career, you will be able to develop wisdom which will always lead to improved income. If you prioritize income over wisdom, you may find that your career will "stagnate" leaving you unable to acquire the income you need later in life when your professional skills are no longer relevant or desirable in the marketplace. Instead, prioritize your career growth through acquiring new skills rather than acquiring income. This will result in more wisdom which employers will always be willing to compensate you for as you become an expert in your field.

If you are in a position where the income is low yet there is career growth, then one's career could easily grow where you will find yourself with the future ability to obtain increased opportunities and income as life progresses.

To excel in life and professional life, one will need to be continuously developing their professional skills. A work environment that does provide career growth but provides a low income is an occupation that might be described as a "growth job". A wise Practitioner would benefit from this opportunity where career growth is possible and understand that compensation is all inclusive of training, quality of work, and income. As long as there is enough income to support and sustain a modest life, you might decide to prioritize growth of career skills rather than income, allowing you to become an expert in your field where your skills will be in high demand ensuring longevity in your career with the ability to obtain increased amounts of income as your wisdom and responsibilities increase.

(4) If one is able to develop their career skills and the provided income is reasonable, it would be advisable to stay in that position for an extended period of time seeking growth and opportunity which will result in the ability to sustain one's career over a longer period of time with continually increasing amounts of income as one's wisdom and responsibilities increase.

A Practitioner might choose to think of the improved career skills and growth as part of their compensation in addition to the monetary gain. Through acquiring professional positions that support your career growth, especially early in your career, you will be able to develop wisdom which will always lead to improved income.

To excel in life and professional life, one will need to be continuously developing their professional skills. A work environment that does provide career growth and does provide a reasonable income is an occupation that might be described as the "ideal job". A wise Practitioner would benefit from this opportunity where career growth is possible and understand that compensation is all inclusive of training, quality of work, and income. As long as there is continued growth and income to support and sustain your life, you might decide to stay at this job for as long as possible.

Chapter 15

With The Elimination of Excitement Comes The Complete Destruction of Discontentedness

Punna, there are forms recognizable by the eye that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, tempting. If a Monk does not seek excitement in them, does not welcome them, and does not remain holding to them, excitement is eliminated in him. With the elimination of excitement, Punna, there is the elimination of discontentedness, I say.

There are, Punna, sounds recognizable by the ear..., odors recognizable by the nose..., flavors recognizable by the tongue..., physical objects recognizable by the body..., mental objects recognizable by the mind that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, tempting. If a Monk does not seek excitement in them, does not welcome them, and does not remain holding to them, excitement is eliminated in him.

With the elimination of excitement, Punna, there is the elimination of discontentedness, I say.

(Reference: SN 35.88)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares a similar Teaching as the prior Chapter adding a bit more information.

The mind will experience desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, and tempting forms that the mind sees through the eyes. If a Practitioner does not long or yearn for excitement in these agreeable forms, welcome them, or remain holding on to them, then the mind can eliminate its craving/desire/attachment to impermanent conditions that are creating the impermanent pleasant feelings causing the mind to be dissatisfied (i.e. discontent). Because the pleasant feelings are based on impermanent conditions and are not permanent, the mind eventually becomes discontent or dissatisfied with the constant struggle attempting to hold on to the pleasant feelings permanently. While the mind experiences temporary pleasantness, it will eventually swing to painful feelings or feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant due to the mind basing its inner feelings on impermanent conditions.

Through the elimination of craving/desire/attachment for desirable and agreeable forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects through the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind, a Practitioner will gradually eliminate all discontentedness.

The unEnlightened mind will continue to long with a strong eagerness for pleasant feelings through The Six Sense Bases and as long as the mind is seeking, welcoming, and holding on to the cravings/desires for these pleasant feelings chasing after the objects of its affection, the mind will continue to experience discontentedness including painful feelings and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant.

The mind needs to be trained to be “satisfied with what is” rather than continuously chase after the objects of its affection to experience pleasant feelings. Allowing the mind to continue to chase after pleasant feelings is to invite painful feelings and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant into the mind.

Because the conditions that create pleasant feelings are impermanent, eventually the mind will be unable to acquire those conditions to create the pleasant feelings, thus, painful feelings or feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant will be experienced.

Detailed explanation of The Six Sense Bases is available in this same book series found in the book “The Six Sense Bases” (Volume 9).

Chapter 16

The Cause of Discontentedness

There are, Migajāla, forms recognizable by the eye that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, tempting.

If a Monk seeks excitement (pleasant feelings) in them, welcomes them, and remains holding to them, excitement arises. When there is excitement, there is craving and desire. When there is craving and desire, there is bondage. Bound by the fetter of sensual desire, Migajāla, a Monk is called one dwelling with a partner.

(In the case of sounds recognizable by the ear ... odors recognizable by the nose ... flavors recognizable by the tongue ... physical objects recognizable by the body ... mental objects recognizable by the mind, the discourses are similar to that of forms recognizable by the eye.)

(Reference: SN 35.63)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he highlights his central Teaching of how craving/desire/attachment leads to discontentedness of the mind describing craving as a “partner”. One who has eliminated craving/desire/attachment is described as a “lone dweller”.

With craving/desire/attachment in the mind, a Practitioner’s mind will be unliberated experiencing continuous discontentedness. The mind will continue to chase after the objects of its affection in an attempt to please the craving. Never experiencing lasting satisfaction, the mind continues to long with a strong eagerness through The Six Internal Sense Bases of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind for The Six External Sense Bases of forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects.

The mind is “bound by the fetter of sensual desire”. The mind is inhibited, trapped, and bound to getting pleasure through The Six Sense Bases attempting to satisfy its “sensual desire” but never experiences lasting satisfaction due to the mind basing its inner feelings on impermanent conditions through The Six Sense Bases.

The unEnlightened mind wants “desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, tempting” forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects at all times permanently. The unEnlightened mind is chasing pleasant feelings “seeks excitement in them, welcomes them, and remains holding to them, excitement arises”.

“When there is excitement, there is craving and desire” as the mind will be unable to be calm and peaceful while excitement arises and the mind obsesses with craving/desire.

Even though one may be alone, with craving/desire/attachment, a Practitioner “is called one dwelling with a partner”.

The Buddha explains, “there is bondage. Bound by the fetter of sensual desire” when there is craving/desire/attachment through The Six Sense Bases, the mind is bound, not liberated, it is stuck in The Cycle of Rebirth and the cycle of continuous discontentedness.

A Practitioner who has trained the mind to eliminate craving/desire/attachment is released from the fetter of sensual desire.

Sensual desire is just one of The Ten Fetters that needs to be eliminated to experience Enlightenment. Liberating the mind from all of The Ten Fetters a Practitioner will experience peace, calmness, serenity, and contentedness with joy - permanently.

Detailed explanation of The Six Sense Bases is available in this same book series found in the book “The Six Sense Bases” (Volume 9).

Chapter 17

With the Elimination of Excitement There is the Elimination of Discontentedness

Punna, there are forms recognizable by the eye...sounds recognizable by the ear...odors recognizable by the nose...flavors recognizable by the tongue...physical objects recognizable by the body...mental objects recognizable by the mind that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of craving.

If a Monk does not experience excitement (pleasant feelings) in them, welcome them, and remain holding to them, excitement is eliminated in him.

With the elimination of excitement, Punna, there is the elimination of discontentedness, I say.

(Reference: SN 35.88)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how the elimination of excitement (i.e. pleasant feelings) leads to the elimination of all discontentedness.

Because of sensual desire, the mind is longing, yearning, and obsessed with seeking pleasant feelings through The Six Sense Bases. As long as the mind continues to do this, it will experience discontentedness as the conditions that create the pleasant feelings are not permanent and it is only a matter of time before painful feelings or feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant will invade the mind.

Through training the mind to eliminate craving/desire for pleasant feelings, the mind will then also eliminate painful feelings and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant.

Chapter 18

The Destruction of Excitement

Monks, attend carefully to forms. Recognize the impermanence of forms as it really is. When a Monk, attending carefully to forms, recognizes the impermanence of forms as it really is, he feels indifferent towards forms.

With the destruction of excitement (pleasant feelings) comes destruction of craving and desire; with the destruction of craving and desire comes destruction of excitement.

With the destruction of excitement, craving, and desire the mind is said to be well liberated.

(In the case of sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects, the discourses are similar to that of forms.)

(Reference: SN 22.52)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how the mind can be liberated through the elimination of craving/desire which leads to excitement (i.e. pleasant feelings).

If a Practitioner can understand that they are eliminating the unEnlightened mind's fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as sensual desire where it wants to base its inner feelings on impermanent conditions, they can then actively work to eliminate all discontentedness.

The Enlightened mind will still experience fun and joy but, those mental qualities will not be based on impermanent conditions that the mind attempts to hold on to craving them to be permanent.

Instead, the Enlightened mind can experience the situation, and then let it go not craving for it to be permanent. The mind needs to recognize the impermanent nature of forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects, no longer craving/desiring for them to be permanent.

If the mind craves for pleasant feelings through The Six Sense Bases, it is only welcoming and inviting in the painful feelings and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant.

As long as the mind is stuck in this constant cycle of pursuing pleasure through impermanent conditions, it will never experience the lasting and satisfying peacefulness, calmness, serenity, and contentedness with joy in the Enlightened mental state.

Chapter 19

The Suitable Way for Attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment) (First Discourse)

Monks, I will teach you the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

Listen to that and attend closely, I will speak...

And what, Monks, is the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment)?

Here, a Monk sees the eye as impermanent, he sees forms as impermanent, he sees eye-consciousness as impermanent, he sees eye-contact as impermanent, he sees as impermanent whatever feeling arises with eye-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the ear as impermanent, he sees sounds as impermanent, he sees ear-consciousness as impermanent, he sees ear-contact as impermanent, he sees as impermanent whatever feeling arises with ear-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the nose as impermanent, he sees odors as impermanent, he sees nose-consciousness as impermanent, he sees nose-contact as impermanent, he sees as impermanent whatever feeling arises with nose-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the tongue as impermanent, he sees flavors as impermanent, he sees tongue-consciousness as impermanent, he sees tongue-contact as impermanent, he sees as impermanent whatever feeling arises with tongue-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the body as impermanent, he sees physical objects as impermanent, he sees body-consciousness as impermanent, he sees body-contact as impermanent, he sees as impermanent whatever feeling arises with body-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the mind as impermanent, he sees mental objects as impermanent, he sees mind-consciousness as impermanent, he sees mind-contact as impermanent, he sees as impermanent whatever feeling arises with mind-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

This, Monks, is the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(Reference: SN 35.147)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how The Six Internal Sense Bases, The Six External Sense Bases, and contact through these sense bases create the consciousness or awareness of discontent feelings and these feelings are impermanent.

For example, the eye comes in contact with a form and the mind becomes aware of this through the mind or consciousness. Whatever discontent feelings that arise as a result of this contact are impermanent.

This can be said of all The Six Internal Sense Bases and The Six External Sense Bases. Whether it is the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind, these are all impermanent. Forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects are also all impermanent.

The discontent feelings such as pleasant feelings, painful feelings, or feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant that arise in the mind through contact through The Six Sense Bases are also impermanent.

The mind needs to be trained to eliminate the discontent feelings associated with contact through The Six Sense Bases to move the mind towards Enlightenment.

Understanding The Universal Truth of Impermanence, a Practitioner can then train the mind to no longer hold on or welcome discontent feelings into the mind based on impermanent conditions.

Detailed explanation on The Universal Truth of Impermanence is available in Chapter 4 of this same book series found in the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

Chapter 20

The Suitable Way for Attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment) (Second Discourse)

Monks, I will teach you the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

Listen to that and attend closely, I will speak...

And what, Monks, is the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment)?

Here, a Monk sees the eye as discontentedness, he sees forms as discontentedness, he sees eye-consciousness as discontentedness, he sees eye-contact as discontentedness, he sees as discontentedness whatever feeling arises with eye-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the ear as discontentedness, he sees sounds as discontentedness, he sees ear-consciousness as discontentedness, he sees ear-contact as discontentedness, he sees as discontentedness whatever feeling arises with ear-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the nose as discontentedness, he sees odors as discontentedness, he sees nose-consciousness as discontentedness, he sees nose-contact as discontentedness, he sees as discontentedness whatever feeling arises with nose-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the tongue as discontentedness, he sees flavors as discontentedness, he sees tongue-consciousness as discontentedness, he sees tongue-contact as discontentedness, he sees as discontentedness whatever feeling arises with tongue-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the body as discontentedness, he sees physical objects as discontentedness, he sees body-consciousness as discontentedness, he sees body-contact as discontentedness, he sees as discontentedness

whatever feeling arises with body-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the mind as discontentedness, he sees mental objects as discontentedness, he sees mind-consciousness as discontentedness, he sees mind-contact as discontentedness, he sees as discontentedness whatever feeling arises with mind-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

This, Monks, is the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(Reference: SN 35.148)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how The Six Internal Sense Bases, The Six External Sense Bases, and contact through these sense bases create the consciousness or awareness of discontent feelings and these feelings are discontentedness.

For example, the eye comes in contact with a form and the mind becomes aware of this through the mind or consciousness. Whatever discontent feelings that arise as a result of this contact is discontentedness.

This can be said of all The Six Internal Sense Bases and The Six External Sense Bases. Whether it is the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind, these are all potential sources of discontentedness. Forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects are also all potential sources of discontentedness.

The discontent feelings such as pleasant feelings, painful feelings, or feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant that arise in the mind through contact through The Six Sense Bases are discontentedness.

The mind needs to be trained to eliminate the discontent feelings associated with contact through The Six Sense Bases to move the mind towards Enlightenment.

Understanding The Universal Truth of Discontentedness, a Practitioner can then train the mind to no longer hold on or welcome discontent feelings into the mind based on impermanent conditions.

Detailed explanation on The Universal Truth of Discontentedness is available in Chapter 4 of this same book series found in the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha's Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 11-20)

https://youtu.be/_4bJ82tIHGs

Podcast(s)

Ep. 327 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha's Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 11-20)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--327---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Buddhas---Volume-10---Chapter-11-20-e1jqofn/a-a83gf6l>

Chapter 21

The Suitable Way for Attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment) (Third Discourse)

Monks, I will teach you the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

Listen to that and attend closely, I will speak...

And what, Monks, is the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment)?

Here, a Monk sees the eye as non-self, he sees forms as non-self, he sees eye-consciousness as non-self, he sees eye-contact as non-self, he sees as non-self whatever feeling arises with eye-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the ear as non-self, he sees sounds as non-self, he sees ear-consciousness as non-self, he sees ear-contact as non-self, he sees as non-self whatever feeling arises with ear-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the nose as non-self, he sees odors as non-self, he sees nose-consciousness as non-self, he sees nose-contact as non-self, he sees as non-self whatever feeling arises with nose-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant

He sees the tongue as non-self, he sees flavors as non-self, he sees tongue-consciousness as non-self, he sees tongue-contact as non-self, he sees as non-self whatever feeling arises with tongue-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the body as non-self, he sees physical objects as non-self, he sees body-consciousness as non-self, he sees body-contact as non-self, he sees as non-self whatever feeling arises with body-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

He sees the mind as non-self, he sees mental objects as non-self, he sees mind-consciousness as non-self, he sees mind-contact as non-self, he sees

as non-self whatever feeling arises with mind-contact as condition, whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

This, Monks, is the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(Reference: SN 35.149)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how The Six Internal Sense Bases, The Six External Sense Bases, and contact through these sense bases create the consciousness or awareness of discontent feelings and these feelings are not the self (i.e. non-self).

For example, the eye comes in contact with a form and the mind becomes aware of this through the mind or consciousness. Whatever discontent feelings that arise as a result of this contact is not the self.

This can be said of all The Six Internal Sense Bases and The Six External Sense Bases. Whether it is the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind, these are all not the self. All forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects are also not the self.

The discontent feelings such as pleasant feelings, painful feelings, or feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant that arise in the mind through contact through The Six Sense Bases are not the self.

The mind needs to be trained to eliminate the discontent feelings associated with contact through The Six Sense Bases to move the mind towards Enlightenment.

Understanding The Universal Truth of Non-self, a Practitioner can then train the mind to no longer hold on or welcome discontent feelings into the mind based on impermanent conditions.

Detailed explanation on The Universal Truth of Non-self is available in Chapter 4 of this same book series found in the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

Chapter 22

The Suitable Way for Attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment) (Fourth Discourse)

Monks, I will teach you the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

Listen to that and attend closely, I will speak...

What do you think, Monks, is the eye permanent or impermanent?

'Impermanent, Venerable Sir.'

Is what is impermanent discontentedness or contentedness?

'Discontentedness, Venerable Sir.'

Is what is impermanent, discontentedness, and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: This is mine, this I am, this is my 'self'?

'No, Venerable Sir.'

Are forms permanent or impermanent? Is eye-consciousness permanent or impermanent? Is eye-contact permanent or impermanent? Is any feeling that arises with eye-contact as condition - whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant permanent or impermanent?

'Impermanent, Venerable Sir.'

Is the ear permanent or impermanent? Is the nose permanent or impermanent? Is the tongue permanent or impermanent? Is the body permanent or impermanent? Is the mind permanent or impermanent? Is any feeling that arises with ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, mind-contact as condition permanent or impermanent?

'Impermanent, Venerable Sir.'

Is what is impermanent discontentedness or contentedness?

'Discontentedness, Venerable Sir.'

Is what is impermanent, discontentedness, and subject to change fit to be regarded thus: This is mine, this I am, this is my 'self'?

'No, Venerable Sir.'

Seeing thus, Monks, the instructed Noble Disciple experiences a fading away of strong feelings towards the eye, towards forms, a fading away of strong feelings towards eye-consciousness, a fading away of strong feelings towards eye-contact, a fading away of strong feelings towards whatever feeling arises with eye-contact as condition-whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

(All the below were restated as above.)

He experiences a fading away of strong feelings towards the ears...towards the nose... towards the tongue...towards the body...towards the mind...towards whatever feeling arises with mind-contact as condition-whether pleasant or painful or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

Experiencing a fading away of strong feelings, he becomes free from strong feelings. Through freedom from strong feelings (his mind) is liberated. When it is liberated, there comes the knowledge: It's liberated.

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 existence.

This, Monks, is the way that is suitable for attaining Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(Reference: SN 35.150)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares a Teaching to walk Students through reflecting on his Teachings to discover the truth so that they can acquire wisdom.

With asking his Students questions, they can investigate The Teachings through reflection and discover the truth rather than believing anything that he shares.

Through understanding that The Six Sense Bases are impermanent a Practitioner trains the mind to eliminate holding on to strong feelings related to the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind.

With the elimination of strong feelings and being freed from the strong feelings produced by craving/desire/attachment, the Practitioner gains the knowledge that the mind is well liberated towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

The Practitioner then understands that having attained Enlightenment, there is no further rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth.

Chapter 23

Disassociation Will Lead to Your Welfare and Peacefulness

Monks, whatever is not yours, disassociate with it.

When you have disassociated with it, that will lead to your welfare and peacefulness.

And what is it, Monks, that is not yours?

The eye is not yours: disassociate with it. When you have disassociated with it, that will lead to your welfare and peacefulness.

(In the case of the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind, the discourses are similar to that of the eye.)

Suppose, Monks, people were to carry off the grass, sticks, branches, and foliage in this Jeta's Grove, or to burn them, or to do with them as they wish. Would you think: People are carrying us off, or burning us, or doing with us as they wish?

'No, Venerable Sir.'

For what reason?

'Because, Venerable Sir that is neither our self nor what belongs to our self.'

So too, Monks, **the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, the mind is not yours: disassociate with it. When you have disassociated with it, that will lead to your welfare and peacefulness.**

(Reference: SN 35.101)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a Practitioner will need to disassociate with The Six Sense Bases not considering the physical body to be “you” or “the self”.

Through training the mind to disassociate with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind as being “the self”, a Practitioner can work towards the elimination of the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as “personal existence view” to realize The Universal Truth of Non-self and “sensual desire”.

The Buddha helps his Students more deeply understand this Teaching relating it to “Jeta’s Grove”.

Jeta’s Grove was a location where The Buddha and his Students spent an extensive amount of time as there was a Temple there that was built for them to share these Teachings with the local community.

The Buddha and his Students stayed at Jeta’s Grove more than any other location. A beings mind can oftentimes associate material objects and possessions as belonging to you and taking ownership of these, including taking ownership over the physical body.

So, Gotama Buddha wisely uses this location as a way to ask the Students “Suppose, Monks, people were to carry off the grass, sticks, branches, and foliage in this Jeta's Grove, or to burn them, or to do with them as they wish. Would you think: People are carrying us off, or burning us, or doing with us as they wish?”.

The Students answer the question from The Buddha, ‘No, Venerable Sir’.

While the mind can be questioned and intellectually understand that none of these material objects are “you” or belong to you, the mind needs to be deeply trained to let them go “disassociating” with them which “will lead to your welfare and peacefulness”. If the mind continues to hold on to these impermanent objects, it will continue to experience discontentedness.

A Practitioner needs to mentally let go of holding on to people, situations, experiences, jobs, material objects, etc. A Practitioner does not necessarily need to eliminate them from their life, but instead, deeply train the mind to eliminate the craving/desire/attachment to hold on to these and other things permanently.

Through training the mind to let go of these impermanent conditions seeking pleasure, then it can be trained to reside in peacefulness, calmness, serenity, and contentedness with joy - permanently.

But, if the mind thinks that all these impermanent objects are “you” or “the self”, when those impermanent objects no longer exist, the mind will experience painful feelings.

By disassociating with all objects considering “that is not yours”, then the mind can be unaffected when impermanence is experienced.

If the mind is holding on to the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind craving for agreeable experiences with forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects, it may experience pleasant feelings when it gets what it wants through The Six Sense Bases, but it will then also experience painful feelings and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant when the conditions that created the pleasant feelings no longer exist.

The cycle of continued discontentedness just continues, and the mind is not free from the strong feelings. It is unliberated continuing to experience constant discontentedness.

Instead, the mind can be liberated from the strong feelings to experience freedom and liberation, the peacefulness of Enlightenment, because the mind is no longer longing with a strong eagerness for the objects of its affection. The mind also will not experience painful feelings nor feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant when it is liberated from chasing after the objects of its affection through The Six Sense Bases.

Chapter 24

The Arising and Elimination of Feeling

Monks, these three feelings are born of contact, rooted in contact, with contact as their source and condition.

What three?

Pleasant feeling, painful feeling, neither painful-nor-pleasant feeling.

In dependence on a contact to be experienced as pleasant, Monks, a pleasant feeling arises. With the elimination of that contact to be experienced as pleasant, the corresponding feeling - the pleasant feeling that arose in dependence on that contact to be experienced as pleasant - is eliminated and subsides.

(In case of painful feeling, neither painful-nor-pleasant feeling, similar discourses were spoken by The Perfectly Enlightened One.)

Monks, **just as heat is generated and fire is produced from the conjunction and friction of two fire-sticks, but when the sticks are separated and laid aside the resulting heat is eliminated and subsides;**

So too, **these three feelings are born of contact**, rooted in contact, with contact as their source and condition. In dependence on the appropriate contacts the corresponding feelings arise; with the elimination of the appropriate contacts the corresponding feelings are eliminated.

(Reference: SN 36.10)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares his description of discontentedness and the condition that produce discontentedness to arise.

The Buddha explains discontentedness as pleasant feelings, painful feelings, and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant.

It is contact that creates the condition to produce the arising of discontent feelings.

The eyes come into contact with a form that then produces feelings that are either pleasant, painful, or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

The ears come into contact with a sound that then produces feelings that are either pleasant, painful, or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

The nose comes into contact with an odor that then produces feelings that are either pleasant, painful, or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

The tongue comes into contact with a flavor that then produces feelings that are either pleasant, painful, or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

The body comes into contact with a physical object that then produces feelings that are either pleasant, painful, or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

The mind comes into contact with a mental object that then produces feelings that are either pleasant, painful, or neither painful-nor-pleasant.

With just the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or mind existing on its own, there is no discontentedness.

With just forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, or mental objects existing on their own, there is no discontentedness.

It is only when the condition of “contact” exists between The Six Internal Sense Bases and The Six External Sense Bases that discontentedness can arise.

Contact is the condition that leads to the feelings produced in the mind.

Just like if two sticks are not rubbed together they do not produce fire, if The Six Internal Sense Bases do not come into contact with The Six External Sense Bases, there is no discontentedness. Contact is the condition that allows discontent feelings to arise. Therefore, a wise Practitioner will need to be watchful over the mind guarding the doorways to discontentedness.

While contact will happen through The Six Sense Bases as this cannot be permanently eliminated, if there is no craving/desire/attachment for pleasant feelings, then painful feelings nor feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant will arise in the mind.

An understanding of Dependent Origination will help you to more deeply understand the conditions that exist that arise discontentedness in the mind so that you can actively work to eliminate these conditions from the mind so that discontentedness will no longer be produced.

Detailed explanation of Dependent Origination is available in this same book series found in Chapter 14 of the book “The First Stage of Enlightenment (Stream-Enterer)” (Volume 5).

