

THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHA

The Path to Enlightenment

Revealing The Hidden



Lowly Arts

Volume 12

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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

Generosity

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Lowly Arts (Volume 12)

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

The book, “Lowly Arts” 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 settling 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

Lowly Arts

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)**

What Are Lowly Arts?

Chapter 1

What are the Lowly Arts?

Venerable Sir, where as some Ascetics and Brāhmins, feeding on the food of the dedicated, make their living by such base arts, such wrong means of livelihood as palmistry, divining by signs, portents, dreams, body-marks, mouse-gnawings, fire-oblations, oblations from a ladle, of husks, rice-powder, rice grains, ghee or oil, from the mouth or of blood, reading the finger-tips, house- and garden-lore, skill in charms, ghost-lore, earth-house lore, snake-lore, poison-lore, rat-lore, bird-lore, crow-lore, foretelling a person's life-span, charms against arrows, knowledge of animals' cries, ...

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as judging the marks of gems, sticks, clothes, swords, spears, arrows, weapons, women, men, boys, girls, male and female slaves, elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, cows, goats, rams, cocks, quail, iguanas, bamboo rats, tortoises, deer, ...

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as predicting: The chiefs will march out - the chiefs will march back, our chiefs will advance and the other chiefs will retreat, our chiefs will win and the other chiefs will lose, the other chiefs will win and ours will lose, thus there will be victory for one side and defeat for the other, ...

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as predicting an eclipse of the moon, the sun, a star; that the sun and moon will go on their proper course - will go astray; that a star will go on its proper course - will go astray; that there will be a shower of meteors, a blaze in the sky, an earthquake, thunder; a rising, setting, darkening, brightening of the moon, the sun, the stars; and such will be the outcome of these things, ...

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as predicting good or bad rainfall; a good or bad harvest; security, danger; disease, health; or accounting, computing, calculating, poetic composition, philosophizing, ...

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as arranging the giving and taking in marriage, engagements and divorces; [declaring the time for] saving and spending, bringing good or bad luck, procuring abortions, using spells to bind the tongue, binding the jaw, making the hands jerk, causing deafness, getting answers with a mirror, a girl-

medium, a heavenly being; worshipping the sun or Great Brahmā (God), breathing fire, invoking the goddess of luck, ...

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins, feeding on the food of the dedicated, make their living by such base arts, such wrong means of livelihood as appeasing the heavenly beings and redeeming vows to them, making earth-house spells, causing virility or impotence, preparing and consecrating building-sites, giving ritual rinsings and bathings, making sacrifices, giving emetics, purges, expectorants and phlegmagogues, giving ear-, eye-, nose-medicine, ointments and counter-ointments, eye-surgery, surgery, pediatry, using balms to counter the side-effects of previous remedies, ...

(Reference: DN 1)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares a description of the lowly arts.

Chapter 2

The Ascetic Gotama Refrains from Such Base Arts

Monks, whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins, feeding on the food of the dedicated, make their living by such base arts, such wrong means of livelihood as palmistry, divining by signs, portents, dreams, body-marks, mouse gnawings, fire-oblations, oblations from a ladle, of husks, rice-powder, rice grains, ghee or oil, from the mouth or of blood, reading the finger-tips, house- and garden-lore, skill in charms, ghost-lore, earth-house lore, snake-lore, poison-lore, rat-lore, bird-lore, crow-lore, foretelling a person's life-span, charms against arrows, knowledge of animals' cries, the Ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood.

Thus the worldling would praise The Tathāgata.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as judging the marks of gems, sticks, clothes, swords, spears, arrows, weapons, women, men, boys, girls, male and female slaves, elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, cows, goats, rams, cocks, quail, iguanas, bamboo-rats, tortoises, deer, the Ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts.

Thus the worldling would praise The Tathāgata.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as predicting: The chiefs will march out - the chiefs will march back, our chiefs will advance and the other chiefs will retreat, our chiefs will win and the other chiefs will lose, the other chiefs will win and ours will lose, thus there will be victory for one side and defeat for the other', the Ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts.

Thus the worldling would praise The Tathāgata.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as predicting an eclipse of the moon, the sun, a star; that the sun and moon will go on their proper course - will go astray; that a star will go on its proper course - will go astray; that there will be a shower of meteors, a blaze in the sky, an earthquake, thunder; a rising, setting, darkening, brightening of the moon, the sun, the stars; and such will be the outcome of these things, the Ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood.

Thus the worldling would praise The Tathāgata.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as predicting good or bad rainfall; a good or bad harvest; security, danger; disease, health; or accounting, computing, calculating, poetic composition, philosophizing, the Ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood.

Thus the worldling would praise The Tathāgata.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as arranging the giving and taking in marriage, engagements and divorces; [declaring the time for] saving and spending, bringing good or bad luck, procuring abortions, using spells to bind the tongue, binding the jaw, making the hands jerk, causing deafness, getting answers with a mirror, a girl-medium, a heavenly being; worshipping the sun or Great Brahmā (God), breathing fire, invoking the goddess of luck, the Ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood.

Thus the worldling would praise The Tathāgata.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins, feeding on the food of the dedicated, make their living by such base arts, such wrong means of livelihood as appeasing the heavenly beings and redeeming vows to them, making earth-house spells, causing virility or impotence, preparing and consecrating building-sites, giving ritual rinsings and bathings, making sacrifices, giving emetics, purges, expectorants and phlegmagogues, giving ear-, eye-, nose-medicine, ointments and counter-ointments, eye-surgery, surgery, pediatry, using balms to counter the side-effects of previous remedies, the Ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood.