The Universal Truth of Discontentedness can capture the full essence and meaning of what is mostly described across books and writings about Gotama Buddha's Teachings where you see the word "suffering" substitute the word "discontentedness". Where you see the word "Dukkha" substitute the word "discontentedness".

Discontentedness describes the mental state when the mind is unsatisfied, displeased, uncalm, or unpeaceful. The mind is shaken up, unsteady, or unstable.

Discontentedness is impermanent but it continues to happen over and over again because the conditions that are causing the discontentedness still remain in the unEnlightened mind. The Path to Enlightenment is to train the mind to eliminate the conditions that are causing the discontentedness through dedicated learning, reflecting, and practice of these Teachings.

Discontentedness is a mental state that can arise from physical or emotional pain through to the slightest unpleasantness of a small odor or slightest of touches when unpleasant feelings arise. It describes the mental state that can arise from extreme physical discomfort through to the smallest of needle pricks, emotional unpleasantness or significant traumas and effects of the mind. Discontentedness also describes the condition of the mind when there are feelings of happiness, excitement, elation, thrill, exhilaration, euphoria, boredom, loneliness, shyness, displeasure, uncomfortable, dissatisfaction, and others in the mind.

Discontentedness is a state of being, not a feeling or emotion itself.

When the mind is excited and elated, the mind is uncalm where one does not have concentration.

The Enlightened mind is beyond pleasure and pain where instead of experiencing conditioned happiness, excitement, and elation based on an impermanent condition, it will instead experience permanent joy no longer attaching its inner feelings to impermanent conditions.

Gotama Buddha describes three feelings as discontent. This is referred to as The Universal Truth of Discontentedness.

The goal of these Teachings is to eliminate discontentedness of mind providing the mind a permanent place to reside in the mental state of Enlightenment.

- A pleasant feeling (happiness, excitement, elation, thrill, exhilaration, euphoria, etc.)
- A painful feeling (sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fear, stress, anxiety, etc.)
- A feeling that is neither painful-nor-pleasant (boredom, loneliness, melancholy, shyness, displeased, uncomfortable, unsatisfied, etc.)

Happiness can be described as discontentedness because we know those feelings and pleasures will not last - they are impermanent. Once the pleasant feelings cease to exist, the mind then oftentimes moves to painful feelings of sadness, anger, or worse. The mind continues to go through this constant cycle of chasing pleasant feelings, then experiencing painful feelings and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant experiencing discontentedness struggling in life.

All three of these feelings can be experienced in the mind which can be described as discontentedness. If we use the word “suffering”, as has been used in the past, it only describes 1/3 of the meaning of “dukkha” originally taught by Gotama Buddha. Suffering describes a painful feeling but it does not describe the other two (2) types of “dukkha” or feelings taught by Gotama Buddha. Using the word suffering, a Practitioner would be missing 66.6% of what Gotama Buddha was discussing to eliminate from the mind, thus, finding it very challenging to ever experience Enlightenment.

Discontentedness is experienced through The Six Sense Bases. The eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and the mind. These are the six internal sense bases or the six internal sense faculties. You will see different people using different language to describe Gotama Buddha’s Teachings because even how people describe these Teachings is impermanent. It is not steady, fixed, or constant as different people choose to use different language.

The six internal sense bases experience the six external sense bases of forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects.

The mind longing for pleasant feelings through the six internal sense bases for the six external sense bases is one of the significant problems of the unEnlightened mind described in The Ten Fetters as “sensual desire”. The mind is chasing after pleasant feelings through The Six Sense Bases looking to fulfill the objects of its desires through impermanent conditions.

The mind experiences discontentedness through longing for sensual pleasure through these six (6) sense bases.

The Six Sense Bases

Internal Sense Base	External Sense Base
Eyes	Forms
Ears	Sounds
Nose	Odors
Tongue	Flavors
Body	Physical Objects
Mind	Mental Objects

When seeing an agreeable form through the eyes, one experiences pleasant feelings.
When seeing a disagreeable form through the eyes, one experiences a painful feeling. The mind is discontent.

When hearing an agreeable sound through the ears, one experiences pleasant feelings.
When hearing a disagreeable sound through the ears, one experiences a painful feeling. The mind is discontent.

When smelling an agreeable odor through the nose, one experiences pleasant feelings.
When smelling a disagreeable odor through the nose, one experiences a painful feeling. The mind is discontent.

When tasting an agreeable flavor through the tongue, one experiences pleasant feelings. When tasting a disagreeable flavor through the tongue, one experiences a painful feeling. The mind is discontent.

When touching an agreeable physical object through the body, one experiences pleasant feelings. When touching a disagreeable physical object through the body, one experiences a painful feeling. The mind is discontent.

When recognizing an agreeable mental object through the mind, one experiences pleasant feelings. When recognizing a disagreeable mental object through the mind, one experiences a painful feeling. The mind is discontent.

Mental objects are objects such as thoughts, ideas, emotions, mental states, etc.

Through all six (6) sense bases or The Six Doorways to Discontentedness, the mind experiences pleasant feelings, painful feelings, and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant. When pleasant feelings, painful feelings, and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant are experienced, the mind is discontent. There are more detailed Teachings on this topic in the book “The Six Sense Bases” (Volume 9) in this same book series.

As the mind chases pleasant feelings, due to the impermanent nature of these feelings, the mind is then inviting in painful feelings and/or feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant as the mind still has a longing with a strong eagerness for impermanent conditions to create pleasant feelings. If the mind is basing its inner pleasant feelings on impermanent conditions, it is also going to experience painful feelings and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant based on impermanent conditions. Instead, the mind can be trained to be inwardly peaceful and calm no longer yearning for pleasant feelings through conditions which are all impermanent.

To attain Enlightenment, you will need to learn how to “guard” the doorways to discontentedness and “protect your own contentedness” through developing a life practice of non-craving, non-desire, non-attachment, or non-clinging. We are each responsible to “protect or maintain our own contentedness of mind”, no one else can do that for us.

Since the mind is not resting in one of these three (3) feelings permanently, due to the internal feelings being based on impermanent conditions, the mind is experiencing discontentedness.

The goal of Gotama Buddha’s Teachings and pursuing Enlightenment, is for the mind to be content which is a permanent place the mind can reside through liberation of the mind. The mind will be liberated from basing its internal feelings on impermanent conditions residing permanently peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy. To accomplish this, one needs to observe the truth in Gotama Buddha’s Teachings to acquire wisdom through your practice of The Teachings and then deeply training the mind.

We acquire wisdom through learning and practicing The Teachings to observe the same “truths” as Gotama Buddha. The collection of this wisdom leads to improved ways for the mind to function optimally with purity of thought and awakened to attain Enlightenment.

Enlightenment is a permanent place for the mind to reside because once you learn something to acquire wisdom you do not “unlearn” it. You learn through experience and observation of The Teachings through practice of The Teachings. There is no belief in these Teachings and practices but instead experiential learning where you observe the truth in The Teachings that becomes wisdom. Liberation of the mind by wisdom (i.e. Enlightenment) is the only mental state that is permanent. Enlightenment is a mental state where the mind can reside permanently peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy.

Detailed explanation of The Six Sense Bases is available in this same book series found in the book “The Six Sense Bases” (Volume 9).

Chapter 25

The Way to Purity

Of ways The Eight Fold is the best;
and of true things the stages four;
freedom from strong feelings is the best of things;
of humans best is he who sees.

This is the very Way;
there is none else for seeing purity;
herein do you a-faring go,
the way to baffle Māra this.

Herein when you have faring gone
as end you'll come to make of ill;
shown surely was the Way by me,
who ease from darts had come to know.

Tis you the dedicated must work;
the men-so-gone but show the way;
who in their reflection, as they fare,
from Māra's bonds find liberty.

Transient is all men think and do:
when this by wisdom is discerned,
then does one turn away from ill:
this is the way to purity.

Painful is all men think and do:
when this by wisdom is discerned,
then does one turn away from ill:
this is the way to purity.

Without the self men think and do:
when this by wisdom is discerned,
then does one turn away from ill:
this is the way to purity.

(Reference: DHP 273-279)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares a way to purify the mind.

This is from the Dhammapada so the content is organized based on scholar's interpretation who have attempted to summarize his Teachings.

I typically do not dive into the Dhammapada but I do share The Teachings of The Buddha from other parts of The Pāli Canon. This book series does contain a limited number of Chapters from the Dhammapada.

The Dhammapada is a scholarly work that attempts to summarize Gotama Buddha's Teachings in verse form. So, the Dhammapada is an interpretation from many years after the lifetime of Gotama Buddha based on what scholars thought were The Teachings of Gotama Buddha but not his actual words or Teachings.

One thing that you may know about the scholarly community is, they are typically not Practitioners but instead more interested in the historical aspects of The Teachings and what happened throughout history rather than learning and practicing The Teachings to acquire wisdom and attain Enlightenment.

They are less interested in Enlightenment itself and more interested in the historical aspects around Gotama Buddha's lifetime and what has transpired since that time in relation to his Teachings.

So, if one is reading the Dhammapada, they are reading a scholarly interpretation (i.e. a non-practitioner) of Gotama Buddha's Teachings which then need to be interpreted by you to determine, what is it that Gotama Buddha was actually teaching?

In my opinion, it is much better to go to the source of his Teachings that can be independently verified to learn and practice those with guidance from a Teacher to independently determine the truth for yourself to acquire wisdom, even though some consider the Dhammapada a source of The Buddha's Teachings, not everyone does.

The words in the Dhammapada cannot be practiced to independently verify the truth to acquire wisdom which would lead to attaining Enlightenment. But, if you understand The Teachings of The Buddha, you can then understand the Dhammapada in a more detailed way.

The words in the Dhammapada do not lead to Enlightenment since they are not the actual Teachings of Gotama Buddha but interpretations by scholars. The words in the Dhammapada cannot be learned, reflected on, and practiced, in such a way that would produce Enlightenment.

It is the discourses in The Pāli Canon that are "The Words of The Buddha" and represent his Teachings. Learning, reflecting, and practicing these, a Practitioner can independently verify the truth to acquire wisdom improving the condition of the mind to attain Enlightenment.

By going directly to the source (i.e. the discourses) to learn and apply The Teachings in practice to determine the truth through experience, you are not trying to interpret a scholar's interpretation to figure out what Gotama Buddha taught. You are instead, learning what Gotama Buddha taught and then, applying that in practice with guidance from a Teacher to independently determine the truth for yourself to acquire wisdom.

The mind is liberated and attains Enlightenment through wisdom.

With that said, there are a select number of Chapters in this book series that are from the Dhammapada denoted as "DHP" in the reference.

You will notice these Chapters are almost like poetry in the way they are composed.

While The Buddha did speak, at times, in a way that can be consider a bit like poetry, his true Teachings are delivered in discourses that can be learned, reflected on, and practiced to determine the truth.

With an understanding of The Buddha's Teachings, you can find Chapters such as this one, interesting to explore and uncover what is being shared from scholars. Just always keep in mind that the Dhammapada is not the actual "Words of The Buddha" but instead, a scholarly interpretation of what people 1,000-1,200 years after the death of The Buddha thought he was teaching based on the discourses they had reviewed.

I will help you to understand this Chapter just as I have done in other parts of this book series. And while I may reference in the explanation what The Buddha was teaching, now you understand that, while these are based on what The Buddha taught, they are not an actual account of what he said during his lifetime.

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Of ways The Eight Fold is the best: The best way to Enlightenment is The Eight Fold Path.

and of true things the stages four: There are four Stages of Enlightenment.

freedom from strong feelings is the best of things: Liberation of the mind results in freedom from strong feelings which is the best thing you could ever experience.

of humans best is he who sees: He who has eliminated ignorance (unknowing of true reality) can see clearly no longer confused about The Natural Laws of Existence is the best of all humans. They have completely purified the mind no longer experiencing any unwholesome mental qualities, only experiencing wholesomeness.

— — — — —

This is the very Way: The Eight Fold Path is the way to Enlightenment.

there is none else for seeing purity: There is no other way to purify the mind other than The Eight Fold Path where the mind will eliminate all ignorance (unknowing of true reality) being able to see true reality, seeing clearly.

herein do you a-faring go: This is the way to go forward on The Path to Enlightenment.

the way to baffle Māra this: The way to eliminate the unwholesome influence of Māra The Evil One.

— — — — —

Herein when you have faring gone: When you have gone forward on The Path to Enlightenment.

as end you'll come to make of ill: You can eliminate all desire to cause harm.

shown surely was the Way by me: I have shown you The Path to Enlightenment through these Teachings.

who ease from darts had come to know: Where you will come to understand the ending of painful feelings.

— — — — —

Tis you the dedicated must work: You must have dedication to do the work.

the men-so-gone but show the way: Those who have eliminated discontentedness having attained Enlightenment, will show the way to Enlightenment.

who in their reflection, as they fare: Through reflecting on The Teachings to acquire wisdom as they walk forward.

from Māra's bonds find liberty: They will experience liberation of mind, freedom from strong feelings, and escape the bonds of Māra The Evil One.

Transient is all men think and do: All that human beings think and do is impermanent.

when this by wisdom is discerned: Understanding the wisdom of The Universal Truth of Impermanence.

then does one turn away from ill: That is when one can turn away from harming others to practice harmlessness.

this is the way to purity: This is the way to purify the mind, through understanding The Universal Truth of Impermanence.

Painful is all men think and do: All unEnlightened human beings experience painful feelings.

when this by wisdom is discerned: Understanding the wisdom of The Universal Truth of Discontentedness.

then does one turn away from ill: That is when one can turn away from harming others to practice harmlessness.

this is the way to purity: This is the way to purify the mind, through understanding The Universal Truth of Discontentedness.

Without the self men think and do: All that human beings think and do is not the self as there is no permanent self.

when this by wisdom is discerned: Understanding the wisdom of The Universal Truth of Non-self.

then does one turn away from ill: That is when one can turn away from harming others to practice harmlessness.

this is the way to purity: This is the way to purify the mind, through understanding The Universal Truth of Non-self.

Chapter 26

The Noble Eight Fold Path The Way of Practice Leading to the Elimination of Discontentedness

And what, Monks, is The Noble Truth of the Way of Practice Leading to the Elimination of Discontentedness?

It is just this Noble Eight Fold Path, namely: Right View; Right Intention; Right Speech; Right Action; Right Livelihood; Right Effort; Right Mindfulness; Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is Right View?

It is, Monks, the wisdom of discontentedness, the wisdom of the cause of discontentedness, the wisdom of the elimination of discontentedness, and the wisdom of the way of practice leading to the elimination of discontentedness. This is called Right View.

And what, Monks, is Right Intention?

The intention of renunciation, the intention of non-ill-will, the intention of harmlessness. This, Monks, is called Right Intention.

And what, Monks, is Right Speech?

Refraining from lying, refraining from slander, refraining from harsh speech, refraining from frivolous speech. This is called Right Speech.

And what, Monks, is Right Action?

Refraining from taking life, refraining from taking what is not given, refraining from sexual misconduct. This is called Right Action.

And what, Monks, is Right Livelihood?

Here, Monks, the Noble Disciple, having given up wrong livelihood, keeps himself by Right Livelihood.

And what, Monks, is Right Effort?

Here, Monks, a Monk rouses his will, makes an effort, stirs up energy, exerts his mind and strives to prevent the arising of unarisen evil unwholesome mental states. He rouses his will, makes an effort, stirs up energy, exerts his mind and strives to overcome evil unwholesome mental states that have arisen. He rouses his will, makes an effort, stirs up energy, exerts his mind and strives to produce unarisen wholesome mental states. He rouses his will, makes an effort, stirs up energy, exerts his mind and strives to maintain wholesome mental states that have arisen, not to let them fade away, to bring them to greater growth, to the full perfection of development. This is called Right Effort.

And what, Monks, is Right Mindfulness?

Here, Monks, a Monk resides reflecting on body as body, dedicated, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside craving and worry for the world; he resides reflecting on feelings as feelings, dedicated, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside craving and worry for the world; he resides reflecting on mind as mind, dedicated, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside craving and worry for the world; he resides reflecting on mental objects as mental objects, dedicated, clearly aware and mindful, having put aside craving and worry for the world. This is called Right Mindfulness.

And what, Monks, is Right Concentration?

Here, a Monk, distant from sense-desires, distant from unwholesome mental states, enters and resides in the first Jhāna, which is with thinking and pondering, based in seclusion, filled with excitement and joy. And with the subsiding of thinking and pondering, by gaining inner tranquility and oneness of mind, he enters and resides in the second Jhāna, which is without thinking and pondering, based in concentration, filled with excitement and joy. And with the fading away of excitement, remaining imperturbable (unable to be upset or excited; calm; serene), mindful and clearly aware, he experiences in himself the joy of which the Noble Ones say:

'Peaceful is he who resides with equanimity and mindfulness', he enters the third Jhāna. And, having given up pleasure and pain, and with the fading away of former gladness and sadness, he enters and resides in the fourth Jhāna, which is beyond pleasure and pain, and purified by equanimity and mindfulness. This is called Right Concentration.

And that, Monks, is called the way of practice leading to the elimination of discontentedness.

(Reference: DN 22)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares The Eight Fold Path.

The Eight Fold Path is the complete solution to solving the problem of the unEnlightened mind and The Cycle of Rebirth. The Eight Fold Path is “the way of practice leading to the elimination of discontentedness.”

Detailed explanation of The Eight Fold Path is available in this same book series found in Chapter 5 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

What are the Jhānas and how can I experience them?

The Jhānas are preliminary phases the mind experiences as it is making its way to Enlightenment, and prior to the first Stage of Enlightenment.

When the mind is in the Jhānas, there are heightened qualities that are experienced, which are needed in order to fully develop the mind and experience Enlightenment. These are referred to as “the Jhānas”.

Without experiencing the Jhānas, a Practitioner would have no ability to attain Enlightenment, or even the first Stage of Enlightenment.

The Jhānas are oftentimes misunderstood, especially outside of Asia.

Oftentimes people think that the Jhānas are only experienced through the practice of meditation and, that the Jhānas are turned “on or off” while in meditation or in daily life. This misunderstanding leads to the inability to experience these heightened qualities of mind, the first Stage of Enlightenment, or Enlightenment itself. Thus, an individual continues to stay trapped in the unEnlightened state experiencing sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc. over and over and over again. The mind is stuck in this continuous cycle of discontent feelings due to its lack of wisdom of The Path to Enlightenment.

I will demystify the Jhānas and help you to understand what they are and how to experience them so that you can escape the constant struggles and difficulties of the unEnlightened mind.

(Please read further if you are interested in learning this important Teaching so that the mind can become free of these strong feelings and others.)

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As mentioned, the Jhānas are heightened qualities that are experienced as one is progressing on The Path to Enlightenment. These are heightened qualities of awareness (i.e. mindfulness), tranquility, concentration, and equanimity, along with other beneficial qualities of mind that are needed to experience progress on The Path to Enlightenment and Enlightenment itself.

A Practitioner would be unable to experience Enlightenment without these heightened qualities developed and acquired in the Jhānas.

The Jhānas are experienced through learning, reflecting on (i.e. independently verifying), and practicing The Eight Fold Path.

The Eight Fold Path is the core and central Teaching of The Buddha, it is “THE” Path to Enlightenment. If you are interested in experiencing Enlightenment through The Teachings of The Buddha, you would need to know The Eight Fold Path, inside and out, backwards and forwards, up and down, left and right. And, you would need to learn The Eight Fold Path through the original Words of The Buddha with guidance from a Teacher while you retain the responsibility for your own learning and growth.

It is putting together all the individual factors of The Eight Fold Path that the mind will move into, and reside in, the Jhānas.

Yes, one will need to meditate to experience the Jhānas but, it is not only meditation that one needs to learn and practice to experience the Jhānas. There are many other aspects of The Path to Enlightenment than only meditation, which are described in The Eight Fold Path, and all of these factors are needed to make progress towards Enlightenment to include, experiencing the Jhānas.

Meditation is one aspect of one factor in The Eight Fold Path. If you did the math, that means that meditation is about 6% of The Path to Enlightenment. There is much more to experiencing Enlightenment than only meditation. There is much more to experiencing the Jhānas than only meditation.

Unfortunately, many people are misunderstanding, thinking that The Buddha sat under a tree, meditated, and instantly got to Enlightenment. This is just untrue and a significant misunderstanding. You can know this is true through The Words of The Buddha and his important Teachings.

“Monks, I do not say that final knowledge (wisdom) is achieved all at once. On the contrary, **final knowledge is achieved by gradual training, by gradual practice, by gradual progress.**” (Reference: MN 70.22)

An Enlightened being would have attained “final knowledge” through acquiring wisdom, by learning, reflecting (i.e. independently verifying), and practicing The Teachings of The Buddha to awaken to The Natural Laws of Existence, the mind is then Enlightened.

Final Knowledge = Enlightenment

Enlightenment is not achieved “all at once”.

You can independently verify that Enlightenment is not experienced “all at once” or instantly because, everything you have ever accomplished in life has been through gradual training, gradual practice, and gradual progress, just like The Buddha is sharing in this important Teaching. It took The Buddha six (6) years to attain Enlightenment.

Think about learning to read, write, and speak English, did it happen all at once? Think about the job or occupation that you perform, was your wisdom and skills acquired “all at once”?

No, of course not.

Therefore, you can understand how acquiring wisdom to attain Enlightenment does not occur “all at once”. The Words of The Buddha are sharing this important Teaching and, you can independently verify it for yourself. All of The Teachings of The Buddha are independently verifiable and is how a Practitioner would need to progress on The Path to Enlightenment to actually experience Enlightenment. It is through gradual training and gradual practice that leads to gradual progress of acquiring wisdom and awakening to the Enlightened mental state.

So, Enlightenment, and the Jhānas, are not experienced “all at once” and they are not experienced only in meditation.

These are The Words of The Buddha on the Jhānas.

“And what, Monks, is Right Concentration? Here, a Monk, distant from sense-desires, distant from unwholesome mental states, enters and resides in the first Jhāna, which is with thinking and pondering, based in seclusion, filled with excitement and joy. And with the subsiding of thinking and pondering, by gaining inner tranquility and oneness of mind, he enters and resides in the second Jhāna, which is without thinking and pondering, based in concentration, filled with excitement and joy. And with the fading away of excitement, remaining imperturbable (unable to be upset or excited; calm; serene), mindful and clearly aware, he experiences in himself the joy of which the Noble Ones say:

‘Peaceful is he who resides with equanimity and mindfulness’, he enters the third Jhāna. And, having given up pleasure and pain, and with the fading away of former gladness and sadness, he enters and resides in the fourth Jhāna, which is beyond pleasure and pain, and purified by equanimity and mindfulness. This is called Right Concentration.”

(Reference: DN 22)

The Buddha describes the four (4) Jhānas in multiple places within his Teachings. There are only four (4) Jhānas, even though you will see different numbers being taught by other people who have misunderstanding but, The Buddha only taught four (4) Jhānas, as you can see in his original words.

The Buddha describes the four (4) Jhānas in the same way in each Teaching. However, this is a reference to the eighth factor of The Eight Fold Path, Right Concentration. This is where he describes the Jhānas, in detail, and this is where the misunderstandings in the world are originating as people are not understanding what was taught by The Buddha.

Right Concentration is accomplished through a well developed meditation practice and practicing “singleness of mind” in daily life. The Buddha describes how to practice Right Concentration as part of The Path to Enlightenment in many of his other Teachings, which all integrate into The Eight Fold Path.

So, because Right Concentration is to practice meditation and developing singleness of mind, some people are misunderstanding the Jhānas as only being experienced in meditation and is something that is turned “on and off”.

This is confusing many people and leading to the inability to experience the Jhānas and Enlightenment.

As you can see in the original Words of The Buddha, he is describing enhanced qualities of mind that the mind “enters and resides” in as part of his description of the Jhānas.

The mind “resides” in the Jhānas.

He is describing the Jhānas as part of The Eight Fold Path because this is the byproduct or benefit, of practicing the entire core and central Teaching of The Buddha, The Eight Fold Path, which will guide you in training the mind to experience the Jhānas and attain Enlightenment.

One enhanced quality of mind that is experienced in the second Jhāna includes “oneness of mind” or “unification of the mind”.

In the unEnlightened state, there is a conscious mind and a subconscious mind, both of these are polluted and need to be purified to experience Enlightenment. However, the subconscious mind is much more heavily polluted than the conscious mind. A Practitioner in the unEnlightened state will have some awareness of the conscious mind but, they will lack awareness of the subconscious mind until, they are experiencing the second Jhāna.

Oneness of mind, or unification of the mind, is when the conscious mind and subconscious mind have merged. They have become “one”. The Practitioner will have “full awareness” of the entire mind, the mind becomes highly introspective being able to easily look inward. This is sometimes referred to as “the opening of the third eye, divine eye, or inward looking eye”.

When “oneness of mind” or “unification of mind” is experienced, there will no longer be a conscious and subconscious mind but instead, there will be just one mind - “oneness of mind” or “unification of the mind”. And, this enhanced quality is needed in order to purify the mind. You would be unable to purify the entire mind to attain Enlightenment if there was no awareness of the entire mind throughout your entire day.

So, to even get to the first Stage of Enlightenment, and Enlightenment itself, a Practitioner needs to experience “oneness of mind” or “unification of the mind” in the second Jhāna. And, this is an enhanced quality of mind that is experienced at all times during one’s day.

This is not a quality of mind that is only experienced during meditation and it is not an aspect of the mind that is turned “on or off”. Instead, the mind is “residing” in this mental quality. This is true for all the enhanced qualities of the Jhānas. They are experienced at all times and, are not turned “on or off”. As shared by The Buddha, the mind “enters” and “resides” in the Jhānas.

For anyone who has experienced the Jhānas, they know this to be true.

The translation of the word “Jhāna” is “mental absorption” and “meditative absorption” because, to experience the Jhānas, a Practitioner will have mentally absorbed a certain amount of The Teachings of The Buddha and be practicing those Teachings. And, the Practitioner will have conducted and benefited from a certain amount of meditation. The mind has mentally “absorbed” The Teachings of The Buddha, and is practicing The Teachings of The Buddha, to include but not limited to, meditation.

When a mind has absorbed something and is experiencing improved qualities of mind, those qualities are not being turned “on or off” nor only experienced during meditation. These mental qualities are always present, the mind is “residing” in these enhanced qualities.

The Jhānas are temporary, as the mind can regress out of the Jhānas if the mind becomes complacent. However, if one continues to remain determined, dedicated, and diligent, the qualities of the Jhānas will continue to persist in the mind, all the way through to Enlightenment and while the mind is experiencing Enlightenment.

The Jhānas are not something to boast about nor take pride in. If the mind is becoming arrogant or prideful due to experiencing the Jhānas, a Practitioner would be wise to “cut that off and let it go”. Otherwise, the mind is complacent and will ultimately regress out of the Jhānas and, this will hinder any further progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

So in short, you will need to experience the Jhānas to make progress on The Path to Enlightenment and to attain Enlightenment itself, and this is accomplished through learning, reflecting on (i.e. independently verifying), and practicing The Eight Fold Path, the core and central Teaching of The Buddha that you need to know inside and out to experience the Jhānas and Enlightenment.

Experiencing the Jhānas is like the “lightbulb is flickering”, providing an indication to you that the mind has put together The Eight Fold Path well enough to experience these heightened qualities of mind.

The Practitioner will know they are experiencing the Jhānas because they will notice the improved qualities of mind as described by The Buddha in Right Concentration of The Eight Fold Path.

When experiencing the Jhānas it is a significant indication that a Practitioner is making tangible progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

It would be unwise to become arrogant, prideful, or boastful about anything at all, to include experiencing the Jhānas. If so, those unwholesome aspects of the mind would only create a lack of further progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

Once a Practitioner is experiencing the Jhānas, it is time for the real work to begin. The mind is now prepared to fully eradicate all of the pollutions of mind. The needed enhanced qualities have been acquired and it is time to start focusing on the elimination of The Ten Fetters starting with, the first three.

Eliminating the first three fetters/taints/pollutions of mind, a Practitioner will then experience the first Stage of Enlightenment. From the first Stage of Enlightenment, the mind will no longer regress. In the first Stage of Enlightenment, one has progressed past the preliminary phases of the Jhānas, where the mind can regress, and is now firmly in the first Stage of Enlightenment, where the mind will not regress.

But, this is not a time to become complacent but instead, learn, reflect on (i.e. independently verify), and practice the elimination of The Ten Fetters. Your practice will need to pivot towards actively learning, reflecting on (i.e. independently verifying), and practicing to eliminate The Ten Fetters.

A Practitioner will need to know what is each of The Ten Fetters, what are the symptoms, how to eliminate the fetters, and how to know they are eliminated. This can all be learned in one of our annual retreats titled “Purification of The Mind to Attain Enlightenment”. In this retreat, there are individual classes devoted to learning each individual fetter of The Ten Fetters.

The Jhānas await you. These improved qualities of mind await you. Enlightenment awaits you.

The only thing holding you back is your own determination, dedication, and diligence to learn, reflect (i.e. independently verify), and practice The Path to Enlightenment, based on The Words of The Buddha, as taught by The Buddha.

Meditate, Monks, do not be complacent, lest you will regret it later. This is my instruction to you. (Reference: SN 43.1)

Be well and enjoy your journey...

To learn more about the Jhānas please see this recorded online class.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wgxpbmW6bO4&list=PLFuun1phKgQn_7rDGqXFDF-Pz4cRrIBa_&index=3

Chapter 27

Reflection on Every Step Can Be Liberation to Nibbāna (Enlightenment)

Certainly, Monks, I say fetter-destruction (taints) depends on:

The first Jhāna;

The second Jhāna;

The third Jhāna;

The fourth Jhāna:

The sphere of infinite space;

The sphere of infinite consciousness;

The sphere of nothingness;

The sphere of neither perception-nor-non-perception;

The ending of perception and feeling

Monks, it is said: **I say so fetter-destruction depends on the first Jhāna, And, for what reason, is this said?**

Consider the Monk who, **distant from sense desires, distant from evil ideas, enters and resides in the first Jhāna**, which is with thinking and pondering, based in seclusion, filled with excitement and joy: whatever occurs there of form, feeling, perception, volitional formation (choices/decisions) or consciousness, he sees wholly as impermanent objects, as discontentedness, as a disease, a boil, a sting, a hurt, an affliction, as something alien, inferior, empty, not the self. He turns his mind away from such objects and, having done so, brings the mind towards the deathless element (Enlightenment) with the thought: This is the peace, this the summit, just this: the stilling of the mind-activity, the renouncing of all rebirth, the destroying of craving, calm, ending, the cool.

And steadfast therein he wins to fetter-destruction; if not wins to fetter-destruction, **just by reason of that Teaching energy, that Teaching sweetness** he snaps the five lower fetters and, being not subject to return from that world (heavenly realm), becomes completely cool there.

Monks, suppose an archer or his Student were to practice on a strawman or heap of clay: presently he would become a long-shot, a rapid shot, a piercer of great thicknesses: even so, Monks, the Monk who, is distant from sense

desires, is distant from evil ideas, enters and resides in **the first Jhāna**, wherein applied and sustained thought works, which is with thinking and pondering, based in seclusion, filled with excitement and joy.

Certainly, Monks, it is said: I say fetter-destruction depends on the first Jhāna; and it is for this reason that it is said.

(In the case of fetter-destruction depending on the second Jhāna, the third Jhāna, the fourth Jhāna, The Perfectly Enlightened One spoke similarly to that of the first Jhāna.)

Monks, it is said: I say so fetter-destruction depends on **the sphere of infinite space**, And, for what reason, is this said?

By passing wholly beyond perceptions of form, by the passing away of the perceptions of sense-reactions, unattentive to the perceptions of the many, he enters and resides in the sphere of infinite space, thinking: Space is infinite.

In **the sphere of infinite space and sees form, feeling, perception, volitional formation (choices/decisions) or consciousness**, he sees wholly as impermanent objects, as discontentedness, as a disease, a boil, a sting, a hurt, an affliction, as something alien, inferior, empty, not the self, turns his mind away from that and brings it towards the deathless element (Enlightenment) with the thought: This is the peace, this the summit, just this: the stilling of mind-activity, the renouncing of all rebirth basis, the destroying of craving, calm, ending, the cool, wins to fetter-destruction or snapping the five lower fetters is born spontaneously and becomes completely cool.

And steadfast therein he wins to fetter-destruction; if not wins to fetter-destruction, just by reason of **that Teaching energy, that Teaching sweetness** he snaps the five lower fetters and is born spontaneously and, being not subject to return from that world (heavenly realm), becomes completely cool there.

Monks, suppose an archer or his Student were to practice on a strawman or heap of clay; presently he would become a long-shot, a rapid shot, a piercer of great thicknesses: even so, Monks, the Monk who, by passing wholly beyond perceptions of form, by the passing away of the perceptions of sense-reactions, unattentive to the perceptions of the many, he enters and resides in the sphere of infinite space, thinking: Space is infinite.

Certainly, Monks, it is said: I say fetter-destruction depends on **the sphere of infinite space**; and it is for this reason that it is said.

(In the case of fetter-destruction depending on the sphere of infinite consciousness, the sphere of nothingness, The Perfectly Enlightened One also spoke similarly to that of the sphere of infinite space.)

Thus, Monks, as far as reflection prevails there is penetrative wisdom. Moreover, Monks, those spheres - both the attainment of **the sphere of neither perception-nor-non-perception and the ending of perception and feeling** - are ones which, I say, ought to be properly made known by those who are in the Jhānas, skilled in the attainment, skilled in emerging from there, after they have attained and emerged from there.

(Reference: AN 9.36)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that to experience Enlightenment it is dependent on the attainment of the first, second, third, and fourth Jhānas. It is through a Practitioner's gradual training and gradual practice of these Teachings that it will produce gradual progress.

A Practitioner needs to have a well developed practice of The Eight Fold Path to progress to the Jhānas and beyond. Every Practitioner who progresses towards the attainment of Enlightenment will need to eliminate The Ten Fetters to attain Enlightenment. The Practitioner will need to progress to the Jhānas first through a well developed practice of The Eight Fold Path.

From that point, a Practitioner can then start focusing on the elimination of The Ten Fetters to progress into the first, second, third, and fourth Stages of Enlightenment.

You can think of the attainment of the Jhānas as preliminary phases the mind experiences prior to the first Stage of Enlightenment. Without experiencing the Jhānas through a comprehensive and well developed practice of The Eight Fold Path, a Practitioner would be unable to progress to the ultimate goal of Enlightenment.

All the preliminary work a Practitioner is doing to progress to the Jhānas through learning, reflecting, and practicing The Eight Fold Path can be considered as preparing the mind to eliminate The Ten Fetters. A Practitioner would be unable to just eliminate The Ten Fetters but instead, would need to develop a foundation in the core and central Teachings to prepare the mind to release the fetters/taints/pollution of mind described in The Ten Fetters.

Chapter 28

The Four Noble Truths

Monks, there are these Four Noble Truths.

What four?

The noble truth of discontentedness,
the noble truth of the cause of discontentedness,
the noble truth of the elimination of discontentedness,
the noble truth of the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.

And what, Monks, is the noble truth of discontentedness?

It should be said: The Five Aggregates subject to clinging; that is, the form aggregate subject to clinging, the feeling aggregate subject to clinging, the perception aggregate subject to clinging, the volitional formation aggregate subject to clinging, the consciousness aggregate subject to clinging. This is called the noble truth of discontentedness.

And what, Monks, is the noble truth of the cause of discontentedness?

It is this craving which leads to renewed existence, accompanied by excitement and desire, seeking excitement here and there; that is craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence, craving for extermination. This is called the noble truth of the cause of discontentedness.

And what, Monks, is the noble truth of the elimination of discontentedness?

It is the remainderless fading away and elimination of the same craving, the giving up and letting go of it, freedom from it, non-reliance on it. This is called the noble truth of the elimination of discontentedness.

And what, Monks, is the noble truth of the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness?

It is this Noble Eight Fold Path, that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration. This is called the noble truth of the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.

These, Monks, are The Four Noble Truths.

Therefore, Monks, an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the cause of discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the elimination of discontentedness’; an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.’

(Reference: SN 56.13)

This is Gotama Buddha’s Teaching on The Four Noble Truths where he explains the problem of the unEnlightened mind, the cause of the problem, the elimination of the problem, and the path leading to the complete elimination of the problem.

A Practitioner who learns, reflects, and practices The Four Noble Truths has deeply established “Right View” and has made the breakthrough towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

This is a primary, fundamental, and foundational Teaching needed by every Practitioner to attain Enlightenment.

Detailed explanation of The Four Noble Truths is available in this same book series found in Chapter 4 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

It is suggested that you first learn The Four Noble Truths through (Volume 1). The explanation of The Four Noble Truths shared in that book will help you to gain insight into this important Teaching in a way that can be applied to your life to experience the breakthrough and establish Right View. (Volume 1) provides extensive details on The Four Noble Truths and it is best to learn the content in that book prior to investigating what is shared in this book.

1.) The First Noble Truth titled, “the noble truth of discontentedness”, establishes “the problem” with the unEnlightened mind through an understanding of The Five Aggregates.

The Five Aggregates are what makes “a being, a being”. A living being will have all five aggregates, also known as “elements” or “collections”.

The Five Aggregates

Form: the physical body.

Feelings: results of experiences in the mind through The Six Sense Bases.

Perceptions: a belief or opinion based on how things seem.

Volitional Formations: choices or decisions that are made.

Consciousness: the mind.

It is when the mind “clings” or “holds on” to The Five Aggregates that the mind experiences continued discontentedness. Observing the impermanent nature of The Five Aggregates, a human being can “let go” no longer experiencing discontentedness due to

“holding on” to The Five Aggregates experiencing constant rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth.

Due to clinging to The Five Aggregates and a being coming into existence, the mind will experience discontentedness.

All unEnlightened beings will experience discontentedness.

Discontentedness: Gotama Buddha describes three feelings as discontent due to their nature of being based on impermanent conditions. The goal of these Teachings is to eliminate discontentedness of mind providing the mind a permanent place to reside in Enlightenment.

- A pleasant feeling (happiness, excitement, elation, thrill, exhilaration, euphoria, etc.)
- A painful feeling (sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fear, stress, etc.)
- A feeling that is neither painful-nor-pleasant (boredom, loneliness, melancholy, shyness, displeased, uncomfortable, unsatisfied, etc.)

2.) The Second Noble Truth titled, “the noble truth of the cause of discontentedness”, explains the underlying cause of why the mind experiences discontentedness.

It is craving/desire/attachment that causes the mind to experience discontentedness.

Craving/Desire/Attachment/Wants/Expectations/Grasping/Holding/Clinging: a mental longing for something with a strong eagerness. The mind pulling in a direction for objects of its affection.

The Buddha provides specific cravings that the unEnlightened mind will experience. It is “craving which leads to renewed existence”. Not only does craving cause discontentedness but craving is the fuel that leads to rebirth. If there is craving/desire/attachment in the mind, a being will experience rebirth.

The unEnlightened mind will seek pleasant feelings chasing after the objects of its affection. The Buddha explains this as craving that is “accompanied by excitement and desire, seeking excitement here and there; that is craving for sensual pleasures”. The unEnlightened mind will pull in the direction of the objects of its affection and if it gets what it “wants”, the mind experiences temporary pleasant feelings. If the mind does not get what it “wants”, it will experience painful feelings. Many times the mind does not know what it “wants” and will experience feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant.

Craving/desire/attachment keeps the mind in a continuous cycle of discontentedness never being able to find peace or be at ease because it is constantly chasing after something experiencing pleasant feelings, painful feelings, and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant.

The Buddha further explains how the mind has “craving for existence” which is a mental longing with a strong eagerness to exist in the world. With the mind holding on to existence, a being will continue to experience discontentedness and discontentedness in future existences within The Cycle of Rebirth due to the craving/desire/attachment in the mind for continued existence. If there is birth, there is going to be discontentedness.

The mind also can have “craving for extermination” or death. This would be a being who is interested in death through suicide or other destructive conduct. If the mind has craving/desire to eliminate life, the mind is not in the middle and will experience discontentedness and rebirth due to this craving.

All craving/desire/attachment will produce discontentedness in the mind. There is no such thing as a wholesome craving/desire/attachment.

3.) The Third Noble Truth titled, “the noble truth of the elimination of discontentedness” helps a Practitioner understand that to eliminate discontentedness of mind, one needs to eliminate craving/desire/attachment.

Through training the mind to eliminate mental longing with a strong eagerness, the mind can reside peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy because it is no longer seeking pleasant feelings through impermanent conditions and, thus, welcoming in painful feelings and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant. Instead, the mind is trained to be inwardly peaceful and content or “satisfied with what is”.

The Buddha explains the elimination of discontentedness as “it is the remainderless fading away and elimination of the same craving, the giving up and letting go of it, freedom from it, non-reliance on it”.

Through training the mind to eliminate craving/desire/attachment, the mind can reside peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. Through training the mind to no longer chase after the objects of its affection, it can find inner peace no longer experiencing conditioned temporary feelings that are unsatisfactory. Instead, the mind can experience unconditioned mental qualities such as peacefulness, calmness, serenity, and contentedness with joy.

The inner feelings of the Enlightened mind are not based on impermanent conditions but instead, the mind is always peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy not based on temporary conditions. This is accomplished through training the mind to eliminate craving/desire/attachment as described in this entire book series.

Through training the mind in this way, the mind can eliminate 100% of all discontent feelings.

4.) The Fourth Noble Truth titled, “the noble truth of the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness” explains that the way to entirely eliminate discontentedness is through The Eight Fold Path.

It is The Eight Fold Path that provides the complete and perfect solution for how to actively train the mind to eliminate 100% of all discontentedness. While craving/desire/attachment is the cause of the problem and the solution to eliminate discontentedness is to eliminate all craving/desire/attachment, there is an entire path one needs to learn, reflect on, and practice to liberate the mind from discontentedness.

The Buddha explains this as “it is this Noble Eight Fold Path, that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration”.

The Four Noble Truths is the primary core Teaching that establishes Right View helping a Practitioner to examine the problem, cause of the problem, solution to the problem, and the path leading to the complete elimination of the problem. It is The Eight Fold Path that is the central Teaching of The Buddha with the vast majority of his Teachings integrating into The Eight Fold Path in one way or another.

It is through learning, reflecting, and practicing The Eight Fold Path that the mind is trained to be able to completely eliminate all unwholesome decisions that motivate unskillful conduct that leads to unwholesome results. Through training the mind in The Eight Fold Path, it is transformed into making only wholesome decisions that motivate skillful conduct that leads to wholesome results.

Through practicing The Eight Fold Path for an extended period of time, the mind and one's life is completely transformed into living "a better way of life" offered through The Buddha's Teachings.

His Teachings are not rules to follow but instead, guidance to help a Practitioner deeply understand The Natural Laws of Existence related to how the mind and the world functions so that through this new found wisdom, one can choose to train their own mind to function through these natural laws. It is a real struggle and difficult to live in a world that the mind does not understand. It is The Buddha's Teachings that explain how the mind and the world functions through The Natural Laws of Existence. Understanding and practicing The Natural Laws of Existence the mind can be peaceful and at ease no longer struggling through countless difficult and complicated decisions but instead, employ the wisdom found in these Teachings through one's free will wise decision making in a well developed life practice.

The Buddha shares training guidance to help the mind eliminate the taints or pollution deep inside the mind that is inhibiting one from experiencing the brilliance or brightness of being able to live with all beings peacefully and in harmony with one another through focusing on training one's own mind and allowing others to do the same.

The Buddha encourages Students to make an effort to understand and practice The Four Noble Truths as the first breakthrough into understanding why the mind is discontent and how to eliminate 100% of all discontentedness through sharing "an effort should be made to understand: 'This is discontentedness'; an effort should be made to understand: 'This is the cause of discontentedness'; an effort should be made to understand: 'This is the elimination of discontentedness'; an effort should be made to understand: 'This is the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.'"

An Enlightened being knows the peace and tranquility of living life through this Enlightened wisdom of The Buddha. The mind is at ease and never discontent.

This can only be accomplished through one's own efforts and dedication to progressing on The Path to Enlightenment.

The Buddha nor your Teacher can give you Enlightenment. It is only you who can become determined, dedicated, and diligent to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to experience this transformation in your life.

Through making the effort to deeply understand and practice this new found wisdom, the mind will then understand The Natural Laws of Existence discovering a world and life that

you never knew existed. A life where the mind is free from the constant struggles and difficulties of daily life but instead, can function with ease and in harmony with all beings.

Making the breakthrough to The Four Noble Truths the mind can take a few breaths knowing the problem, the cause of the problem, the solution to the problem, and the complete solution to the problem as The Path to Enlightenment.

Without this breakthrough, it will be very challenging for a Practitioner to understand anything else that The Buddha has shared to help you eliminate 100% of all the discontentedness in the mind.

Detailed explanation of The Four Noble Truths is available in this same book series found in Chapter 4 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1) and you can seek guidance with the author of this book to breakthrough to understanding The Four Noble Truths.

Chapter 29

The Four Noble Truths and Dependent Origination

And what, Monks, **is the Noble Truth of discontentedness?**

Birth is discontentedness, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure, and despair are discontentedness. Not to get what one desires is discontentedness. In short, The Five Aggregates based on clinging are discontentedness.

And what, Monks, **is the Noble Truth of the arising of discontentedness**

Conditioned by ignorance (unknowing of true reality) the volitional formations (choices/decisions) come to be;
Conditioned by the volitional activities, consciousness;
Conditioned by consciousness, name-and-form;
Conditioned by name-and-form, the six sense bases;
Conditioned by the six sense bases, contact;
Conditioned by contact, feeling;
Conditioned by feeling, craving;
Conditioned by craving, clinging;
Conditioned by clinging, existence;
Conditioned by existence, birth;
Conditioned by birth, aging-and-death, sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure and despair come to pass.

This is the arising of the whole mass of discontentedness.

This, Monks, is called the Noble Truth of the arising of discontentedness.

And what, Monks, **is the Noble Truth of the elimination of discontentedness?**

From the complete fading out and ending of ignorance (unknowing of true reality) comes the ending of the volitional formations (choices/decisions);

From the ending of the volitional formations (choices/decisions), the ending of consciousness;

From the ending of consciousness, the ending of name-and-form;

From the ending of name-and-form, the ending of the six sense bases;

From the ending of the six sense bases, the ending of contact;

From the ending of contact, the ending of feeling;

From the ending of feeling, the ending of craving;

From the ending of craving, the ending of clinging;

From the ending of clinging, the ending of existence;

From the ending of existence, the ending of birth;

From the ending of birth, aging-and-death, sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure and despair comes the ending of this whole mass of discontentedness.

This, Monks, is called the elimination of discontentedness.

And what, Monks, **is the Noble Truth of the practice that leads to the elimination of discontentedness?**

It is just this Noble Eight Fold Path: Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration. This is called the Noble Truth of the practice that leads to the elimination of discontentedness.

(Reference: AN 3.61)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he combines The Four Noble Truths with Dependent Origination providing a full picture of what is discontentedness, the cause of discontentedness, the elimination of discontentedness, and the path to the complete elimination of discontentedness.

The Four Noble Truths is a detailed and concise Teaching that explains discontentedness, the cause of discontentedness, the elimination of discontentedness, and the path to the complete elimination of discontentedness.

Dependent Origination is a detailed and concise Teaching that explains the arising of discontentedness and the cause of rebirth.

These two (2) Teachings combined provide a more detailed and concise way of understanding the cause of discontentedness and how to eliminate it from the mind.

Detailed explanation of The Four Noble Truths is available in this same book series found in Chapter 4 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

Detailed explanation of Dependent Origination is available in this same book series found in Chapter 14 of the book “The First Stage of Enlightenment (Stream-Enterer)” (Volume 5).

Chapter 30

A Stream-Enterer is Worth More Than Being a Wheel-Turning Monarch

Monks, although a Wheel-Turning Monarch, having exercised supreme sovereign rulership over the four continents, with the breakup of the body, after death, is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world, in the company of the heavenly beings of the heavenly realm, and there in the Nandana Grove, accompanied by an entourage of heavenly nymphs, he enjoys himself supplied and endowed with the five cords of heavenly sensual pleasure, still, as he does not possess four things, he is not freed from hell, the animal realm, and the realm of afflicted spirits, not freed from the plane of misery, the bad destinations, the nether world.

Although, Monks, a Noble Disciple maintains himself by lumps of almsfood and wears rag-robles, still, as he possesses four things, he is freed from hell, the animal realm, and the realm of afflicted spirits, freed from the plane of misery, the bad destinations, the nether world.

What are the four?

- (1) Here, Monks, the Noble Disciple possesses confirmed confidence in The Buddha thus: The Tathāgata is an Arahant, Perfectly Enlightened, accomplished in true wisdom and conduct, fortunate, knower of the worlds, unsurpassed leader of persons to be tamed, Teacher of heavenly beings and humans, The Enlightened One, The Fortunate One.
- (2) He possesses confirmed confidence in The Teachings thus: The Teachings are well expounded by The Perfectly Enlightened One, directly visible, immediate, inviting one to come and see, applicable, to be personally experienced by the wise.
- (3) He possesses confirmed confidence in The Community thus: The Community of The Perfectly Enlightened One's disciples is practicing the wholesome way, practicing the straight way, practicing the true way, practicing the proper way; that is, the four pairs of persons, the eight types of individuals - this Community of The Perfectly Enlightened One's disciples is worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respectful salutation, the unsurpassed field of merit for the world.

- (4) He possesses the virtues (moral conduct) dear to the Noble Ones - unbroken, untorn, unblemished, unblotched, liberating, praised by the wise, not misunderstood, and leading to concentration.

He possesses these four things. And, Monks, between the obtaining of sovereignty over the four continents and the obtaining of the four things, the obtaining of sovereignty over the four continents is not worth a sixteenth part of the obtaining of the four things.

(Reference: SN 55.1)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a Practitioner attaining the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer is more beneficial than a Wheel-Turning Monarch.

A Stream-Enterer would have needed to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to develop wisdom and improve the condition of the mind to eliminate the first three (3) fetters of The Ten Fetters. They would be able to observe that the condition of their mind has significantly improved from progressing on The Path to Enlightenment.

A Wheel-Turning Monarch is an individual who is a leader of a large population of people who chooses to guide them based on The Teachings of The Buddha.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, these were actual Kings.

Today, we could think of a President, Prime Minister, Kings, Queens, politicians, and others who lead a large population of people through wise decision making based on The Natural Laws of Existence shared in The Teachings of The Buddha.

A Wheel-Turning Monarch is a leader of a population of people who decides to implement rules for the population based on these Teachings. With their influence to be able to set rules and guidelines for the population, it is seen as beneficial to guide a population of people through these good wholesome Teachings.

These individuals have deep wisdom of The Teachings and choose to practice them for their own life while also making decisions about their leadership of a large population of people based on The Natural Laws of Existence, specifically, The Natural Law of Kamma.

They are a role model of these Teachings, in that they are setting an example for others to observe that benefits the population of people through more closely understanding how to practice The Teachings in daily life through the example displayed by the “Wheel-Turning Monarch” or today, a leader of a large population of people.

The Natural Laws of Existence are a much higher law than any laws that could be created by human beings. Therefore, for a King or leader to function through these Natural Laws of Existence, this would lead to wholesome outcomes for large groups of people. A Wheel-Turning Monarch has significant influence to help large populations of people through structuring their Kingdom and how it operates based on these natural laws as

this would help individuals in the population more readily progress towards Enlightenment.

But, The Buddha shares that a Practitioner attaining the first Stage of Enlightenment is more beneficial than one who is guiding an entire population of people based on rules for society that are based on these Teachings.

Here, The Buddha is sharing how your attainment of increased levels of training and results from the training is the ultimate goal and what is more beneficial.

A Stream-Enterer will be able to benefit a Community of Practitioners in that their wisdom is able to be shared with others who will then be able to experience the same results of significantly reduced discontentedness and the other benefits mentioned in Volume 5 - Chapter 21. While it would be most wise to seek guidance from a Teacher who has attained Enlightenment, having a Stream-Enterer or any other Practitioner who has attained any of The Four Stages of Enlightenment would be highly beneficial to a population of people as they could gain insight and understanding of The Teachings from those Practitioners.

In this Teaching, The Buddha explains that a Stream-Enterer is more beneficial, or more helpful, than a “Wheel-Turning Monarch”.

Detailed explanation of the first Stage of Enlightenment is available in this same book series found in the book “The First Stage of Enlightenment (Stream-Enterer)” (Volume 5).

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha's Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 21-30)

<https://youtu.be/qlyE4DrafBM>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 329 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha's Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 21-30)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--329---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Buddhas-Way---Volume-10---Chapter-21-30-e1khpur/a-a867n5e>

Chapter 31

To Proclaim Stream-Entry to Yourself

Householder,

When the fivefold guilty dread is eliminated in the Noble Disciple and he is possessed of the four limbs of Stream-Entry, and has well seen and well penetrated the noble discipline by wisdom...

He may, if he so aspires, himself proclaim thus of himself: I am one who has cut off the doom of hell, of rebirth in the womb of an animal, in the realm of afflicted spirits; cut off is the Waste, the Ill-bourn, the Downfall.

A Stream-Enterer am I, one not doomed to the Downfall, assured, bound for Enlightenment.

Now, Householder, **what is the fivefold guilty dread** that is eliminated in him?

- (1) It is that guilty dread, Householder, which **he who kills** causes in this same visible state, as a result of his killing; it is that guilty dread about the life to come, which he who kills causes; also that discontentedness and sadness which he experiences. By abstaining from killing he causes no guilty dread in this same visible state nor for the life to come; he experiences no discontentedness and sadness. Thus in him who abstains from killing that guilty dread is eliminated.
- (2) It is that guilty dread, Householder, which he who **takes what is not given** causes in this same visible state, as a result of his taking what is not given; it is that guilty dread about the life to come, which he who takes what is not given causes; also that discontentedness and sadness which he experiences. By abstaining from taking what is not given he causes no guilty dread in this same visible state nor for the life to come; he experiences no discontentedness and sadness. Thus in him who abstains from taking what is not given that guilty dread is eliminated.
- (3) It is that guilty dread, Householder, which he who **is a wrongdoer in sexual desires** causes in this same visible state, as a result of his being a wrongdoer in sexual desires; it is that guilty dread about the life to come, which he who is a wrongdoer in sexual desires causes; also that discontentedness and sadness which he experiences. By abstaining from being a wrongdoer in sexual desires he causes no guilty dread in

this same visible state nor for the life to come; he experiences no discontentedness and sadness. Thus in him who abstains from being a wrongdoer in sexual desires that guilty dread is eliminated.

- (4) It is that guilty dread, Householder, which he who **tells lies** causes in this same visible state, as a result of his telling lies; it is that guilty dread about the life to come, which he who tells lies causes; also that discontentedness and sadness which he experiences. By abstaining from telling lies he causes no guilty dread in this same visible state nor for the life to come he experiences no discontentedness and sadness. Thus in him who abstains from telling lies that guilty dread is eliminated.
- (5) It is that guilty dread, Householder, which he who **is under the influence of liquor fermented and distilled and so given to heedlessness** (substances that cause heedlessness) - the guilty dread which, as a result of these things, he causes in this same visible state, also about the life to come; also that discontentedness and sadness these are not caused by him who abstains from occasions (or places) for taking liquor fermented and distilled (substances that cause heedlessness). Thus in him who so abstains that guilty dread is eliminated.

These are **the five guilty dreads** that are eliminated,

And of **what four** limbs of Stream-Entry does he possess?

- (1) Herein, Householder, the Noble Disciple is possessed of **unwavering confidence in The Perfectly Enlightened One** thus: The Perfectly Enlightened One is an Arahant, perfectly Enlightened, accomplished in true wisdom and conduct, fortunate, knower of the worlds, unsurpassed leader of persons to be tamed, Teacher of heavenly beings and humans, the Enlightened One
- (2) He is possessed of **unwavering confidence in The Teachings**, thus: The Teachings are well expounded by The Perfectly Enlightened One, directly visible, immediate, inviting one to come and see, applicable, to be personally experienced by the wise.
- (3) He is possessed of **unwavering confidence in The Community**, thus: The Community of The Perfectly Enlightened One's disciples is practicing the wholesome way, practicing the straight way, practicing the true way, practicing the proper way; that is, the four pairs of persons, the eight types of individuals—this Community of The Perfectly Enlightened One's disciples is worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respectful salutation, the unsurpassed field of merit for the world.

- (4) He is possessed of **the virtues (moral conduct) dear to the Noble Ones**, in the virtues (moral conduct) dear to the Noble Ones, unbroken, untorn, unblemished, unblotched, liberating, praised by the wise, not misunderstood, and leading to concentration.

These four limbs of Stream-Entry he possesses.

And what in him is **the noble discipline** that is well seen and well penetrated by wisdom?

Herein, Householder, the Noble Disciple thus **reflects: This being, that is. By the arising of this, that arises. This not being, that is not. By the ending of this, that comes to be eliminated.** That is to say: Because of ignorance (unknowing of true reality), the volitional formations (choices/decisions); because of the volitional formations (choices/decisions), consciousness; because of consciousness, name-and-form; because of name-and-form, the six sense bases; because of the six sense bases, contact; because of contact, feeling; because of feeling, craving; because of craving, clinging; because of clinging, existence; because of existence, birth; because of birth, aging-and-death, grief, displeasure and pain, sadness and despair come into being. Thus is the arising of this whole mass of discontentedness.

But with the diminishing and complete elimination without remainder of ignorance (unknowing of true reality), the ending of the volitional formations (choices/decisions); with the ending of the volitional formations (choices/decisions), the ending of consciousness; with the ending of consciousness, the ending of name-and-form; with the ending of name-and-form, the ending of the six sense bases; with the ending of the six sense bases, the ending of contact; with the ending of contact, the ending of feeling; with the ending of feeling, the ending of craving; with the ending of craving, the ending of clinging; with the ending of clinging, the ending of existence; with the ending of existence, the ending of birth; with the ending of birth, aging-and-death, grief, displeasure and pain, sadness and despair are eliminated to become. Thus is the ending of this whole mass of discontentedness, and this for him is the noble discipline well seen, well penetrated by wisdom.

Now, Householder, since for the Noble Disciple **these five guilty dreads are eliminated, and he is possessed of these four limbs of Stream-Entry, and for him this noble discipline is well seen and well penetrated by wisdom.**

He, if he so aspires, himself may proclaim of himself: Destroyed is hell for me, destroyed is birth in the womb of an animal, destroyed is the realm of afflicted spirits, destroyed is rebirth in the Waste, the Ill-bourn, the Downfall, in hell; a Stream-Enterer am I, one not doomed to the Downfall, one assured, bound for Enlightenment.

(Reference: AN 10.92)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the fivefold guilty dread and the four limbs of Stream-Entry.

There are multiple aspects of training a Practitioner will need to accomplish in order to attain the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer. Namely, a Practitioner will need to eliminate the first three (3) fetters of The Ten Fetters along with multiple other aspects of learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings to attain Stream-Entry.

Here, The Buddha is sharing two aspects of one's practice that will need to be well developed to attain Stream-Entry but, this is not being shared as an exclusive list. There are more comprehensive Teachings shared in a previous volume of this book series that provide guidance on attaining the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer.

The Fivefold Guilty Dread are to fully and deeply practice The Five Precepts. A Practitioner who attains the first Stage of Enlightenment will be deeply practicing The Five Precepts.

Detailed explanation of The Five Precepts is available in this same book series found in Chapter 7 of the book "Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment" (Volume 1).

The Four Limbs of Stream-Entry are to have unwavering confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, The Community, and to be practicing wholesome moral conduct found in The Eight Fold Path described as Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood.

Once a Practitioner attains the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer, the mind will not regress or backslide out of this Stage of Enlightenment. The Buddha explains this as "A Stream-Enterer am I, one not doomed to the Downfall, assured, bound for Enlightenment".

A Stream-Enterer will attain Enlightenment in no more than seven (7) rebirths.

The Buddha explains further that a Stream-Enterer will have penetrative wisdom related to Dependent Origination when he explains "And what in him is the noble discipline that is well seen and well penetrated by wisdom?". The Buddha explains a high-level overview of Dependent Origination pointing to this Teaching as one that a Stream-Enterer will deeply understand.

Detailed explanation of the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer is available in this same book series found in Chapter 14 of the book "The First Stage of Enlightenment (Stream-Enterer)" (Volume 5).

Chapter 32

Three Kinds of Wonders

There are three kinds of wonders, Kevaddha, which I, having myself understood and realized them, have made known to others.

And what are the three?

- (1) The mystic wonder,
- (2) The wonder of mind-reading, and
- (3) The wonder of instruction.

— — —

(1) And what, Kevaddha, is the mystic wonder?

In this case, Kevaddha, suppose that a brother enjoys the possession, in various ways, of mystic power - from being one he becomes multiform, from being multiform he becomes one: from being visible he becomes invisible: he passes without hindrance to the further side of a wall or a battlement or a mountain, as if through air: he penetrates up and down through solid ground, as if through water: he walks on water without dividing it, as if on solid ground: he travels cross-legged through the sky, like the birds on wing: he touches and feels with the hand even the Moon and the Sun, beings of mystic power and potency though they be: he reaches, even in the body, up to the heavenly realm. And some believer, of trusting heart should behold him doing so. Then that believer should announce the fact to an unbeliever, saying: Wonderful, Sir, and marvelous is the mystic power and potency of that Ascetic.... Then that unbeliever should say to him: Well, Sir! there is a certain charm called the Gandhāra Charm. It is by his own ability that he performs all this.

Now what think you, Kevaddha? Might not the unbeliever so say?

'Yes, Sir; he might.'

Well, Kevaddha! It is because I perceive danger in the practice of mystic wonders, that I disagree, and refrain from, and am reluctant to perform.

(2) And what, Kevaddha, is the wonder of mind-reading?

Suppose, in this case, Kevaddha, that a brother can make known the heart and the feelings, the reasonings and the thoughts, of other beings, of other individuals, saying: So and so is in your mind. You are thinking of such and such a matter. Thus and thus are your emotions. And some believer, of trusting heart, should see him doing so. Then that believer should announce the fact to an unbeliever, saying: Wonderful, Sir, and marvelous is the mystic power and potency of that Ascetic... Then that unbeliever should say to him: Well, Sir! there is a charm called the Jewel Charm. It is by his own ability that he performs all this.

Now what think you, Kevaddha? Might not the unbeliever so say?

'Yes, Sir; he might.'

Well, Kevaddha! It is because I perceive danger in the practice of the wonder of mind-reading, that I disagree, and refrain from, and am reluctant to perform.

(3) And what, Kevaddha, is the wonder of instruction?

Suppose, Kevaddha, that a brother teaches thus: Reason in this way, do not reason in that way. Consider thus and not thus. Get rid of this disposition, train yourself, and remain, in that.

This, Kevaddha, is what is called the wonder of instruction.

And further, Kevaddha, suppose that a Tathāgata is born into the world, one who has won the truth, an Arahant, a fully awakened one, abounding in wisdom and goodness, joyful, who knows all worlds, unsurpassed as a guide to humans willing to be led, a Teacher for gods and humans, a Perfectly Enlightened One, a Buddha. He, by himself, thoroughly knows and sees, as it were, face to face this universe, - including the worlds above of the gods, the Brahmās, and the Māras, and the world below with its Ascetics and Brāhmans, its princes and peoples, - and having known it, he makes his wisdom known to others. The truth, lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its completion, does he proclaim, both in the spirit and in the letter, the higher life does he make known, in all its fullness and in all its purity.

A Householder or one of his children, or a man of inferior birth in any class listens to that truth; and on hearing it he has confidence in The Tathāgata (the one who has found the truth); and when he is possessed of that confidence, he considers thus within himself:

Full of hindrances is household life, a path for the dust of passion. Free as the air is the life of him who has renounced all worldly things. How difficult is it for the man who dwells at home to live the higher life in all its fullness, in all its purity, in all its bright perfection! Let me then cut off my hair and beard, let me clothe myself in the orange-colored robes, and let me go forth from the household life into the homeless life?

Then, before long, renouncing his portion of wealth, be it great or small, leaving behind his circle of relatives, be they many or be they few, he cuts off his hair and beard, he clothes himself in the orange-colored robes, and he goes forth from the household life into the homeless life.

When he has thus become an Ascetic, he lives self-restrained by that restraint that should be binding on an Ascetic. Uprightness is his delight, and he sees danger in the least of those things he should avoid. He adopts, and trains himself in, the precepts. He encompasses himself with wholesome deeds in actions and speech. Pure are his means of livelihood, wholesome is his conduct, guarded the door of his senses. Mindful and self-possessed he is altogether joyful.

And how, Kevaddha, is his conduct wholesome?

In this, Kevaddha, that the Monk, putting away the killing of living beings, abandoning the destruction of life. The stick and the sword he has laid aside, and reluctant to roughness, and full of mercy, he resides compassionate and kind to all creatures that have life. Kevaddha, this is called ‘the wonder of instruction’.

With his mind thus serene, made pure, translucent, cultured, free of evil, flexible, ready to act, firm and imperturbable (unable to be upset or excited; calm; serene), he directs and bends down his mind to the wisdom of the destruction of the Deadly Floods. He knows as it really is: This is discontentedness. He knows as it really is: This is the cause of discontentedness. He knows as it really is: This is the elimination of discontentedness. He knows as it really is: This is the Path that leads to the elimination of discontentedness.

He knows as they really are: These are the Deadly Floods. He knows as it really is: This is the cause of the Deadly Floods. He knows as it really is: This is the elimination of the Deadly Floods. He knows as it really is: This is the Path that leads to the elimination of the Deadly Floods. To him, thus knowing, thus seeing, the mind is set free from the Deadly Poison of Craving, is set free from Deadly Poison of Anger, is set free from the Deadly Poison of Ignorance (unknowing of true reality). In him, thus set free, there arises the knowledge of his liberation, and he knows: Rebirth has been destroyed. The

holy life has been fulfilled. What had to be done has been accomplished.
After this present life there will be no beyond!

Just, Kevaddha, as if in a mountain fastness there were a pool of water, clear, translucent, and serene; and a man, standing on the bank, and with eyes to see, should perceive the oysters and the shells, the gravel and the pebbles and the shoals of fish, as they move about or lie within it: he would know: This pool is clear, transparent, and serene, and there within it are the oysters and the shells, and the sand and gravel, and the shoals of fish are moving about or lying still....This, Kevaddha, is what is called 'the wonder of instruction'.

So these, Kevaddha, are the three kinds of wonders I have understood and realized myself, and made known to others.

(Reference: DN 11)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the three kinds of wonders: the mystic wonder, the wonder of mind-reading, and the wonder of instruction.

(1) The Mystic Wonder is supernatural abilities. The Buddha explains that "because I perceive danger in the practice of mystic wonders, that I disagree, and refrain from, and am reluctant to perform". In other words, he does not perform the mystic wonders.

The Buddha explains that because anyone witnessing these supernatural feats would then speak to others who did not witness the feat. That person would then need to rely on belief and would not believe that such a feat is possible. Therefore, The Buddha explains that he does not perform these supernatural abilities because it leads to one needing to rely on belief and, most likely, the individual would not believe that such supernatural abilities exist. Therefore, they would attribute this supernatural feat to "a certain charm called the Gandhāra Charm".

Since a Buddha is interested in sharing only The Teachings that lead to liberation of mind that are independently verifiable leading to observing the truth to acquire wisdom, he chose not to perform these supernatural feats (i.e. miracles) to convince people to learn and practice his Teachings. Instead, he was most interested in individuals choosing to develop determination, dedication, and diligence to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings to experience the results of a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy by eliminating discontentedness through training the mind.

(2) The Wonder of Mind-Reading is to be able to read someone's mind knowing their feelings, thoughts, and emotions. Similar to that of the mystic wonder, The Buddha explains that "because I perceive danger in the practice of wonder of mind-reading, that I disagree, and refrain from, and am reluctant to perform". In other words, he does not perform the wonder of mind-reading.

The Buddha explains that because anyone witnessing the mind reading would then speak to others who did not witness the mind reading. That person would then need to rely on

belief and would not believe that such mind reading is possible. Therefore, The Buddha explains that he does not perform mind reading because it leads to one needing to rely on belief and, most likely, the individual would not believe that mind reading is possible. Therefore, they would attribute the mind reading to “a charm called the Jewel Charm”.

Since a Buddha is interested in sharing only The Teachings that lead to liberation of mind that are independently verifiable leading to observing the truth to acquire wisdom, he chose not to perform mind reading to convince people to learn and practice his Teachings. Instead, he was most interested in individuals choosing to develop determination, dedication, and diligence to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings to experience the results of a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy by eliminating discontentedness through training the mind.

(3) The Wonder of Instruction is to share The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment as a Teacher. The Buddha was known to share Teachings that eliminate ignorance (unknowing of true reality) helping Students to awaken the mind to Enlightenment. It is the wonder of instruction that accomplishes this goal.

Because The Buddha does not perform supernatural abilities nor mind reading he instead practices “the wonder of instruction” where he skillfully shares The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment.

The Buddha then goes on to discuss various aspects of his Teachings that lead to Enlightenment. He mentions wholesome conduct, The Four Noble Truths, and the elimination of craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) (i.e. The Three Poisons, The Three Unwholesome Roots, and The Three Fires),

Through the practice of these Teachings, The Buddha explains how a Practitioner can then see clearly just like one might stand on the bank of a water way and clearly be able to see oysters, shells, gravel, pebbles, and fish.

The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment learned, reflected upon, and practiced will lead to being able to see clearly and one can eliminate 100% of all discontentedness.

Chapter 33

One Who is Near to Nibbāna (Enlightenment)

Monks, possessed of four qualities a man is incapable of falling away; he is near to Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

What are the four?

Herein a **Monk is perfect in virtue (practicing moral conduct),**
He is guarded as to the doors of the sense bases,
He is moderate in eating,
He is devoted to watchfulness.

And **in what way is a Monk perfect in virtue (moral conduct)?**

Herein a Monk is virtuous, he resides restrained with the restraint of the training guidelines; perfect in the practice of right (moral) conduct he sees danger in the slightest faults; he takes up and trains himself in the stages of training. Thus a Monk is perfect in virtue (moral conduct).

And **how is a Monk guarded as to the doors of the sense bases?**

Herein a Monk, seeing a form with the eye, does not grasp at the general features or at the details. Since craving and aversion, evil, unprofitable states, might flow in upon one who resides with the sense base of the eye uncontrolled, he applies himself to such control, he sets a guard over the sense base of the eye, and he attains control. When he hears a sound with the ear, or with the nose smells an odor, or with the tongue tastes a flavor, or with the body touches a physical object; when with the mind he recognizes a mental object, he does not grasp at the general features or details. But since craving and aversion, evil, unprofitable states, might flow in upon one who resides with the sense base of the eye uncontrolled, he applies himself to such control, he sets a guard over the sense base of the ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind, and attains control. That is how a Monk has the doors of the sense bases guarded.

And **how is a Monk moderate in eating?**

Herein a Monk takes his food thoughtfully and carefully, not for sport, not for indulgence, not for personal charm or adornment, but just enough for the support, for the continuance of the body, for its resting unharmed, to help the living of the holy life, with this thought: My former feeling I check and I set going no new feeling. Thus maintenances shall be mine, blamelessness and comfort in life. Thus a Monk is moderate in eating.

And **how is a Monk devoted to watchfulness?**

By day a Monk walks up and down and then sits, thus purify the mind of obstructive states. By night for the first watch he does likewise. In the middle watch of the night, lying on his right side he takes up the lion posture, resting one foot on the other, and thus collected and composed fixes his thoughts on rising up again. In the last watch of the night, at early dawn, he walks up and down, then sits, and so purifies the mind of obstructive states. That is how a Monk is devoted to watchfulness.

Possessed of these four qualities a Monk is incapable of falling away; he is near to Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(Reference: AN 4.37)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares four qualities that a Student would be practicing who is close to attain Enlightenment and would be incapable of the mind regressing.

Perfect in Virtue (moral conduct) is to be deeply practicing Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood of The Eight Fold Path.

Guarding The Six Sense Bases is to practice restraint through The Six Sense Bases not allowing the mind to have craving or aversion through The Six Sense Bases.

Moderation in eating is to train the mind to not overeat causing the physical body to work hard through digestion, which would not be “the middle way”. Food should not be seen as being digested for pleasing the tongue and thus, the mind, but for the endurance and “continuance of the body”, for ending discomfort. Food is only to sustain the health of the body and, thus, the mind. Be sure to make wise choices about the quality of food that you choose to ingest as this will directly result in the health of the body. Through maintaining the health of the body for a longer period of time, this reduces the burden placed on the mind and elongates the amount of time one would have in the human realm to cultivate the mind on The Path to Enlightenment.

Devoted to watchfulness is related to the mind being “calm and relaxed” while also being “alert and attentive” being devoted to awakening the mind to Enlightenment. Through purification of the mind in learning, reflecting, and practicing The Eight Fold Path one will eliminate “obstructive states”.

While The Buddha is describing his sleeping position in the “lion’s pose”, one does not need to sleep in that pose to attain Enlightenment. This practice is not about training the physical body to permanently assume a specific position during sleep but instead, learning, reflecting, and practicing Teachings to train the mind to acquire wisdom.

Chapter 34

The Supreme Development of The Sense Bases

Now, Ānanda, how is there the supreme development of the sense bases in the Noble One's Discipline?

Here, Ānanda, when a Monk sees a form with the eye, there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable.

He understands thus:

There has arisen in me what is agreeable, there has arisen what is disagreeable, there has arisen what is both agreeable and disagreeable. But that is conditioned, clear, dependently arisen; this is peaceful, this is superb, that is, equanimity.

The agreeable that arose, the disagreeable that arose, and the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose are eliminated in him and equanimity is established.

Just as a man with good sight, having opened his eyes might shut them or having shut his eyes might open them, so too concerning anything at all, the agreeable that arose, the disagreeable that arose, and the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose are eliminated just as quickly, just as rapidly, just as easily, and equanimity is established.

This is called in the Noble One's Discipline the supreme development of the sense bases regarding forms recognizable by the eye.

(Similar discourses were spoken in the case of hearing a sound with the ear, smelling an odor with the nose, tasting a flavor with the tongue, touching a physical object with the body, recognizing a mental object with the mind, though with different analogy as the following:

Sound: Just as a strong man might easily snap his fingers;

Odor: Just as raindrops on a slightly sloping lotus leaf roll off;

Flavor: Just as a strong man might easily spit out a ball of spit collected on the tip of his tongue;

Physical object: Just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm;

Mental object: Just as if a man were to let two or three drops of water fall onto an iron plate heated for a whole day, they would quickly vaporize and vanish.)

(Reference: MN 152)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a Practitioner can fully develop the mind to eliminate sensual desire through The Six Sense Bases.

Whenever a Practitioner observes with mindfulness (i.e. awareness of mind) that the agreeable, disagreeable, or both agreeable and disagreeable has arisen in the mind, one should cut it off and let it go (i.e. eliminated). If not, then discontentedness will arise creating an uncalm mind.

But, when one is watchful over with Right Mindfulness, the mind can eliminate the agreeable, disagreeable, or both agreeable and disagreeable that has arisen in the mind, establishing equanimity.

Equanimity (Pāli: upekkhā) is mental calmness, composure, and evenness of temper, especially in a difficult situation; treating everyone impartially.

If a Practitioner's sense bases are unrestrained, the mind is uncalm and will lack peacefulness. With The Six Sense Bases restrained, a Practitioner will have mental discipline that results in a calm and peaceful mind.

Chapter 35

Need Not to Know How Much Fetters Were Worn Away

Monks, just as a carpenter or a carpenter's apprentice, inspecting the handle of his , sees thereon the marks of his fingers and thumb, nor knows how much of the adze-handle was worn away that day, nor the previous day, nor at any time, yet knows just when the wearing away has reached the end of wearing away; even so,

Monks, a Monk intent upon making - become known not to what extent the fetters were worn away that day, nor the previous day, nor at any time, yet knows just when the wearing away has reached the end of wearing away.

(Reference: SN 22.101)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a Practitioner is not able to know just how much any of the individual fetters/taints/pollution of mind have been worn away in a given day but, a Practitioner will know when they have been completely eliminated.

Once all of The Ten Fetters are completely and entirely eliminated, a Practitioner will no longer experience any discontentedness for an extended period of time.

While it is not suggested that a Practitioner convince the mind that it is Enlightened, there will come a time when a Practitioner can observe that the mind has not experienced even the slightest discontentedness for an extended period of time. When a Practitioner observes there is no discontentedness for 1-3 years on a continuous and ongoing basis, one can know for themselves the mind is Enlightened. But, the wisest Practitioners will never convince themselves the mind is Enlightened and instead, remain dedicated to continuing to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings their entire life.

If a Practitioner prematurely convinces the mind that it is Enlightened, there is the danger that the mind will become arrogant with pride or complacency can arise. If these exist in the mind, the Practitioner is not Enlightened. And, once the mind is Enlightened, there are increased amounts of wisdom and benefits one can experience as the mind continues to ascend to higher degrees of Enlightenment. Therefore, the wisest Practitioners will never convince the mind that it is Enlightened continuing to progress in their journey to attain higher degrees of benefits and results through having a well developed life practice.

A mind is Enlightened once it has eliminated all of The Ten Fetters. This Stage of Enlightenment is referred to as an Arahant. It is the fourth Stage of Enlightenment. Having attained this Stage of Enlightenment, a wise Practitioner will know for themselves that the mind is no longer experiencing any discontentedness. But, through remaining consistent with one's practice, to include meditation, the mind will continue to experience increased benefits.

There is no benefit in convincing the mind that it is Enlightened and therefore, if a Practitioner remains humble and continuing to progress to attain higher degrees of wisdom, the mind can experience continued improvements throughout life even when the mind is no longer experiencing discontentedness because it is Enlightened.

It is wise to never consider there to be a "finish line" that one would cross once the mind is Enlightened. This will promote continued progress and development in one's life.

Chapter 36

The Tathāgata Is The One Who Shows the Way

The Brāhmin Ganaka Moggallāna asked The Perfectly Enlightened One: 'When Master Gotama's disciples are thus advised and instructed by him, do they all attain Nibbāna (Enlightenment), the ultimate goal, or do some not attain it?'

When, Brāhmin, they are thus advised and instructed by me, some of my disciples attain Nibbāna (Enlightenment), the ultimate goal, and some do not attain it.

'Master Gotama, since Nibbāna (Enlightenment) exists and the path leading to Nibbāna exists and Master Gotama is present as the guide, what is the cause and reason why, when Master Gotama's disciples are thus advised and instructed by him, some of them attain Nibbāna, the ultimate goal, and some do not attain it?'

As to that, Brāhmin, I will ask you a question in return. Answer it as you choose. What do you think, Brāhmin? Are you familiar with the road leading to Rājagaha?

'Yes. Master Gotama, I am familiar with the road leading to Rājagaha.'

What do you think, Brāhmin? Suppose a man came who wanted to go to Rājagaha, and he approached you and said: 'Venerable Sir, I want to go to Rājagaha. Show me the road to Rājagaha.'

Then you told him: Now, good man, this road goes to Rājagaha. Follow it for a while and you will see a certain village, go a little further and you will see a certain town, go a little further and you will see Rājagaha with its lovely parks, groves, meadows, and ponds. Then, having been thus advised and instructed by you, he would take a wrong road and would go to the west.

Then a second man came who wanted to go to Rājagaha, and he approached you and said: 'Venerable Sir, I want to go to Rājagaha.' Then you told him: Now, good man, this road goes to Rājagaha. Follow it for a while and you will see a certain village, go a little further and you will see a certain town, go a little further and you will see Rājagaha with its lovely parks, groves, meadows, and ponds. Then, having been thus advised and instructed by you, he would arrive safely in Rājagaha.

Now, Brāhmin, since Rājagaha exists and the path leading to Rājagaha exists and you are present as the guide, what is the cause and reason why, when those men have been thus advised and instructed by you, one man takes a wrong road and goes to the west, and one arrives safely in Rājagaha?

‘What can I do about that, Master Gotama? I am one who shows the way.’

So too, Brāhmin, Nibbāna (Enlightenment) exists and the path leading to Nibbāna exists and I am present as the guide. Yet when my disciples have been thus advised and instructed by me, some of them attain Nibbāna, the ultimate goal, and some do not attain it.

What can I do about that, Brāhmin?

The Tathāgata is one who shows the way.

(Reference: MN 107)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he helps a Brāhmin understand why not all of his Students attain Enlightenment. As it might be thought that everyone who learned, reflected, and practiced The Teachings directly with a Perfectly Enlightened One would attain Enlightenment. But this is not true and would be permanence while we know that would not exist based on The Universal Truth of Impermanence.

Notice how The Buddha skillfully asks the Brāhmin questions to guide the Brāhmin to his own answer. Rather than just giving someone an answer to a question they have asked, oftentimes it is better to ask well thought out and well placed questions to guide a person to answering their own question. This way, it is like the individual is teaching themselves.

An individual will be more likely to listen to their own logic and understanding to teach themselves rather than accepting the logic and understanding of another person. If the individual already has the wisdom to answer the question, they do not need to believe what you are sharing but instead, they can see “true reality” through well thought out and well placed questions guiding an individual to a helpful answer through interactive discussion.

You might choose to use this approach with friends, children, co-workers, employers, or anyone whom you need to guide to understanding your logic in solving a certain challenge.

This Teaching also helps us to understand how the success of one’s own attainment of Enlightenment is not necessarily based purely on the guidance of the Teacher but, in fact, developing one’s life practice is an independent pursuit. While a Practitioner will need guidance from a Teacher, each individual Practitioner would need to understand what they are looking to develop in their practice and seek the appropriate guidance.

Then, once guidance is provided, a Student would need to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings diligently seeking any follow up guidance to ensure understanding.

Since not all Students of even a Perfectly Enlightened Buddha would attain Enlightenment, then we know one of the primary determining factors of whether one does or does not attain Enlightenment is based on the Students' own determination and diligence to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings as an independent practice while seeking guidance.

A Teacher can only show the way to Enlightenment. A Teacher cannot give a Student Enlightenment nor hold their hand on the journey to Enlightenment. Instead, a Student will need to apply their own patience and endurance to "never give up" continuing to walk the path with The Buddha. And, if a Student feels lost, they should let the Teacher know they feel lost so they can continue their journey.

A Teacher should be holding the light to illuminate The Path to Enlightenment assisting the Student out of the darkness to be able to more clearly see the path. But the Student will need to develop their own light so that they can more readily walk the path through improved decision making.

This Teaching can also be beneficial for parents, employers, community leaders or anyone who is guiding individuals in life. This Teaching can help you understand that your goal is not to make decisions for your children, employees, friends, family members, life partners, etc. but instead, to provide guidance that will help them in making wise decisions.

As parents, employers, or the other roles we fulfill in life, we cannot control what others do. We cannot give people a list of decisions for exactly what they should or should not do in every situation because every situation is different based on unique circumstances. But we can share wisdom that when understood by our children, employees, or others that they can then apply that wisdom for improved decision making.

So, your goal is not to control people in your life but instead, to provide them guidance that when understood they can, with their own free will, make wise wholesome decisions that lead to wholesome outcomes. You are not going to permanently be with your children, employees, or others in your life. But the wisdom you share to help guide a person's decision making can reside in the mind and be the guiding light that helps them navigate a challenging world leading to a better way of life.

Chapter 37

Cause and Reason Why Some Beings Do Not Attain Nibbāna in This Very Life

‘Venerable Sir, what is the cause and reason why some beings here do not attain Nibbāna (Enlightenment) in this very life?’

There are, Ruler of the Heavenly Beings, forms recognizable by the eye that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, tempting. If a Monk seeks excitement (pleasant feelings) in them, welcomes them, and remains holding to them, his consciousness becomes dependent upon them and clings to them.

A Monk with clinging does not attain Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(In the case of sounds recognizable by the ear ... odors recognizable by the nose ... flavors recognizable by the tongue ... physical objects recognizable by the body ... mental objects recognizable by the mind, the discourses are similar to that of forms recognizable by the eye.)

This is the cause and reason, Ruler of the Heavenly Beings, why some beings here do not attain Nibbana (Enlightenment) in this very life.

(Reference: SN 35.118)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as sensual desire is a hindrance to the attainment of Enlightenment.

If the mind has craving through The Six Sense Bases, a being will be unable to experience Enlightenment.

Detailed explanation of The Six Sense Bases and elimination of sensual desire is available in this same book series found in the book “The Six Sense Bases” (Volume 9).

Chapter 38

No Desire for the Nutriment One Attains Enlightenment

If, Monks, there is no desire for the nutriment edible food, or for the nutriment contact, or for the nutriment of volitional formations (choices/decisions), or for the nutriment consciousness, if there is no excitement, if there is no craving, consciousness does not become established there and come to growth.

Where consciousness does not become established and come to growth, there is no development of name-and-form. Where there is no development of name-and-form, there is no growth of volitional formations (choices/decisions). Where there is no growth of volitional formations (choices/decisions), there is no production of future renewed existence. Where there is no production of future renewed existence, there is no future birth, aging, and death. Where there is no future birth, aging, and death, I say that: is without sorrow, anguish, and despair.

Suppose, Monks, there was a house, a hall with a peaked roof, with windows on the northern, southern, and eastern sides.

When the sun rises and a beam of light enters through a window, where would it become established?

‘On the western wall, Venerable Sir.’

If there were no western wall, where would it become established?

‘On the earth, Venerable Sir.’

If there were no earth, where would it become established?

‘On the water, Venerable Sir’

If there were no water, where would it become established?

‘It would not become established anywhere, Venerable Sir.’

So too, Monks, if there is no desire for the nutriment edible food ... for the nutriment contact ...for the nutriment of volitional formations (choices/decisions) ... for the nutriment consciousness ... consciousness does not become established there and come to growth.

Where consciousness does not become established and come to growth, there is no development of name-and-form. Where there is no development of name-and-form, there is no growth of volitional formations. Where there is no growth of volitional formations, there is no production of future renewed existence. Where there is no production of future renewed existence, there is no future birth, aging, and death. Where there is no future birth, aging, and death, I say that: is without sorrow, grief, and despair.

(Reference: SN 12.64)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares another Teaching to help a Practitioner understand how the mind attaining Enlightenment a being is no longer reborn in The Cycle of Rebirth.

When the mind eliminates craving/desire/attachment, it will experience Enlightenment.

The Buddha explains that when the mind has eliminated craving/desire/attachment to food, contact, volitional formations, and consciousness, the mind will not experience “excitement” based on those conditions. When “there is no craving, consciousness does not become established there and come to growth” the mind is Enlightened and it will no longer lead to rebirth.

Craving is the fuel that leads to rebirth. If there is craving/desire/attachment in the mind at the time of death, there will be rebirth. The Buddha is explaining how “consciousness does not become established there and come to growth” when “there is no craving”.

He further explains in the second paragraph of this Teaching sharing that “where consciousness does not become established and come to growth, there is no development of name-and-form”. He is describing that where there is no consciousness (i.e. a mind), that there is no forming of a new being. Name-and-form is the living being and if name-and-form does not develop, there is no further rebirth. Name-and-form would only be created if there is a consciousness (i.e. a mind), to enter the physical body. Without a consciousness, there is no rebirth.

Then, The Buddha uses the example of the sun shining into a building to explain that if there is no craving/desire/attachment, that consciousness cannot be established to create a new existence just like the sun cannot establish itself if there is no object to shine on like a wall, earth, or water. If these objects do not exist, then the sun is unable to establish its beam on these objects much like consciousness cannot be established if there is no craving.

If there is no more birth, there will be no more discontentedness such as “sorrow, grief, and despair”.

Chapter 39

Dependent Origination

When this exists, that comes to be;
with the arising of this, that arises.

When this does not exist, that does not come to be;
with the elimination of this, that ceases.

(Reference: SN 12.2)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares a very basic introduction to Dependent Origination.

Dependent Origination is a detailed Teaching that shares the “cause and effect” of how ignorance (unknowing of true reality) leads to rebirth and a being then experiences discontentedness.

Here in this Teaching, The Buddha is just sharing a basic introduction of Dependent Origination where one needs to understand the “cause and effect” relationship of “when this exists, that comes to be” and “with the arising of this, that arises”.

Conversely, “when this does not exist, that does not come to be” and “with the elimination of this, that ceases”.

This basic understanding of causality, “cause and effect”, or “action and result” forms the basis of The Teachings on The Natural Law of Kamma and will explain how everything that comes into existence whether feelings, perceptions, thoughts, or an actual being itself, has some cause that initiates it into arising or existence.

Likewise, through the same “cause and effect” or “action and result” the elimination of feelings, perceptions, thoughts, or an actual being can be traced through the same sequence of events in The Teaching of Dependent Origination.

Detailed explanation of Dependent Origination is available in this same book series found in Chapter 14 of the book “The First Stage of Enlightenment” (Volume 5).

Detailed explanation of The Natural Law of Kamma is available in this same book series found in the book “The Natural Law of Kamma” (Volume 6).

Chapter 40

Dependent Origination as The Law of Nature

Monks, with ignorance (unknowing of true reality) as condition, volitional formations (choices/decisions) [come to be];

With volitional formations as condition, consciousness;
with consciousness as condition, name-and-form;
with name-and-form as condition, the six sense bases;
with the six sense bases as condition, contact;
with contact as condition, feeling;
with feeling as condition, craving;
with craving as condition, clinging;
with clinging as condition, existence;
with existence as condition, birth;
with birth as condition, aging-and-death, sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure, and despair come to be.

Such is the cause of this whole mass of discontentedness.

And what, Monks, is **aging-and-death**?

The aging of the various beings in the various orders of beings, their growing old, brokenness of teeth, greyness of hair, wrinkling of skin, decline of vitality, degeneration of the sense bases; this is called aging. The passing away of the various beings from the various orders of beings, their perishing, breakup, disappearance, mortality, death, completion of time, the breakup of the aggregates, the laying down of the carcass; this is called death. Thus this aging and this death are together called aging-and-death.

With the arising of birth, there is the arising of aging-and-death. With the elimination of birth, there is the elimination of aging-and-death. Just this Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of aging-and-death; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is **birth**?

The birth of the various beings into the various realms of beings, their being born, descent [into the womb], production, the coming together of the aggregates, the obtaining of the sense bases. This is called birth.

With the arising of existence, there is the arising of birth. With the elimination of existence, there is the elimination of birth. This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of birth; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is **existence**?

There are these three kinds of existence: sense-sphere existence (six sense bases), form-sphere existence (form realms), formless-sphere existence (formless realms). This is called existence.

With the arising of clinging, there is the arising of existence. With the elimination of clinging, there is the elimination of existence. This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of existence; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is **clinging**?

There are these four kinds of clinging: clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to views, clinging to rules and vows, clinging to a notion of self. This is called clinging.

With the arising of craving, there is the arising of clinging. With the elimination of craving, there is the elimination of clinging. This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of clinging; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is **craving**?

There are these six classes of craving: craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for odors, craving for flavors, craving for physical objects, craving for mental objects. This is called craving.

With the arising of feeling, there is the arising of craving. With the elimination of feeling, there is the elimination of craving. This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of craving; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is **feeling**?

There are these six classes of feeling: feeling born of eye-contact, feeling born of ear-contact, feeling born of nose-contact, feeling born of tongue-contact, feeling born of body-contact, feeling born of mind-contact. This is called feeling.

With the arising of contact, there is the arising of feeling. With the elimination of contact, there is the elimination of feeling. This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of feeling; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is **contact**?

There are these six classes of contact: eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, mind-contact. This is called contact.

With the arising of the six sense bases, there is the arising of contact. With the elimination of the six sense bases, there is the elimination of contact. This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of contact; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, are the **six sense bases**?

The eye base, the ear base, the nose base, the tongue base, the body base, the mind base. These are called the six sense bases.

With the arising of name-and-form, there is the arising of the six sense bases. With the elimination of name-and-form, there is the elimination of the six sense bases. This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of the six sense bases; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is **name-and-form**?

Feeling, perception, volitional formation (choices/decisions), contact, consciousness: this is called name. The four great elements and the form derived from the four great elements: this is called form. Thus this name and this form are together called name-and-form.

With the arising of consciousness, there is the arising of name-and-form. With the elimination of consciousness, there is the elimination of name-and-form. This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of name-and-form; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is **consciousness**?

There are these six classes of consciousness: eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, mind-consciousness. This is called consciousness.

With the arising of volitional formations (choices/decisions), there is the arising of consciousness. With the elimination of volitional formations, there is the elimination of consciousness. This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of consciousness; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, are **volitional formations**?

There are these three kinds of volitional formations (choices/decisions): the bodily volitional formation, the verbal volitional formation, the mental volitional formation. These are called the volitional formations.

With the arising of ignorance (unknowing of true reality), there is the arising of volitional formations. With the elimination of ignorance, there is the elimination of volitional formations. Just this Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of volitional formations; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

When, Monks, a Noble Disciple thus understands the condition; thus understands the cause of the condition; thus understands the elimination of the condition; thus understands the way leading to the elimination of the condition, he is then called: A Noble Disciple who is accomplished in view, (who is) accomplished in vision, who has arrived at these true Teachings, who sees these true Teachings, who possesses a trainee's wisdom, (who possesses) a trainee's true wisdom, who has entered the stream of The Teachings, a Noble One with penetrative wisdom, one who stands squarely before the door to the Deathless (Enlightenment).

(Reference: SN 12.2)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares Dependent Origination. Dependent Origination is the ultimate description of the “cause and effect” relationship of how ignorance (unknowing of true reality) leads to discontentedness and continued rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth. Dependent Origination is a series of twelve (12) conditions that lead from one to another ultimately causing rebirth and continued discontentedness.

The elimination of ignorance (unknowing of true reality) through acquiring wisdom is what leads to the elimination of discontentedness and continuous rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth. Learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings with guidance from a Teacher to independently discover the truth is how a Practitioner acquires wisdom.

It is ignorance (unknowing of true reality) that leads to volitional formations (choices/decisions) in a previous life that are uninformed leading to unwholesomeness. Through lacking wisdom an individual will make unwise decisions producing harm in the world which will be returned to you due to The Natural Law of Kamma.

Kamma is “cause and effect” or “action and result”. Essentially, Kamma is the results of your decisions. So it is one’s volitional formations (choices/decisions) that lead to the results we experience in life producing a new life.

Consciousness, or the mind, then comes into being through The Cycle of Rebirth leading to name-and-form. Name-and-form is essentially the physical body. The consciousness and physical body come together forming The Six Sense Bases.

The Six Sense Bases are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. These are formed within the womb, developing and maturing outside the womb. An unEnlightened human being experiences agreeable and disagreeable forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and mental objects through The Six Sense Bases.

Contact leads to feelings being produced in the mind. Feelings are results of experiences in the mind through contact with The Six Sense Bases experiencing forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and/or mental objects.

Craving, or mental longing with a strong eagerness, is produced when the mind has longing and yearning through The Six Sense Bases for pleasant feelings thinking this will satisfy the mind.

The mind will then be interested to cling, or hold on to, forms, sounds, odors, flavors, physical objects, and/or mental objects to continue to experience the pleasant feelings.

This leads to continued existence as craving is the fuel that causes rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth.

With continued existence, there is birth leading to the accumulation of The Five Aggregates as a new being.

When there is birth, there will be aging-and-death with sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure, and despair in life.

Dependent Origination is explaining the detailed “cause and effect” relationship of how discontentedness of mind comes to be in The Cycle of Rebirth. It describes how beings continue to experience discontentedness and constant rebirth.

	Ignorance, Volitional Formations
Present Effects	Consciousness, Name-and-Form, The Six Sense Bases, Contact, Feeling
Present Causes	Craving, Clinging, Existence
Future Effects	Birth, Aging-and-Death

Past Life	Ignorance, Volitional Formations, Consciousness, Name-and-Form, The Six Sense Bases, Contact, Feeling, Craving, Clinging, Existence, Birth and Aging-and-Death
Present Life	Ignorance, Volitional Formations, Consciousness, Name-and-Form, The Six Sense Bases, Contact, Feeling, Craving, Clinging, Existence, Birth and Aging-and-Death
Future Life	Ignorance, Volitional Formations, Consciousness, Name-and-Form, The Six Sense Bases, Contact, Feeling, Craving, Clinging, Existence, Birth and Aging-and-Death

It is through ignorance (unknowing of true reality) that beings continue to experience discontentedness in continued wandering and roaming through The Cycle of Rebirth. The unEnlightened mind does not understand what it does not understand. By not understanding the causes and conditions that create discontentedness and continued rebirth, a being continues to roam and wander through countless rounds of rebirth within The Cycle of Rebirth hindered and plagued by its own ignorance (unknowing of true reality).

It is the elimination of ignorance (unknowing of true reality) that allows a Practitioner to undo or unravel the entire massive amount of discontentedness experienced through continuous rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth. Ignorance is eliminated through acquiring wisdom. Wisdom is acquired through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings with guidance from a Teacher to independently discover the truth. A Practitioner will need to investigate these Teachings applying energy and effort in a determined, dedicated, and diligent development of their life practice. Through consistent ongoing learning, reflection, and practice of these Teachings, a Practitioner can observe for themselves that the condition of the mind and one's life continues to improve.

As wisdom is gradually increased and practiced in daily life through wise decision making, discontentedness is gradually decreased from the mind. For example, a Practitioner can observe that situations that once produced anger or frustration in the mind no longer has the same result. A Practitioner can observe that the same situation that once produced discontentedness can reoccur but through practicing these Teachings the mind will have diminished and then eliminates 100% of all discontentedness. The mind can reside peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy as a Practitioner learns, reflects, and practices these Teachings training the mind to no longer be affected by its own ignorance (unknowing of true reality).

With the mind having eliminated 100% of all discontentedness, a Practitioner will know for themselves that there is no longer any rebirth as the mind has been fully and completely trained residing peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently.

The Practitioner has removed the conditions that are keeping the mind trapped in The Cycle of Rebirth. They have dismantled and destroyed all the “causes and conditions” that are creating continuous rebirth, namely ignorance (unknowing of true reality) and the mind is Enlightened.

A Stream-Enterer will not have accomplished the goal of eliminating ignorance (unknowing of true reality) from the mind but they will understand Dependent Origination and know that this is the training method to eliminate discontentedness to attain Enlightenment. They will be deeply practicing The Eight Fold Path as the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness while fully understanding Dependent Origination.

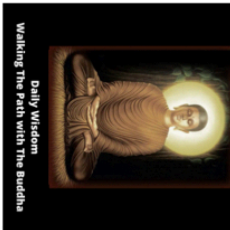
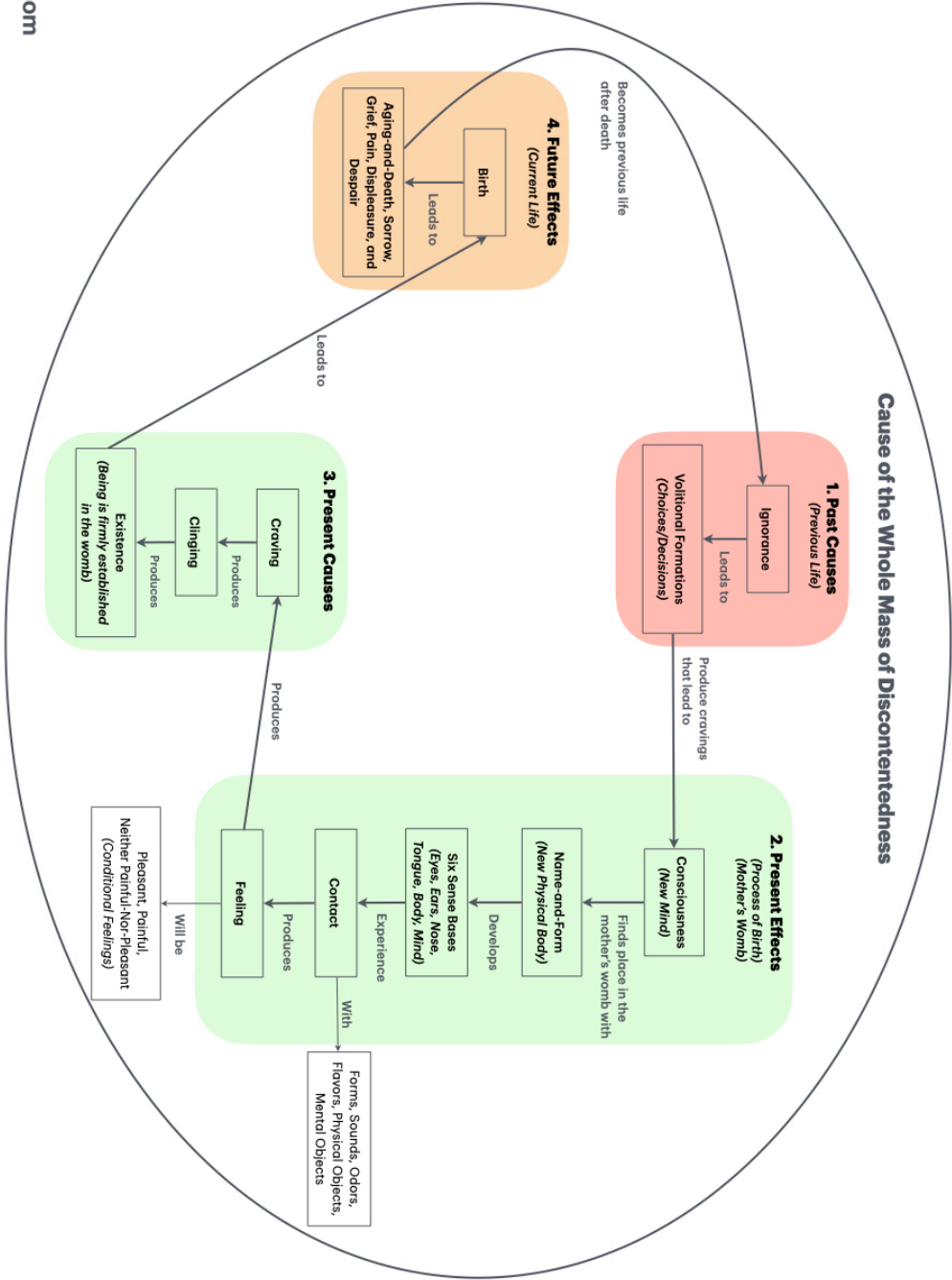
It is not until a Practitioner eliminates all Ten Fetters that the mind will have completely eliminated ignorance (unknowing of true reality) and be fully practicing these Teachings no longer experiencing any discontentedness or any more rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth.

Dependent Origination

The Highest Law of Nature

The Cycle of Rebirth

Why a Being Experiences Discontentedness and Rebirth



Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha's Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 31-40)

<https://youtu.be/1fJUOCgoLkM>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 331 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha's Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 31-40)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--331---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Buddhas-Way---Volume-10---Chapter-31-40-e1kjc10/a-a86d9n5>

Chapter 41

Wisdom, Mindfulness, and Name-and-Form Stopped by the Stopping of Consciousness

‘Wisdom and mindfulness’, said Venerable Ajita, ‘and name-and-form’, sir; tell me this when asked, where is this stopped?

I shall answer this question which you have asked, Ajita;

Where name-and-form is completely stopped. By the stopping of consciousness, there it is stopped.

(Reference: Ne 5)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how to end The Cycle of Rebirth by stopping name-and-form and consciousness (i.e. the mind).

Name-and-Form is described in Dependent Origination as “Feeling, perception, volitional formation (choices/decisions), contact, consciousness: this is called name. The four great elements and the form derived from the four great elements: this is called form. Thus this name and this form are together called name-and-form”.

Name-and-Form is essentially, the coming together of physical body and the mind (i.e. consciousness).

The Buddha is describing in this Teaching that the elimination of rebirth (i.e. name-and-form) is accomplished through the elimination of consciousness.

It is craving that is the fuel that leads to continued rebirth. Through the elimination of craving, the condition that causes rebirth is eliminated.

Eliminating craving/desire/attachment not only eliminates discontentedness but it also eliminates rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth as there is no longer support for the continuation and maintenance of consciousness when craving/desire/attachment is fully extinguished.

Chapter 42

Without Clinging One Attains Nibbāna (Enlightenment)

Here, Ānanda, a Monk is practicing thus: If it were not, it would not be mine; it will not be and it will not be mine. What exists, what has come to be, that I am abandoning. Thus he obtains equanimity. He does not seek excitement in that equanimity, welcome it, or remain holding to it. Since he does not do so, his consciousness does not become dependent on it and does not cling to it.

A Monk, Ānanda, who is without clinging attains Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(Reference: MN 106)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a Practitioner cannot even cling to the wholesome qualities of the mind or else one will not attain Enlightenment.

As a Practitioner progresses on The Path to Enlightenment, there will be multiple qualities of mind that will begin to permeate in the mind. Qualities such as loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, equanimity, mindfulness, and others will just always exist.

Once the mind is Enlightened, these qualities will not arise, change, or fade away, they are unconditioned.

These mental qualities and others are not based on any condition, so they are permanent.

As a Practitioner nears closer and closer to Enlightenment, the mind experiences glimpses of Enlightenment where one can experience a few minutes, hours, days, weeks, or months of no discontentedness and purely wholesome qualities filling the mind. This can be thought of like the light of Enlightenment is flickering but it is not yet fully lite. The mind is not yet fully experiencing Enlightenment but instead, just getting glimpses of what Enlightenment is as its making its way to Enlightenment.

As this is occurring, it is important to not allow the mind to have pleasant feelings due to the qualities of Enlightenment starting to permeate in the mind. A Practitioner needs to cut off and let go of any arising pleasant feelings associated with the mind filling with mental qualities of Enlightenment otherwise, the mind will not experience Enlightenment.

Allowing the mind to experience pleasant feelings associated with the mental qualities of Enlightenment is to continue to allow the mind to base its inner feelings on an impermanent condition. “He does not seek excitement in that equanimity, welcome it, or remain holding to it. Since he does not do so, his consciousness does not become dependent on it and does not cling to it”.

It is through the elimination of the unwholesome qualities of mind that are conditioning the mind to remain in the unEnlightened state that a Practitioner continues to experience discontentedness.

It is through the purification of mind to eliminate the unwholesome qualities that the mind moves to Enlightenment, experiencing the unconditioned mental qualities of the Enlightened mind.

As these wholesome qualities begin to fill the mind, a Practitioner will need to ensure they are not craving/desiring or clinging to them or else they will fade away. The mind needs to remain unaffected by the qualities of Enlightenment as they start to fill the mind.

The mental qualities experienced as the mind moves closer to Enlightenment are beyond pleasure and pain, something the mind has never experienced. It is easy to potentially allow the mind to indulge in these wholesome mental qualities craving/desiring and clinging to them “wanting” them to continue. Doing so would be to sabotage one’s progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

If there is any craving/desire or clinging in the mind, the mind will not experience Enlightenment. The mind needs to be trained to not even cling to the wholesome qualities of Enlightenment as one experiences increased benefits.

The Buddha explains not to cling to equanimity in this Teaching, however, one can apply this to all wholesome mental qualities experienced along The Path to Enlightenment.

If there is clinging, the mind will not experience Enlightenment. Even clinging to wholesome mental qualities will eventually produce discontentedness to include painful feelings.

“A Monk, Ānanda, who is without clinging attains Nibbāna (Enlightenment)”.

Chapter 43

By Not Clinging, They Are Freed

Clinging they look upon with fear,
For it produces birth and death;
And by not clinging they are freed,

In the destruction of birth and death.
They reside in joy for they are safe,
And reach Nibbāna (Enlightenment) here and now.

They are beyond all fear and hate;
They have escaped all discontentedness.

(Reference: MN 130)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how by not clinging a Practitioner is freed from all discontentedness.

If there is clinging in the mind, there will be fear with continued birth and death. But by the elimination of clinging, the mind is freed from discontentedness.

By elimination of discontentedness, a Practitioner will know they have eliminated rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth. The mind can reside joyful as it is now safe having made a full escape from The Cycle of Rebirth through attaining Enlightenment.

An Enlightened mind no longer experiences any fear or hate, it has eliminated all discontentedness.

Chapter 44

Calm and Reflection Have Part in True Wisdom

Monks, these two qualities have part in true wisdom.

What two?

Calm and reflection.

If cultivated, what profit does calm attain?

The mind is cultivated.

What profit results from a cultivated mind?

All craving is abandoned.

Monks, if reflection is cultivated, what profit does it attain?

Wisdom is cultivated.

If wisdom is cultivated, what profit does it attain?

All ignorance is abandoned.

A mind defiled by craving is not liberated; and wisdom defiled by ignorance (unknowing of true reality) is not developed. Thus, Monks, through the fading away of craving there is liberation of mind; and through the fading away of ignorance (unknowing of true reality) there is liberation by wisdom.

(Reference: AN 2.31)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how “calmness leads to the elimination of craving” and “reflection leads to the elimination of ignorance”. Accomplishing these goals, a Practitioner’s mind would be close to Enlightenment and potentially Enlightened.

To attain Enlightenment, a Practitioner needs to eliminate craving/desire/attachment from the mind. The Buddha guides Practitioners to understand that calmness is a quality of mind that leads to the elimination of craving/desire/attachment, thus, the elimination of discontentedness.

To attain Enlightenment, a Practitioner also needs to cultivate wisdom in the mind. The Buddha guides Practitioners to understand that reflection is a quality of mind that leads to the cultivation of wisdom, thus, the elimination of ignorance.

To attain Enlightenment, a Practitioner will need to eliminate craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality). This is the general way to understand what needs to be eliminated with The Ten Fetters representing a detailed description of what needs to be eliminated from the mind to attain Enlightenment.

It is wisdom that transforms ignorance (unknowing of true reality). Wisdom is acquired through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings.

Transforming The Three Poisons: Craving, Anger, and Ignorance

Gotama Buddha’s Teachings to eliminate craving, anger, and ignorance are known, for good reason, as The Three Poisons, The Three Unwholesome Roots, and The Three Fires. Also known as (greed, hatred, and delusion) or (desire, ill will, and confusion).

These are The Three Poisons that exist and are present in the mind as part of rebirth into the human realm. It is our goal, through these Teachings, to eliminate these three poisons through practice of non-craving or generosity, non-anger or loving-kindness, and non-ignorance or wisdom. To attain Enlightenment, one would need to completely eliminate The Three Poisons.

These metaphors suggest how dangerous afflictive thoughts and emotions can be if they are not understood and transformed. Craving (Greed/Desire) refers to our selfishness, desire, attachment, and grasping for contentedness and satisfaction outside of ourselves. Anger (Hatred/Ill Will) refers to our hostility and aggression, our aversion and repulsion toward unpleasant people, circumstances, and even toward our own uncomfortable feelings. Ignorance (Delusion/Confusion) refers to our dullness, confusion, and misperception; our unknowing or wrong views of reality misunderstanding the world around us as described as part of The Natural Laws of Existence in Gotama Buddha’s Teachings.

The poisons of craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) — mask our true nature, the awakened mind of wisdom and compassion. These poisonous states of mind then motivate non-virtuous and unskillful intentions, speech, and actions, which produces unwholesome Kamma so they need to be transformed, remedied and an antidote applied to experience the brightness of the Enlightened mind.

Craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) are deeply embedded in the conditioning of our personalities. Our behavior is habitually influenced and tainted by these three poisons, these unwholesome roots buried deep into the mind. Burning within

us as craving (greed/desire), anger (hatred/ill will), and ignorance (delusion/confusion), these poisons lay to waste hearts, lives, hopes, and civilizations, driving us blind and thirsty through the seemingly endless round of birth and death - The Cycle of Rebirth.

Gotama Buddha describes these defilements as bonds, hindrances, and knots; the actual root cause of unwholesome Kamma and the entire spectrum of human discontentedness. It is The Three Poisons, The Three Unwholesome Roots, or The Three Fires that keeps the mind in the unEnlightened state. It is only when a Practitioner deeply understands these and uproots them from the mind, that one can reside permanently peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy.

Although this Teaching may appear negative or unpleasant, indeed, a wise understanding of The Three Poisons of craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) is ultimately positive and empowering. With this superb understanding, we can clearly see and feel the factors that are causing discontentedness and suffering in our lives. And with this clarity and insight, we can make the choice to eliminate those factors.

The Teaching of The Four Noble Truths clearly explains that when we embrace and understand the exact causes of our discontentedness, suffering and dissatisfaction, we can then take the necessary steps to extinguish those causes and liberate the mind. This is certainly positive and empowering.

In addition, it is important for us to realize that Gotama Buddha's Teachings regarding defilement and purification are not just rigid, restrictive, or authoritarian theories regarding morality, but are real and solid truths essential to our correct understanding of reality and eventual awakening. Through learning these Teachings and the practice of these Teachings, we awaken to true reality, acquiring wisdom, eliminating the poison of ignorance/delusion or "unknowing" we have of true reality that keeps The Three Poisons well rooted into the mind causing us untold amounts of discontentedness and suffering.

Through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings while seeking guidance with a Teacher, a Practitioner will independently observe the truth acquiring wisdom to liberate the mind removing these poisons to experience Enlightenment.

Detailed explanation of The Three Poisons and how to eliminate them is available in this same book series found in Chapter 8 of the book "Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment" (Volume 1).

Chapter 45

The Motivation

Monks, an effort should be made to understand: ‘This is discontentedness;’ ‘This is the cause of discontentedness;’ ‘This is the elimination of discontentedness;’ ‘This is the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.’

Thus, Monks, I have taught you the destination and the path leading to the destination. Whatever should be done, Monks, by a compassionate Teacher out of compassion for his disciples, aspiring for their welfare, that I have done for you.

These are the feet of trees, Monks these are empty huts.

Meditate, Monks, do not be complacent, lest you regret it later.

This is my instruction to you.

Why is that?

Because he is out of the Evil One’s range.

(Reference: SN 56 & SN 43.44)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares encouraging words to motivate Students to learn, reflect, and practice The Four Noble Truths along with the entire Eight Fold Path.

He explains that he has taught “the destination” or “what is Enlightenment” and “the path leading to the destination” which is The Eight Fold Path.

The Buddha explains that all that he has shared and taught was done so out of compassion for his Students “aspiring for their welfare”.

He encourages Students to meditate and not to be complacent so that one can get out of range from Māra the Evil One.

When a Practitioner’s mind enters into the Jhānas, it is then protected from “Māra the Evil One”.

Māra the Evil One is an unwholesome being who roams the world influencing unskillful, unbeneficial, and negative conduct. Māra, and beings acting on its behalf, look for ways to entice and lure an individual into conduct that would result in unwholesome results.

Other traditions may refer to this entity as Satan, The Devil, or other names associated with a devilish being who is associated with the Realm of Hell looking to cause calamity for all beings here on earth attempting to influence human beings to create “hell on earth”.

Through training the mind in these Teachings, a Practitioner eventually gets to the Jhānas where the mind is protected and no longer influenced by Māra the Evil One. A mind that has entered the Jhānas “is said to have blindfolded Māra”. Māra is no longer able to influence a Practitioner as their mind has become more stable and steady through well developed wisdom, moral conduct, and mental discipline, yet, the mind is still not Enlightened. There is more work to do in order to fully protect the mind from discontentedness.

Can you explain complacency and how to eliminate it from the mind?

Complacency is a hindrance to Enlightenment and will obstruct an individual from attaining this mental state.

Complacency is experienced in the mind where it is dull, lethargic, and unmotivated, it will hinder a Practitioner from the attainment of Enlightenment.

Complacency includes: being disinterested to learn and practice The Teachings of The Buddha. This can be experienced as a disinterest to read books, come to classes, seek guidance from a Teacher, meditate, etc. The Buddha describes complacency to the point where, if the mind experiences an unwholesome thought/idea/feeling and the Practitioner does nothing about it, then the mind is complacent. What a Practitioner is taught to do on The Path to Enlightenment is to “cut off and let go” of all unwholesome thoughts/ideas/feelings, therefore, if one does nothing about an unwholesome thought/idea/feelings, the mind is complacent.

Again, this will hinder an individual from the attainment of Enlightenment, which is a purification of the mind.

If the mind is unEnlightened, then there is the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as ignorance (unknowing of true reality) still in the mind. A Practitioner does not understand things as they truly are, the mind lacks wisdom of The Natural Laws of Existence. This is an all encompassing pollution of mind and is the last one that will be eliminated from the mind prior to Enlightenment.

As long as one’s mind is unEnlightened, it does not have the needed wisdom to attain Enlightenment because it is not yet practicing The Teachings (i.e. The Natural Laws of Existence), thus, there is ignorance, confusion, misunderstanding, misperception, a lack of wisdom, or “the unknowing of true reality” still in the mind. Ignorance is eliminated through learning, reflecting (i.e. independently verifying), and practicing The Teachings of The Buddha to acquire wisdom. Wisdom is just the opposite of “the unknowing of true reality” and will eradicate the mind’s fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as ignorance.

While ignorance is involved in all the fetters/taints/pollutions, the fetters that are directly involved in complacency are “Doubt” and “Sensual Desire”.

The mind doubts The Teachings of The Buddha and their ability to guide an individual to Enlightenment. And, the mind is having sensual desire, in that, it is holding on to certain things with craving/desire/attachment being unmotivated to learn and practice The Teachings while also indulging in unwholesome thoughts/ideas/feelings.

Doubt (Elimination of doubts about The Teachings and the ability of them to attain Enlightenment. Confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, The Community, your Teacher, and your own ability to attain Enlightenment.)

Sensual desire (Elimination of the desire for pleasures from The Six Sense Bases: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and the mind.)

There is a remedy, or solution to eliminate complacency, that can be implemented to ensure the mind is able to overcome this obstacle and continue its journey to Enlightenment.

The solution is to practice The Eight Fold Path to include, the Enlightenment factors of investigation, energy, and joy from The Seven Factors of Enlightenment. The Enlightenment factors of investigation, energy, and joy are just the opposites of the dullness, lethargy, and lack of motivation that exists in the mind during the time of complacency. Some older texts use the phrase “sloth and torpor” for complacency but, “complacency” is a much better way to understand this aspect of the unEnlightened mind with language we use today.

Investigation: (Dedicated examination, exploration, research, study, and questioning to learn The Teachings.)

Energy: (Effort, determination, ambition, initiative, motivation, vigor, and enthusiasm; willingness to do something.)

Joy: (Pleased and delighted not associated with any specific object; unconditioned gladness; the Practitioner is not attaining it by craving/desire/attachment.)

Meditate, Monks, do not be complacent, lest you will regret it later. This is my instruction to you. (Reference: SN 43.1)

You can learn more about complacency and its remedy using these resources.

Volume 1 - Chapter 3 and the recorded classes where I teach The Five Hindrances, this is one of those.

Free Books - The Words of The Buddha

<https://www.buddhadailywisdom.com/freebuddhabooks>

The Five Hindrances & The Seven Factors of Enlightenment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7t6VKPshUn0>

Chapter 46

The Tathāgata's Final Passing

Monks, for this reason those matters which I have discovered and proclaimed should be thoroughly learnt by you, practiced, developed and cultivated, so that this holy life may endure for a long time, that it may be for the benefit and peacefulness of the multitude (many people), out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and peacefulness of heavenly beings and humans.

And what are those matters...?

They are: The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, the four Right Efforts, the four bases of mental power, the five spiritual faculties, the five mental powers, The Seven Factors of Enlightenment, The Noble Eight Fold Path.

And now, Monks, I declare to you - all conditioned things are of a nature to decay, strive on untiringly. The Tathāgata's final passing will not be long delayed. Three months from now The Tathāgata will take his Final Nibbāna (Final Enlightenment).

Ripe I am in years. My life-span's determined
Now I go from you, having made myself my refuge.

Monks, be untiring, mindful, disciplined,
Guarding your minds with well-collected thought.

He who, tirelessly, keeps to the guidance and Teachings,
Leaving birth behind, will put an end to sorrow and despair.

(Reference: DN 16)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he prepares his Students for his own death. As a Fully Perfectly Enlightened Buddha, he was well aware of his pending death and knew when it would occur.

Three months prior to his death, in this Teaching he notifies his Students that “The Tathāgata’s final passing will not be long delayed. Three months from now The Tathāgata will take his Final Nibbāna (Final Enlightenment)”. Final Nibbāna or Final Enlightenment is when someone has attained Enlightenment during their life and then there is death of the physical body, the separation of the body and the mind, the breakup of the physical body and, thus, the mind is no longer attached to the physical body.

The Buddha encourages his Students to “strive on untiringly” being determined, dedicated, and diligent in their continuous pursuit to Enlightenment. Through “guarding your minds with well-collected thought” “he who, tirelessly, keeps to the guidance and Teachings” will “leave birth behind will put an end to sorrow and despair” no longer experiencing any discontentedness and eliminating The Cycle of Rebirth.

Old and “ripe I am in years. My life-span’s determined. Now I go from you, having made myself my refuge” The Buddha’s mind is fully protected and will no longer experience any more existence in The Cycle of Rebirth.

He delivers what he feels to be the core Teachings that one needs to actively learn to ensure his Teachings continue long into the future “for the benefit and peacefulness of heavenly beings and humans”. The Teachings he declares as essential are “The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, the four Right Efforts, the four bases of mental power, the five spiritual faculties, the five mental powers, The Seven Factors of Enlightenment, The Noble Eight Fold Path”.

All of these Teachings are deeply explained and shared in the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1) and through the remaining books in this book series. With guidance from a Teacher, you can learn and progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

The Teachings of “the four bases of mental power, the five spiritual faculties, and the five mental powers” are not shared in great detail within this book series as these are cultivated automatically as part of practice of the other Teachings. With The Buddha’s layering of Teachings and overlapping discourses that ensure one develops the mind on The Path to Enlightenment, there is nothing additional one needs to learn, reflect, and practice to develop these aspects of the mind.

Instead, focusing on the core and central Teachings of The Path to Enlightenment will ensure one is cultivating “the four bases of mental power, the five spiritual faculties, and the five mental powers”.

I suggest one focuses on The Three Universal Truths, The Four Noble Truths, The Eight Fold Path with a well developed meditation practice, and The Five Precepts with the additional Teachings interconnected to these as detailed in the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1) and through the remaining books in this book series.

As a Prince named Siddhartha Gotama who eventually becomes Gotama Buddha upon his Enlightenment and lifetime of work, he left the royal riches of being the next in line for the throne as the King of his father's Kingdom. Though having wealth and every material possession he might desire available to him, none of that led to his peacefulness of mind and Enlightenment.

One might wonder why does a Buddha dedicate their life to sharing Teachings into the world if there is no inherent benefit to a Buddha himself as he has already attained Enlightenment? Why not just go back to life as a member of the royal family living a life of luxury?

Here in this Teaching, The Buddha briefly touches on his purpose for sharing The Teachings as he did for his entire life. A Buddha shares their Teachings into the world for only one reason. Not fame or fortune but instead "out of compassion for the world".

Compassion is concern for the misfortunes of others.

A Buddha has already made a complete end to their discontentedness and deeply understands exactly what it took to eliminate their own discontentedness through independent discovery of The Teachings. They have penetrating wisdom that is profound and beyond that of the average human being. They want nothing, desire nothing, and crave nothing. They "are freed from sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure, and despair" and have only one goal.

To help the world.

Seeing the sea of discontentedness among unEnlightened beings, a Buddha has the answers to solve the discontentedness of the entire world. But, he is only one man and it is his last life. A Buddha is determined, dedicated, and diligent in his efforts to share The Teachings into the world that will rid it of all discontentedness - all sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure, and despair can be entirely eliminated as each individual chooses to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings.

While the objective of a Buddha to share their Teachings into the world comes with extensive work and effort, they are tireless in their journey to help other beings while at the same time doing so without craving/desire/attachment (mental longing with a strong eagerness).

So, they work and apply effort to plant and grow trees so that the world will become a better place. But they will never, themselves, experience the enjoyment of the shade of those trees as their work cannot be accomplished in just one lifetime. It is the entire community of Practitioners that remain, to include all Enlightened beings, who continue to "strive on" sharing The Teachings of a Buddha into the world so that one day the entire world is cooled, calm, and peaceful.

Seeing the world's misfortunes, a Buddha humbly does their work "out of compassion for the world".

To learn and practice The Teachings of a Buddha is to take part in improving the condition of your own mind and in doing so, you are improving the world. It is through your own determination, dedication, and diligence to developing your own mind that you will significantly reduce and eliminate any harm you are causing in the world. This is the most compassionate thing you could ever do for others is to improve the condition of your own mind through developing your life practice to eliminate the unwholesome qualities and cultivate wholesome qualities.

In some respects, we are individually making efforts to improve our corner of the world and through each individual doing that, the world becomes a better place. But, one must focus on improving their own mind without craving to “fix the world”. Each individual needs to come to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings on their own. It is not possible to force someone to attain Enlightenment. Nothing in these Teachings will work through force.

So, if you have “compassion for the world” you are encouraged to learn, reflect, and practice these wholesome Teachings to improve the condition of your mind and your life.

In doing so, you can make a complete end to discontentedness and experience the ease and enjoyment of no longer experiencing any discontent feelings ever again while no longer experiencing existence through The Cycle of Rebirth.

Final Nibbāna

Final Nibbāna, or Final Enlightenment, is when someone attains Enlightenment and dies. This is referred to as Final Enlightenment.

During one’s life, the mind can be trained to attain Enlightenment. The mind will reside peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. The mind will no longer experience any mental pain associated with unwelcomed emotions, thoughts, ideas, or any sort of discontentedness of mind. All discontentedness such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc., will be completely eliminated from the mind.

However, a being is unable to completely transcend physical pain while in the human form. This is impossible. While the mind can be developed to not react with anger, sadness, hostility, aggression, or other discontent feelings upon experiencing physical pain, nonetheless, physical pain will still be experienced by the mind.

The mind can eliminate all cravings/desires/attachments while in the human form and during this life to experience Enlightenment. But while still alive, a being cannot eliminate the connection between the body and the mind. The mind is still connected to the physical body during life. Therefore, the mind will still experience physical pain but the mind will experience it differently in the Enlightened mental state versus in the unEnlightened mental state.

In the unEnlightened mental state, when the mind experiences physical pain, one can become angered, frustrated, irritated, annoyed, hostile, aggressive, resentful, fearful, and experience other discontent feelings. This is due to the mind craving permanent health, permanent comfort, and permanent pleasant feelings from the body. It is impossible for the body to experience permanent comfort due to The Universal Truth of Impermanence.

The pain associated with the physical body is an important aspect of the mind that needs to exist in order for a being to function in the world. If a being did not experience physical pain, they would be unable to remove the physical body from harm when too close to a heat source or if another problematic situation arose. The sensation of physical pain experienced by the mind helps a being understand, potential damage will occur or has occurred and therefore, seek a remedy to the physical pain. This is why we choose to step away from a heat source. The mind is alerted that the physical body is experiencing pain and the being takes action to resolve the situation. This is beneficial and needed during life.

In these situations, an unEnlightened mind will oftentimes experience discontentedness associated with the craving for permanent comfort of the physical body. When there is physical pain, the unEnlightened mind becomes discontent.

An Enlightened mind has been deeply trained to the point that it understands physical pain is impermanent, and that allowing the mind to become discontent due to physical pain, does not help to eliminate the physical pain.

Discontentedness at times of physical pain could actually make the situation worse.

For example, if one was bitten by a poisonous snake and became agitated, overactive, and uncalm, this would increase respirations of the lungs and heart functions creating conditions for the poison to more rapidly move through the body causing more significant injury and damage with an increased risk of potential death. Through training the mind to reside unagitated and calm, an individual can decrease the harm to the body and improve their ability to survive an injury such as a snake bite because the poison will not permeate in the body as rapidly when the mind is calm. Through the mind remaining calm during physical injuries, a being increases their ability to resolve the situation with a positive outcome.

When an Enlightened mind experiences physical pain, the mind can continue to reside peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy despite the physical injury, damage, or pain. This is an added benefit experienced by an Enlightened mind producing improved outcomes in situations where physical pain is experienced.

Nonetheless, there is still physical pain for an Enlightened being but it is just that the mind will not react to the pain and instead, respond to resolve the situation finding a solution. The physical pain associated with existence will continue for the remaining time of existence even for an Enlightened being. But, they will not experience mental anguish or any type of discontentedness associated with the physical pain. The Enlightened mind does not relate to the pain in the same way as the unEnlightened mind which will oftentimes become discontent due to physical pain.

It is not until the physical body dies, described by Gotama Buddha as “the breakup of the body”, that the body and mind completely separate. From that point, not only has one transcended discontentedness their entire life due to the attainment of Enlightenment, but the being will then experience the complete elimination of all pain including physical pain. This is referred to as Final Enlightenment or Final Nibbāna.

Enlightenment is experienced during life and the mind has transcended all emotional pain and suffering. But, the physical pain will remain, because it is needed to make wise decisions concerning the physical body during times of injury. The Enlightened mind will

have physical pain but will have acquired an improved way of responding to the physical pain rather than reacting to it so there is no mental pain.

Once a being has attained Enlightenment and dies, there is no longer any physical pain because the separation of the body and mind has occurred, therefore one has attained Final Enlightenment. All pain both mental and physical has been completely eliminated - permanently.

It is possible for an unEnlightened being to experience Enlightenment and Final Enlightenment at the time of death. The being would have experienced discontentedness their entire life but at the time of death, they would immediately experience Enlightenment and Final Enlightenment no longer experiencing rebirth through The Cycle of Rebirth.

What happens once one attains Enlightenment and dies experiencing Final Enlightenment is an undeclared Teaching of Gotama Buddha. He did not teach what is next other than an Enlightened being will not experience any further existence in The Cycle of Rebirth.

There are other Teachings from Gotama Buddha in this book series related to how to ensure The Teachings of a Buddha are sustained in the world. Chapters 33 and 34 in the book "Foundation in The Teachings" (Volume 3) provides these Teachings and an explanation of these Teachings.

What Happens at Death?

After we die does the body become soil to the earth or after death what remains? Isn't there spirit or energy which exist inside our body? Isn't there some sort of energy?

No, at the time of death the body and mind separate and then there is "break up of the body".

The body was described by Gotama Buddha through The Four Elements of Earth, Wind, Fire, and Water.

Essentially, the physical body is described and classified into these Four Elements.

Earth: The solids of the body. (hair, teeth, nails, bones, etc.)

Wind: The movement of bodily functions. (Circulation, movement of bile, etc.)

Fire: The temperature of the body.

Water: The liquids of the body. (urine, saliva, blood, pus, tears, etc.)

The physical body is nothing more than these four elements coming together with a mind or consciousness. The joining of the body and the mind creates a person.

Once the body and mind separate, the body will deteriorate remaining as these four elements but without a mind or consciousness.

What you are looking at when you see the body is a unique collection of these four elements that is always in a state of change and upon death, the body will continue that change and configuration but it will still be just these four elements.

The body will progressively deteriorate and depending whether there is burial or cremation, will determine how quickly the process of change occurs.

Through burial, the process is much slower. Cremation accelerates the process of change of these four elements.

What happens to the mind upon death?

If the mind is not yet Enlightened, (i.e. the mind has not yet attained Enlightenment), then there is rebirth into one of The Five Realms.

Heavenly Realm
Human Realm
Afflicted Spirits Realm
Animal Realm
Hell Realm

Heavenly, Afflicted Spirits, and Hell realms are formless realms. (i.e. there is no physical form).

Human and Animal realms are form realms, (i.e. there is physical form).

Rebirth is not instantaneous and upon rebirth there is a completely new existence with a new form or formless existence and a new consciousness, (i.e. a new mind).

The new mind will have residual memories of past lives and unextinguished craving/desire/attachment from past lives. The residual memories of past lives may potentially be recalled as the mind awakens towards Enlightenment more and more.

If someone attains Enlightenment what happens to the mind? Does it disappear?

If the mind has experienced Enlightenment during the human or heavenly existence or at death, (i.e. Enlightenment can be attained during an existence in the human or heavenly realm or at death in those realms but not in the lower realms), the body and mind separate and what happens next is an "undeclared" Teaching.

To attain Enlightenment, the mind needs to get to the point where there is no craving/desire/attachment (i.e. mental longing with a strong eagerness) to know what is next.

An Enlightened mind is experiencing so much peace, calm, serenity, and contentedness with joy that is permanent, the mind is not going to care what is next.

An Enlightened mind has already extinguished all fears including the fear of death, therefore, the mind is so peaceful and does not fear death so what happens next, the Enlightened mind does not care.

Having attained Enlightenment, you will know that you are already experiencing complete and utter peacefulness so if there is something next after death for an Enlightened being, it is either as good as you are currently experiencing or better.

And, if there is nothing next, then, ok, you are "done".

Either way, the mind needs to "let go" of wanting to know what is next and just focus on learning and practicing The Teachings with guidance on The Path to Enlightenment to experience Enlightenment in this life now that you are human.

Is the mind or soul/spirit the same thing?

No they are not.

There is no Teaching from The Buddha that there is or is not a soul/spirit. This is not a Teaching he shared. He left The Teaching on a soul/spirit as "undeclared".

How Did The Buddha Die?

Author: Venerable Dr Mettanando Bhikkhu
Published: 15 May 2001 - Bangkok Post

(This article was partially edited by the author of this book series to improve the formatting and readability, however, the primary content of the article was not edited. Dr Mettanando Bhikkhu was a physician before becoming an Ordained Practitioner. He was based at Wat Ratchaorasaram Ratchaworawihan, Thailand at the time that this article was published.)

During Vesak Day, we are informed that it is also the day The Buddha attained Final Enlightenment. But not many know how The Buddha died. Ancient texts weave two stories about The Buddha's death. Was it planned and willed by The Buddha, or was it food poisoning, or something else altogether?

Here's an account [to help you better understand how The Buddha died].

The Mahaparinibbana Sutta, (Reference: DN 16) from the Long Discourse of The Pāli Canon, is without doubt the most reliable source for details on the death of Siddhattha Gotama (BCE 563-483), The Buddha. It is composed in a narrative style that allows readers to follow the story of the last days of The Buddha, beginning a few months before he died.

To understand what really happened to The Buddha is not a simple matter, though. The sutta, or discourse, paints two conflicting personalities of The Buddha, one overriding the other.

The first personality was that of a miracle worker who beamed himself and his entourage of Monks across the Ganges River (D II, 89), who had a divine vision of the settlement of gods on earth (D II, 87), who could live until the end of the world on condition that someone invite him to do so (D II, 103), who determined the time of his own death (D II, 105), and whose death was glorified by the shower of heavenly flowers and sandal powder and divine music (D II, 138).

The other personality was that of an aged being who was failing in health (D II, 120), who almost lost his life because of a severe pain during his last retreat at Vesali (D II, 100), and who was forced to come to terms with his unexpected illness and death after consuming a special cuisine offered by his generous host.

These two personalities take turns emerging in different parts of the narrative. Moreover, there also appear to be two explanations of The Buddha's cause of death: One is that the Buddha died because his attendant, Ānanda, failed to invite him to live on to the age of the world or even longer (D II, 117). The other is that he died by a sudden illness which began after he ate what is known as "Sukaramaddava" (D II, 127-157).

The former story was probably a legend, or the result of a political struggle within the Buddhist community during a stage of transition, whereas the latter sounds more realistic and accurate in describing a real life situation that happened in The Buddha's last days.

A number of studies have focused on the nature of the special cuisine that The Buddha ate during his last meal as being the agent of his death. However, there is also another approach based on the description of the symptoms and signs given in the sutta, which modern medical knowledge can shed light on.

In another mural painting at Wat Ratchasittharam, The Buddha is approaching death, but he still takes time to answer questions put forth by the Ascetic Subhadda, his last convert who, after being admitted to the Buddhist Order, became an Arahant (An Enlightened Being).

What We Know

In the Mahaparinibbana Sutta, we are told that The Buddha became ill suddenly after he ate a special delicacy, Sukaramaddava, literally translated as "soft pork", which had been prepared by his generous host, Cunda Kammaraputta. The name of the cuisine has attracted the attention of many scholars, and it has been the focus of academic research on the nature of the meal or ingredients used in the cooking of this special dish.

The sutta itself provides details concerning the signs and symptoms of his illness in addition to some reliable information about his circumstances over the previous four months, and these details are also medically significant.

The sutta begins with King Ajatasattus' plot to conquer a rival state, Vajji. The Buddha had journeyed to Vajji to enter his last rainy-season retreat. It was during this retreat that he fell ill. The symptoms of the illness were sudden, severe pain.

However, the sutta provides no description of the location and character of his pain. It mentions his illness briefly, and says that the pain was intense, and almost killed him.

Subsequently, The Buddha was visited by Māra, the Evil One, who invited him to pass away. The Buddha did not accept the invitation right away. It was only after Ānanda, his attendant, failed to recognize his hint for an invitation to remain that he died. This piece of the message, though tied up with myth and supernaturalism, gives us some medically significant information. When the sutta was composed, its author was under the impression that The Buddha died, not because of the food he ate, but because he already

had an underlying illness that was serious and acute-and had the same symptoms of the disease that finally killed him.

The Timing

[The] Theravada Buddhist tradition has adhered to the assumption that the historical Buddha passed away during the night of the full moon in the lunar month of Vesak (which falls sometime in May to June). But the timing contradicts information given in the sutta, which states clearly that the Buddha died soon after the rainy-season retreat, most likely during the autumn or mid-winter, that is, November to January.

A description of the miracle of the unseasonal blooming of leaves and flowers on the sala trees, when The Buddha was laid down between them, indicates the time frame given in the sutta.

Autumn and winter, however, are seasons that are not favorable for the growth of mushrooms, which some scholars believe to be the source of the poison that The Buddha ate during his last meal.

Diagnosis

The sutta tells us that The Buddha felt ill immediately after eating the Sukaramaddava. Since we do not know anything about the nature of this food, it is difficult to name it as the direct cause of The Buddha's illness. But from the descriptions given, the onset of the illness was quick.

While eating, he felt there was something wrong with the food and he suggested his host have the food buried. Soon afterward, he suffered severe stomach pain and passed blood from his rectum.

We can reasonably assume that the illness started while he was having his meal, making him think there was something wrong with the unfamiliar delicacy. Out of his compassion for others, he had it buried.

Was food poisoning the cause of the illness? It seems unlikely. The symptoms described do not indicate food poisoning, which can be very acute, but would hardly cause diarrhea with blood. Usually, food poisoning caused by bacteria does not manifest itself immediately, but takes an incubation period of two to 12 hours to manifest itself, normally with acute diarrhea and vomiting, but not the passage of blood.

Another possibility is chemical poisoning, which also has an immediate effect, but it is unusual for chemical poisoning to cause severe intestinal bleeding. Food poisoning with immediate intestinal bleeding could only have been caused by corrosive chemicals such as strong acids, which can easily lead to immediate illness. But corrosive chemicals should have caused bleeding in the upper intestinal tract, leading to vomiting blood. None of these severe signs are mentioned in the text.

(NOTE from author of this book series: Chemicals were not yet invented during the lifetime of The Buddha.)

Peptic ulcer diseases can be excluded from the list of possible illnesses as well. In spite of the fact that their onset is immediate, they are seldom accompanied by bloody stool. A gastric ulcer with intestinal bleeding produces black stool when the ulcer penetrates a blood vessel. An ulcer higher up in the digestive tract would be more likely to manifest itself as bloody vomiting, not a passage of blood through the rectum.

Other evidence against this possibility is that a patient with a large gastric ulcer usually does not have an appetite. By accepting the invitation for lunch with the host, we can assume that The Buddha felt as healthy as any man in his early 80s would feel. Given his age we cannot rule out that The Buddha did not have a chronic disease, such as cancer or tuberculosis or a tropical infection such as dysentery or typhoid, which could have been quite common in The Buddha's time.

These diseases could produce bleeding of the lower intestine, depending on their location. They also agree with the history of his earlier illness during the retreat. But they can be ruled out, since they are usually accompanied by other symptoms, such as lethargy, loss of appetite, weight loss, growth or mass in the abdomen. None of these symptoms were mentioned in the sutta.

A large hemorrhoid can cause severe rectal bleeding, but it is unlikely that a hemorrhoid could cause severe abdominal pain unless it is strangulated. But then it would have greatly disturbed the walking of The Buddha to the house of his host, and rarely is hemorrhoid bleeding triggered by a meal.

Mesenteric Infarction

A disease that matches the described symptoms-accompanied by acute abdominal pain and the passage of blood, commonly found among elderly people, and triggered by a meal-is mesenteric infarction, caused by an obstruction of the blood vessels of the mesentery. It is lethal. Acute mesenteric ischemia (a reduction in the blood supply to the mesentery) is a grave condition with a high rate of mortality.

The mesentery is a part of the intestinal wall that binds the whole intestinal tract to the abdominal cavity. An infarction of the vessels of the mesentery normally causes the death of the tissue in a large section of the intestinal tract, which results in a laceration of the intestinal wall.

This normally produces severe pain in the abdomen and the passage of blood. The patient usually dies of acute blood loss. This condition matches the information given in the sutta. It is also confirmed later when The Buddha asked Ānanda to fetch some water for him to drink, indicating intense thirst.

As the story goes, Ānanda refused, as he saw no source for clean water. He argued with The Buddha that the nearby stream had been muddied by a large caravan of carts. But The Buddha insisted he fetch water anyway.

A question arises at this point: Why did The Buddha not go to the water himself, instead of pressing his unwilling attendant to do so? The answer is simple. The Buddha was suffering from shock caused by severe blood loss. He could no longer walk, and from then to his death bed he was most likely carried on a stretcher.

If this was indeed the situation, the sutta remains silent about The Buddha's traveling to his deathbed, possibly because the author felt that it would be an embarrassment for The Buddha. Geographically, we know that the distance between the place believed to be the house of Cunda and the place where The Buddha died was about 15 to 20 kilometers. It is not possible for a patient with such a grave illness to walk such a distance.

More likely, what happened was that The Buddha was carried on a stretcher by a group of Monks to Kusinara (Kushinagara).

It remains a point of debate whether The Buddha really determined to pass away at this city, presumably not much larger than a town. From the direction of The Buddha's journey, given in the sutta, he was moving north from Rajagaha. It is possible that he did not intend to die there, but in the town where he was born, which would have taken a period of three months to reach.

From the sutta, it is clear that The Buddha was not anticipating his sudden illness, or else he would not have accepted the invitation of his host.

Kusinara was probably the nearest town where he could find a doctor to take care of him. It is not difficult to see a group of Monks hurriedly carrying The Buddha on a stretcher to the nearest town to save his life.

Before passing away, The Buddha told Ānanda that Cunda was not to be blamed and that his death was not caused by eating Sukaramaddava. The statement is significant. The meal was not the direct cause of his death. The Buddha knew that the symptom was a repeat of an experience he'd had a few months earlier, the one which had almost killed him.

Sukaramaddava, no matter the ingredients or how it was cooked, was not the direct cause of his sudden illness.

Progression of the Disease

Mesenteric infarction is a disease commonly found among elderly people, caused by the obstruction of the main artery that supplies the middle section of the bowel-the small intestine-with blood. The most common cause of the obstruction is the degeneration of the wall of the blood vessel, the superior mesenteric artery, causing severe abdominal pain, also known as abdominal angina.

Normally, the pain is triggered by a large meal, which requires a higher flow of blood to the digestive tract. As the obstruction persists, the bowel is deprived of its blood supply, which subsequently leads to an infarction, or gangrene, of a section of the intestinal tract. This in turn results in a laceration of the intestinal wall, profuse bleeding into the intestinal tract, and then bloody diarrhea.

The disease gets worse as the liquid and content of the intestine oozes out into the peritoneal cavity, causing peritonitis or inflammation of the abdominal walls. This is already a lethal condition for the patient, who often dies due to the loss of blood and other fluid. If it is not corrected by surgery, the disease often progresses to septic shock due to bacterial toxins infiltrating the blood stream.

Retrospective Analysis

From the diagnosis given above, we can be rather certain that The Buddha suffered from mesenteric infarction caused by an occlusion of the superior mesenteric artery. This was the cause of the pain that almost killed him a few months earlier during his last rainy-season retreat.

With the progress of the illness, some of the mucosal lining of his intestine sloughed off, and this site became the origin of the bleeding.

Arteriosclerosis, the hardening of the vessel wall caused by aging, was the cause of the arterial occlusion, a small blockage that did not result in bloody diarrhea, but is a symptom, also known to us as abdominal angina.

He had his second attack while he was eating the Sukaramaddava. The pain was probably not intense in the beginning, but made him feel that there was something wrong. Suspicious about the nature of the food, he asked his host to have it all buried, so that others might not suffer from it.

Soon, The Buddha realized that the illness was serious, with the passage of blood and more severe pain in his abdomen. Due to the loss of blood, he went into shock. The degree of dehydration was so severe that he could not maintain himself any longer and he had to take shelter at a tree along the way.

Feeling very thirsty and exhausted, he got Ānanda to collect water for him to drink, even though he knew that the water was muddied. It was there that he collapsed until his entourage carried him to the nearest town, Kusinara, where there would have been a chance of finding a doctor or lodging for him to recover in.

It was probably true that The Buddha got better after drinking to replace his fluid loss, and resting on the stretcher. The experience with the symptoms told him that his sudden illness was the second attack of an existing disease. He told Ānanda that the meal was not the cause of his illness, and that Cunda was not to blame.

A patient with shock, dehydration and profuse blood loss usually feels very cold. This was the reason why he told his attendant to prepare a bed using four sheets of ifsanghati nf. According to Buddhist monastic discipline, a ifsanghati nfi is a cloak, or extra piece of robe, very large, the size of a bed sheet, which The Buddha allowed Ordained Practitioners to wear in winter.

This information reflects how cold the Buddha felt because of his loss of blood. Clinically, it is not possible for a patient who is in a state of shock with severe abdominal pain, most likely peritonitis, pale and shivering, to be ambulatory.

The Buddha was most likely put into a lodging, where he was nursed and warmed, located in the city of Kusinara. This view is also confirmed with the description of Ānanda who, weeping, swoons and holds onto the door of his lodge after learning that The Buddha was about to pass away.

Normally, a patient with mesenteric infarction could live 10 to 20 hours. From the sutta we learn that The Buddha died about 15 to 18 hours after the attack. During that time, his attendants would have tried their best to comfort him, for example, by warming the room

where he was resting, or by dripping some water into his mouth to quench his lingering thirst, or by giving him some herbal drinks. But it would be highly unlikely that a shivering patient would need someone to fan him as is described in the sutta.

Off and on, he may have recovered from a state of exhaustion, allowing him to continue his dialogues with a few people. Most of his last words could have been true, and they were memorized by generations of Monks until they were transcribed. But finally, late into the night, The Buddha died during a second wave of septic shock. His illness stemmed from natural causes coupled with his age, just as it would for anyone else.

Conclusion

The hypothesis outlined above explains several scenes in the narrative of the sutta, namely, the pressuring of Ānanda to fetch water, The Buddha's request for a fourfold cloak for his bed, the ordering of the meal to be buried, and so on.

It also reveals another possibility of the actual means of transportation of The Buddha to Kusinara and the site of his death bed. Sukaramaddava, whatever its nature, was unlikely to have been the direct cause of his illness. The Buddha did not die by food poisoning. Rather, it was the size of the meal, relatively too large for his already troubled digestive tract, that triggered the second attack of mesenteric infarction that brought an end to his life.

Author's Thoughts

Due to their importance, The Words of The Buddha book series have the last words of The Buddha in multiple places throughout the book series.

You can investigate these chapters, which some of them are the same. There are basically two different chapters being repeated throughout the book series in all of these books and chapters.

Volume 2 - Chapter 45

Volume 3 - Chapter 97

Volume 9 - Chapter 47

Volume 10 - Chapter 46

Volume 12 - Chapter 48

In all of these locations within the books series, I have inserted the last words of The Buddha and shared what one encounters upon death. This will help you to understand and gain the wisdom of, what transpires for a being as part of the process of dying and death itself.

A Student who reads this article titled "How Did The Buddha Die?" and is unEnlightened may perceive the depiction of how The Buddha died as being an extremely painful death. That it was painful for The Buddha during his last moments of life. But, that is without the wisdom of what an Enlightened being experiences as a result of having attained Enlightenment and then having issues in the physical body to include death.

I suspect that the author of the article may not be aware of how an unEnlightened and Enlightened being experience pain differently. Therefore, when describing what The Buddha experienced, he described it in graphic terms of, his own frame of reference and lifetime experiences with physical and mental pain - as being severely painful.

An Enlightened being does not experience severe physical pain but instead, it is significantly diminished or muted. An Enlightened being does not experience any mental anguish whatsoever.

When I read this article, I know that The Buddha, while experiencing a medical condition that led to his ultimate death, had a peaceful mind during the entire time leading all the way up to and including death. He would not have been in agonizing pain as one might think who has not experienced physical pain while at the same time experiencing the Enlightened mental state.

An Enlightened being will experience physical pain but, it would be very minimal compared to what an unEnlightened being would experience in the same circumstances. An Enlightened being would experience some physical pain but, they will not experience the mental anguish associated with the physical pain. An Enlightened being's mind will continue to reside peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy, despite any and all physical pain. In this way, the physical pain experienced by an Enlightened being is insignificant and a mere fraction of that which would be experienced by an unEnlightened being given the same exact situation.

For further understanding of physical and mental pain in the unEnlightened and Enlightened mental state, you might choose to investigate The Teachings in Volume 8 - Chapter 40 titled "Transcending Physical Pain by Avoiding Mental Pain". This will help you to understand how an unEnlightened being experiences physical pain versus, an Enlightened being.

Detailed explanation of Transcending Physical Pain by Avoiding Mental Pain is available in this same book series found in Chapter 40 of the book "The Foremost Householder" (Volume 9).

You can also gain an appreciation and the wisdom of this topic through understanding The Teachings of The Buddha when he shares "The Simile of The Saw" in the Kakacūpamasutta Sutta (Reference: MN 21) available in Volume 3 - Chapter 84 of this same book series.

The Buddha shares, "Monks, even if criminals were to sever you savagely limb by limb with a two-handed saw, he who gave rise to a mind of hate towards them would not be practicing my Teachings".

The Buddha shares this Teaching because his own mind, experiencing Enlightenment, would not experience mental anguish in this exact scenario or any others. It would be impossible for an Enlightened being to experience hatred towards anyone for any reason, even if being sawed "limb by limb". Therefore, The Buddha was well aware that if a Student's mind experienced hatred in this situation or any other, the mind would be unEnlightened. He emphasizes this in this Teaching.

This Teaching directly from The Buddha, and others, can provide you further insight to understand how an Enlightened being would not experience any “agonizing pain” during the process of dying or at death.

Detailed explanation of Training a Mind Filled with Loving-Kindness, without Hostility or Ill Will is available in this same book series found in Chapter 84 of the book “Foundations in The Teachings” (Volume 3).

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha’s Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 41-46)

<https://youtu.be/DIL3wmwdOql>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 333 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Buddha’s Way - Volume 10 - (Chapter 41-46)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--333---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Buddhas-Way---Volume-10---Chapter-41-46-e1kn3s5>

Now that you have completed reading (Volume 10) of this book series and may decide to read this book multiple times, I would like to take a moment to personally “thank you” for your determination, dedication, and diligence to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings of The Buddha on The Path to Enlightenment.

The time, effort, energy, and resources that you devote to this path are serving to help you and countless other beings. As you choose to learn and practice these Teachings, you will significantly reduce then eliminate any harm that you are putting into the world through your unknowing of true reality. The unEnlightened mind does not understand what it does not understand.

You are now applying time, effort, energy, and resources to improving the condition of the mind, the condition of your life, and, thus, the condition of the world through investigating The Teachings to acquire wisdom. The world becomes a better place when we each individually choose to improve our own life practice taking responsibility for our own intentions, speech, actions, and livelihood while improving our wisdom and mental discipline.

I admire individuals who choose to walk towards harmlessness. I admire individuals who choose to realize there is a better way of life and create that better way of life for themselves through seeking guidance. And, I admire individuals who do not shrink back from the struggle to move the mind towards Enlightenment when the natural tendency might be to remain complacent.

Why have I chosen to share these Teachings with you?

“That it may be for the benefit and peacefulness of the multitude (many people), out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and peacefulness of heavenly beings and humans”. (Gotama Buddha)

“Because if they understand even a single sentence, that will lead to their welfare and peacefulness for a long time”. (Gotama Buddha)

May you discover the freedom associated with a mind that is peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy permanently - the Enlightened mind.

As you need help to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings, you are welcome to seek guidance which is available openly and freely to “all beings”.

Author



David Roylance is a dedicated Practitioner and Teacher of Gotama Buddha's Teachings who has been part of the Thai community since 2001. He visited Thailand for the first time in 2002 and brought the Traditional Thai Healing Arts back to the United States of America to share with people in the Western World.

His Traditional Thai Healing Arts centers, located in the Washington DC area, provided traditional Thai healing arts to clients and educational opportunities to Students to explore the Thai healing arts, Thai culture, and The Teachings of Gotama Buddha. David is a published author with books on the topics of Traditional Thai Healing Arts and The Path That Leads to Enlightenment.

David has taught Gotama Buddha's Teachings since 2005 in the United States of America. In 2015, he closed his businesses and relocated to Chiang Mai, Thailand to be closer to the Thai culture and the Thai Community of Buddhist Practitioners.

David shares Gotama Buddha's Teachings with Household Practitioners and Ordained Practitioners in Chiang Mai, Thailand and around the world through courses, retreats, and special events providing guidance to help people attain Enlightenment - a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy.

For more information on participating in courses, retreats, special events or to invite these Teachings to your learning venue, use the contact information below:

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Restoration of The Buddha's Teachings

The Path to Enlightenment

The Buddha taught over 2,500 years ago. He taught The Path to Enlightenment guiding countless beings to a mental state that is peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy that is permanent, where the mind has eliminated 100% of all discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc.

Immediately following the death of The Buddha (i.e. Gotama Buddha), The Teachings were shining in the world continuing to guide countless people to Enlightenment. But, over the course of many generations, just as Gotama Buddha predicted, people's understanding of his Teachings gradually diminished due to modifications and adjustments made by people after him. The modifications made to his Teachings, handed down through oral transmission, have made it increasingly difficult for human beings to attain Enlightenment.

The goal of David's Teachings is to root the learning and practice he shares in "The Words of The Buddha" based on The Teachings that existed during the lifetime of Gotama Buddha, so that countless beings can now attain Enlightenment based on the original Path to Enlightenment discovered and declared by Gotama Buddha.

David does this through connecting what he teaches to the largest most complete source of Teachings from Gotama Buddha - The Pāli Canon. The Pāli Canon is the original source text of The Teachings from Gotama Buddha as spoken by him during his lifetime.

David has spent countless hours dedicated to restoring The Words of The Buddha by updating a significant portion of the translations of Gotama Buddha's Teachings from The Pāli Canon. He now offers several resources for Students to learn, reflect, and practice The Path to Enlightenment to experience the results of an Enlightened mind.

David offers books, audiobooks, videos, podcasts, online learning programs, personal guidance, and retreats without any requirement for financial support. All the work that is being done is offered openly and freely for all beings without any requirement to provide any financial support. David accepts donations but Students are not required to provide donations for any work that he does in supporting them on The Path to Enlightenment.

David does not request donations and instead, just accepts whatever is offered to him, if anything at all.

His dedication to sharing these Teachings is not motivated by finances. He shares openly and freely with everyone who has a sincere interest in learning and practicing The Path to Enlightenment.

Ultimately, David plans to preserve The Teachings of The Buddha in a format that is easily, readily, and openly accessible to anyone in the world while offering support to learn, reflect, and practice to experience the results of the Enlightened mind.

His plan is to guide countless people to Enlightenment during his lifetime and leave a Community of Enlightened beings who can continue to share The Teachings long after his death. Through developing a Community of Enlightened beings and preserving The Path to Enlightenment in resources that are easily, readily, and openly accessible to anyone in the world, David is revealing the hidden Teachings of Gotama Buddha and doing the best he can to remove any obstacles one might have to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings, allowing countless people to experience the results of an Enlightened mind.

Upon his death, David predicts that his closest Student, his son and a continued lineage of Teachers, will share these same Teachings continuing to support and grow The Community of Enlightened beings long into the future - for the next 1,000 years.

These efforts will culminate into restoring The Path to Enlightenment back into the world so that all of humanity can experience Enlightenment evolving the human species to one where every being has the opportunity to attain Enlightenment creating “heaven on earth”.

The Goal

An Entire Species of Enlightened Beings

Having experienced Enlightenment and knowing the peace, calm, serenity, and contentedness with joy that comes with having attained Enlightenment, a Buddha's goal is to share his Teachings worldwide so that "all beings" can experience Enlightenment.

The Enlightened mind no longer experiences any discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, anxiety, stress, etc.

All discontent feelings have been eliminated 100% from the Enlightened mind (i.e. all suffering is eliminated).

An Enlightened mind will have loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, equanimity, and generosity among many other wholesome qualities.

Can you imagine an entire world where all human beings have liberated their mind to no longer experience these discontent feelings and are practicing wholesome qualities of mind at all times?

With "The Buddha" (Gotama Buddha) having attained this permanent mental state of Enlightenment on his own as The Perfectly Enlightened Buddha, he would have known that through his dedicated and persistent pursuit to Enlightenment, he had acquired the wisdom needed to guide "all beings" to this same mental state.

However, his teaching career of 45 years would not be enough time to share his Teachings worldwide. He knew, that it would require many centuries for his Teachings to reach all parts of the world. During his lifetime, travel of people and information was limited based on several constraints.

Today, we are in a unique time in history where these same constraints have been eliminated. A time when people and information are able to travel around the world in an instant.

Not only can information travel quickly but all of humanity is slowly coming to the point where there is a common language spoken around the world - the English language.

Criteria exist today that did not exist during Gotama Buddha's lifetime that make now the perfect time for all of humanity to gradually attain Enlightenment realizing a better existence.

- People can travel worldwide.
- Information can be shared worldwide in an instant.
- Commonly spoken language among a large percentage of the worldwide population and this is only growing.

These criteria did not exist during the lifetime of Gotama Buddha and it is only now that the world has come into an age where his original goal is realistically possible.

But, during Gotama Buddha's lifetime it seems they had something that we may not have....

The people during Gotama Buddha's lifetime had perseverance and dedication to learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings to realize the results of experiencing the Enlightened mind. They were not afraid of hard work.

With our modern day conveniences, I am unsure how many people are willing to apply their determination, dedication, and diligence with time, effort, energy, and resources towards The Path to Enlightenment with the goal to experience the Enlightened mind.

When a being decides they are finished with the sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fear, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, etc., that is the time when one can turn towards The Teachings and goal of experiencing Enlightenment.

Through each individual deciding to learn and practice The Teachings of Gotama Buddha, as a collective world, our species will gradually evolve. We evolve to a higher consciousness where we train the mind to not harm others through our intentions, speech, nor actions.

Through each individual deciding to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings of Gotama Buddha, each person benefits and we all benefit as there will be less and less harm in the world.

Through individuals deciding to focus on developing a comprehensive approach to learning and practicing The Teachings of Gotama Buddha with guidance from a Teacher, your life drastically improves and the entire world improves essentially creating "heaven on earth".

We do not need to "fix" the world. That is not the problem. The problem is the unEnlightened mind does not understand The Natural Laws of Existence and it is quite a struggle to live in a world that one does not understand.

Through learning and practicing The Teachings of Gotama Buddha, a Practitioner comes to deeply understand The Natural Laws of Existence to acquire wisdom that will end the struggles and misery one may face on a regular basis.

Are you ready to apply determination, dedication, and diligence with time, effort, energy, and resources towards The Path to Enlightenment with the goal to experience Enlightenment?

If one enjoys anger, sadness, boredom, loneliness, resentment, etc., there is nothing to do.

But, if you are interested to eliminate these unwelcomed feelings from the mind, then I suggest you turn towards The Path to Enlightenment and apply your dedication and diligence to learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings of Gotama Buddha.

And then, as all of humanity gradually experiences Enlightenment we will have accomplished “the goal”.

“An entire species of Enlightened beings”.

Why Have I Decided to Teach The Path to Enlightenment as Taught by Gotama Buddha?

I have chosen to share these Teachings out of compassion for the world.

Compassion (Pāli: karuṇā) is concern for the misfortunes of others.

And due to this compassion, it is important to share Teachings that are based in wisdom, not belief.

There are countless traditions and ways of sharing those traditions throughout the world. All of these, in one form or another, are essentially sharing to cultivate and practice 1.) Universal Love for All Beings 2.) Do No Harm and 3.) Be a Good Moral Person.

However, the way each tradition is shared and the clarity of those teachings is unique to each tradition.

The Path to Enlightenment as taught by Gotama Buddha (“The Buddha”) over 2,500 years ago as documented in The Pāli Canon, is the most clear, concise, and precise Teachings I have ever encountered that leads exactly where he said they do, to Enlightenment.

The Enlightened mind is peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. The Enlightened mind will no longer experience any discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc.

This is accomplished through not believing The Teachings of The Buddha but instead, through learning, reflecting, and practicing to discover the truth. The mind can be trained to eliminate all the conditions that are causing it to be stuck in the unEnlightened state. Through eliminating the pollution of mind by training the mind, one can experience liberation of mind, freedom from strong feelings, peace, Enlightenment.

The Buddha’s Teachings are the only Teachings that I have encountered that do not rely on belief. With belief, one does not know what is true or false because they are just believing. Instead, Gotama Buddha’s Teachings are shared in such a way that, a Practitioner can investigate and examine them to determine the truth which leads to wisdom and thus, Enlightenment. If one was to only believe The Teachings of The Buddha, they could not acquire wisdom nor attain Enlightenment.

These Teachings are perfectly suited for today's society where there is a proliferation of misinformation and untruths. These Teachings, with guidance from a Teacher, guide a Practitioner to independently discover the truth through deeply investigating The Natural Laws of Existence (i.e. The Teachings of The Buddha). Through doing this inner work on The Path to Enlightenment, one can discover that these Teachings are the solution to the challenges we experience in the world and the solutions of how to heal from what hurt us so that we never need to hurt again. The mind can completely and entirely eliminate 100% of all discontent feelings once it is Enlightened.

This cannot be accomplished through belief.

Instead, a Practitioner needs to be determined, dedicated, and diligent to doing the inner work to develop the mind and progress towards the Enlightened mental state by acquiring wisdom.

As far as I have discovered, there are no other teachings on the planet that can guide an individual to the complete elimination of discontent feelings through independently verifying the teachings to acquire wisdom. The Buddha did something very unique during his lifetime that no other person or Teacher has accomplished.

He independently attained Enlightenment, dedicated the rest of his life to sharing his independently discovered Teachings guiding countless people to Enlightenment, and he left his Teachings in such a condition that countless more people have attained Enlightenment after his death. He meets all the criteria of a true Buddha. Gotama Buddha was a true Buddha.

My work during this life has been to rediscover these Teachings, in such a way, that they can now be shared worldwide in the international language of English so that countless people all throughout the world can attain Enlightenment during this lifetime and after my death.

The only way to accomplish this goal is to share Teachings that are not based in belief but instead, are based in independently verifiable truth so that a Practitioner can acquire wisdom.

These Teachings are clear, concise, and precise. They invite investigation and examination. Through doing this work, one can gradually train the mind to gradually practice these Teachings and gradually progress to Enlightenment. As discontentedness is gradually diminished and then eliminated from the mind, one can see the truth for themselves that these Teachings work to guide one to Enlightenment.

These Teachings lead exactly where Gotama Buddha said they do, to Enlightenment, and through each individual choosing to attain Enlightenment, humanity will evolve the human species and at the same time create “heaven on earth”.

Why Have I Decided to Reside and Teach in Thailand in Order to Restore The Teachings of The Buddha Back into Humanity and Create “Heaven on Earth”?

1.) Largest Population of Theravada Buddhist Practitioners Anywhere in the World: Thailand is the largest population of Theravada Buddhist Practitioners and Teachers anywhere in the world. Theravada Buddhism considers The Pāli Canon to be the original source Teachings of The Buddha in The Words of The Buddha. Theravada Buddhism teaches the importance of not changing The Teachings of The Buddha and practicing The Path to Enlightenment as a Buddha has taught, without any modifications.

The Pāli Canon is an important text that should not be believed to be the true Teachings of The Buddha but instead, one can learn, reflect, and practice to independently verify The Teachings to acquire wisdom observing the truth in The Teachings as the mind awakens and discontent feelings are gradually diminished and ultimately eliminated.

Once I dedicate the remaining time of this life sharing these Teachings to restore them back into the world, the Thai people and all other diligent Students who choose to learn with me will not ever allow these Teachings to be changed, modified, degraded, or lost over time. The Thai people and diligent Students are well aware that since the lifetime of Gotama Buddha, that is what has occurred and, through having these Teachings restored during the remaining time of this life, the Thai people and diligent Students will not allow this to occur again.

The Thai people will support these Teachings and ensure they continue to be offered in the world for the benefit of “all beings” while being hosted in Thailand and supported by dedicated Students from many international locations.

These Teachings have existed in Thailand for 800-1200 years and they have received significant support from countless people over many generations. The Thai people understand just how impactful The Teachings of The Buddha are to their society and for all of humanity. The Thai people can observe my dedication and commitment to sharing these Teachings, and where possible, they will support me in sharing these Teachings throughout Thailand and throughout the world.

Due to these Teachings existing in Thailand for approximately 800-1200 years, there is a significant amount of infrastructure already created through over 30,000-40,000 Temples where local Thai people and visitors to Thailand can actively learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to acquire wisdom and then integrate them into their lives. The Temple and Ordained Practitioner infrastructure is not isolated to only Thailand but extends throughout the world and is readily accessible to the benefit of “all beings”. The Thai people have laid the groundwork for these Teachings to now be shared worldwide through the Temple and Ordained Practitioner foundation and infrastructure that has been created over multiple generations.

Thailand is a favorite destination for international travelers with many people visiting Thailand to gain exposure and understanding of these Teachings allowing them to be learned and then practiced “worldwide”. There is an international audience that regularly visits Thailand who can learn these Teachings to then return back to their home country where these Teachings will be able to take root within all international societies. As these Teachings flourish around the world, Thailand has the knowledge and resources to support all of humanity to develop a Temple and Ordained Practitioner infrastructure that can be created within each individual country based on the interest of each country to more deeply integrate these Teachings into their local communities.

2.) Students Have the Ability to Learn and Practice Among Millions of Practitioners: One aspect of learning and practicing The Teachings of The Buddha that will aid one’s development and progress towards the attainment of Enlightenment is, to be part of a Community of Practitioners and Teachers that can provide guidance for gradual training and gradual practice to experience gradual progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

Through me residing and teaching in Thailand, Students have the opportunity to live in a Community of Practitioners and Teachers who are deeply committed to these Teachings and can serve as a role model for Students to gain deeper understanding of how to practice these Teachings in everyday life - even if on a semi-temporary basis during short visits to learn.

Through Students traveling to Thailand to learn while being surrounded by millions of Practitioners, they can more readily absorb how one might choose to integrate these Teachings into their daily life through observing how the people of Thailand live with countless nationalities residing peacefully and harmoniously with each other throughout the Kingdom of Thailand. Students will not only be able to learn these Teachings in a classroom setting at a Temple but, they will also experience day-to-day interactions with people who are choosing to deeply practice these Teachings creating “real life lessons” in a “classroom without walls”.

The entire Kingdom of Thailand can serve as a real life classroom environment where these Teachings are readily practiced and observable by those who choose to visit this Kingdom. I often refer to Thailand as “heaven on earth”.

3.) Can Live With Minimal Expenses: To be able to offer these Teachings at “no cost” I needed to find a location where I could reside with minimal expenses. This allows me to live based on donations rather than charging Students a price for the time, effort, energy, and resources that I expend to share these Teachings worldwide. This allows me to serve the widest audience possible without a need to require payment for my services and The Teachings that are shared.

The basic necessities to live life are readily available and are offered at a minimal cost in Thailand. This provides me the ability to live a basic lifestyle from donations shared by Students. I am able to purchase food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical care at a relatively nominal cost. And, services that I might need to support the development of learning resources are also readily available at a nominal cost.

Whether it be an audio studio to record an audiobook, printing services, technology, classroom supplies, or a full range of other needs to support the continued sharing of these Teachings, Thailand offers these at a nominal price so that there is the best utilization of any and all donations received.

As a result, I am able to help any and all beings regardless of their financial situation through creating a lifestyle where I only need basic necessities to survive and those are provided at a nominal cost while being supported by donations that are fully utilized by purchasing goods and services that are made available at a reasonable price.

4.) Healthy Environment to Live Life and Work: A wise choice for a place to live and teach would need to include a healthy food supply, weather, environment, and lifestyle. All of these are readily available in Thailand which is able to support me in leading as healthy of a lifestyle as possible.

The food in Thailand is healthy and readily available. There are many fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, nuts, seeds, and other foods that are a regular part of the Thai food offerings and readily accessible among countless fresh food markets. This allows me to ingest quality food that is supportive to a long and healthy life, thus, being able to support the learning of many Students for as long as possible due to an elongated duration of life.

Thailand's weather and environment provides the least impact to the physical body without significant weather changes or weather events that can be taxing to one's physical health.

The Thai economy is conducive to living a balanced lifestyle that supports a significant amount of time with family and friends. A work-life balance is highly understood, appreciated, supported, and straight forward to create while living in Thailand. I am able to remain dedicated and determined in my work life while also being dedicated to quality time within our immediate family. This creates the very best environment to ensure consistent health and longevity of life while enjoying a fulfilling life.

5.) Can Share Teachings Within Thailand Throughout the Day and Can Share Teachings with the Rest of The World in the Mornings and Evenings:

Through living and sharing these Teachings from Thailand and needing minimal sleep, I am able to help countless people throughout the day based on the Thai timezone, while helping countless people in other timezones during the early morning hours and evenings. This allows me to be effective at sharing these Teachings around the clock and throughout the world without any limitations based on restrictive timezones.

The timezone in Thailand is favorable to allowing me to share these Teachings worldwide without limitations based on the time of day. I can be helpful from morning, afternoon, and evening where there are Students who are readily interested to learn - whether in-person or online.

6.) Students Have Easy Access to Visas to Gain Access to Classes, Courses, and Retreats: To be successful at sharing these Teachings worldwide, in-person learning is ideal. While there is much that can be learned online and that is one way to be able to share these Teachings, there is no better way to develop your life practice than to learn through in-person access to a Teacher.

Through residing and teaching in Thailand, Students from all over the world have easy access to classes, courses, and retreats from within Thailand due to easy access to visas and as a result, me as their Teacher. Thailand does not have restrictive visa requirements that would bar people from certain countries which would inhibit "all beings" from gaining access to these Teachings.

Instead, Thailand is open and accessible to a wide majority of the world and where needed, I am able to travel.

I live in Chiang Mai, Thailand which is an international destination for countless people around the world. I live within a 4000 km distance to fifty percent (50%) of the world's population. This means that half of the world's population is a short drive or plane ride away. This creates the ability for a large majority of humanity to more easily gain access to these Teachings. And, where needed, I am able to easily travel to all other parts of the world and teach online.

People often travel to Thailand for the sole purpose of learning The Teachings of The Buddha on The Path to Enlightenment. So, by sharing these Teachings from within Thailand, there are countless people who are coming here specifically to learn and practice in the exact location where I reside and teach.

In conclusion, through residing and teaching in Thailand as a “home-base”, I am able to readily share these Teachings worldwide and work towards the restoration of The Teachings of The Buddha back into humanity so that countless people can attain Enlightenment during this lifetime and after my death.

Thailand is the perfect location for these Teachings to be shared and to serve as a “home-base” or “headquarters” for the international community to be invited and welcomed with “open arms”. There is no other location on earth that could provide for a better location to share these important Teachings and to then be preserved for future generations.

The Kingdom is here in Thailand and ready to support you in the development of your life practice towards the attainment of Enlightenment so that we can all create “heaven on earth”.

The Teachings are hosted in the east and visible in the west.

They are readily available to you and there will be a period of 1,000 years that they will “shine in the world” for all those who choose to learn, reflect, and practice to experience the peace and joy of the Enlightened mind. Then, with all of us doing the work towards developing our own individual practice of these Teachings, they will never again diminish, be degraded, or lost. Once restored, these Teachings can continue to support humanity for the rest of time.

May you discover the peace and joy of the Enlightened mind in this lifetime.

May you be peaceful, may you be safe, may you be well, and may you be free of all discontentedness and the suffering it causes.

Invitation to Learn

I would like to invite you to a kind, compassionate and loving community of Practitioners to learn and grow with these Teachings.

I would like to invite you to join this online group.

You will find it to be an online learning center for these Teachings and there is a Teacher there to help provide guidance as you have questions.

Daily Wisdom - Walking The Path with The Buddha

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/DailyWisdom999/>

Additional Learning

Visit BuddhaDailyWisdom.com where you will discover a full range of courses, retreats, and online learning resources to assist you on The Path to Enlightenment.

Donations for Learning

Learn The Teachings of Gotama Buddha that lead to a stable, calm, and peaceful mind. A more peaceful and loving world where all beings have care and compassion for each other.

By supporting this learning opportunity, you will learn how to progress along The Path to Enlightenment and help offer these Teachings to others through online and in-person learning. Through these Teachings, the world will become a kinder, more peaceful, and loving society.

Consider contributing \$5, \$10, \$15 or any amount you wish to help us continue to offer these Teachings to you and others around the world.

You can make a donation for the development and creation of these Teachings to help you and others using this link.

<https://www.buddhadailywisdom.com/supportbuddha>

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I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude for the community of Ordained and Household Practitioners benefiting from the leadership of Venerable Bhikkhu Kukrit Sotthibalo at Wat Na Pah Pong in Krung Thep, Thailand for their dedication and diligence in sharing The Teachings of Gotama Buddha. Their work was the inspiration for “The Words of The Buddha” book series.

Wat Na Pah Pong

<http://watnapp.com>

THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHA

The Path to Enlightenment Revealing The Hidden

Volume 1

Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment

Volume 2

Walking The Path with The Buddha

Volume 3

Foundation in The Teachings

Volume 4

Exploring The Path to Enlightenment

Volume 5

The First Stage of Enlightenment
(Stream-Enterer)

Volume 6

The Natural Law of Kamma

Volume 7

Breathing Mindfulness Meditation

Volume 8

The Foremost Householders

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Generosity

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