Thus the worldling would praise The Tathāgata.

It is, Monks, for such basic, minor matters of moral practice that the worldling would praise The Tathāgata.

(Reference: DN 1)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that he does not practice any of the lowly arts.

He explains that these are all “wrong livelihoods” and that he refrains from practicing these as a livelihood. An Ordained Practitioner would be unable to attain Enlightenment if they were practicing any of these “wrong livelihood”.

A worldling is an individual who is engrossed in the worries of the world, worldly matters, and material things.

Right Livelihood: A livelihood is how you earn your living through daily life to sustain your life in a career, profession, or lifestyle. Our livelihood is the work or activities we do on a daily basis such as an occupation or lifestyle to sustain our life (i.e. stay at home parent, volunteer, retired person, holy life, administrative support, waste removal, cleaning services, doctor, politician, entrepreneur, etc.). A livelihood to sustain our life should not cause any harm to other beings. If we cause harm to other beings in order to sustain our own life, this is going to produce harm in our own life.

For example, are you a doctor, nurse, auto mechanic, street cleaning engineer, food server, waste removal technician, etc. Are you conducting a livelihood that is wholesome and helpful to society and humanity, “yes”, this is a Right Livelihood. You should not cause any harm through your livelihood.

Each person has a livelihood whether the goal is to acquire financial support or not. A livelihood is the career, profession, or lifestyle one chooses. In some cases, a person may choose to pursue personal interests and skills rather than financial goals or a career. A stay at home parent is still a livelihood as this is a contribution to society and humanity providing life sustaining activities but may not have a direct salary associated with the day-to-day responsibilities.

A livelihood is not necessarily solely to make money or produce wealth but instead is how we choose to contribute our time, effort, and energy towards life sustaining activities for us and our family. Finding life supporting activities, a livelihood, that allow us to generate income to support our life through helping others or just purely providing life sustaining activities that we perform as a role in society, is our livelihood. Through finding a livelihood that you enjoy while also providing income or life sustaining needs will ensure a successful livelihood.

For those who do generate income through their livelihood, focus on finding something you enjoy that happens to also provide financial support. This will ensure the best outcome and enthusiasm for your daily life. If you select a livelihood solely on the bases of making money, acquiring wealth, power, prestige, or a specific title, then you will find the mind will struggle to perform your duties and responsibilities on an ongoing consistent basis perhaps even becoming bored or disinterested.

If you find a livelihood that is helping others, you enjoy the profession, and you happen to be able to acquire financial income to sustain your life and the life of those close to you, this will be the best match.

The mind will be motivated and enthusiastic to perform the daily responsibilities of the livelihood with ease. Finding a livelihood where you can acquire an income, help others, and you enjoy the activities required on a daily basis, will ensure that you never “work” one day in your life. Your profession will not feel like “work” but instead it is just one way that you help the world through your daily efforts and it happens to generate life sustaining resources for you and your family. Your livelihood is part of your life practice and we can make conscious and wise choices to ensure we are meeting our goals while also helping others through our livelihood.

Gotama Buddha gave us five livelihoods that we should not engage in as they cause harm to other beings, thus, unwholesome Kamma production: business in weapons, business in living beings (animals, slaves, human trafficking), business in meat, business in substances that cause heedlessness, and business in poisons. These all cause harm in the world, thus, if we choose to sustain our life based on these “wrong livelihoods” then we will experience harm.

Trades Not to Be Plied

Monks, a Household Practitioner should not engage in these five trades.

What five?

Business in weapons,
business in living beings,
business in meat,
business in substances that cause heedlessness,
and business in poisons.

A Household Practitioner should not engage in these five trades.

(Reference: AN 5.177)

— — — — —

And what, Monks, is wrong livelihood?

Scheming, flattery, hinting, belittling, pursuing gain with gain: this is wrong livelihood.

(Gotama Buddha)

(Reference: MN 117)

These are aspects of practice that one is being guided to avoid while practicing one's livelihood.

Scheming: corruption or deception.

Flattery: excessive and insincere praise, given especially to further one's own interests.

Hinting: suggest or indicate something indirectly or covertly. Not being direct, clear, and to the point with one's work activities.

Belittling: talking down to others in negative and disparaging ways in the attempt to diminish others' work.

Pursuing gain with gain: doing work just for profit or greed, without a real interest to provide benefit to humanity through one's livelihood.

As long as your livelihood is not involved in any of these five (5) wrong livelihoods, you are not pursuing a livelihood solely for the purpose of "gain" or selfish desires (i.e. solely for fame or fortune), and you conduct your livelihood with high ethics (i.e. without scheming or corruption), you are practicing "Right Livelihood".

Ordained Practitioners have guidance from Gotama Buddha beyond these five (5) livelihoods that are considered "wrong livelihood". For example, Gotama Buddha provided guidance that Ordained Practitioners who provide tattoos, palm reading, spells, predictions based on astronomy, and other types of "livelihoods" are practicing "wrong livelihood". Gotama Buddha's Teachings have much more details on "Right Livelihood" for Ordained Practitioners.

Gotama Buddha's objectives for Ordained Practitioners was to keep them focused on learning, practicing, and sharing these Teachings so that they could eliminate the discontent mind for themselves and guide humanity in eliminating their discontent mind. Therefore, Ordained Practitioners who focus on livelihoods other than learning, practicing, and sharing The Teachings are not practicing "Right Livelihood".

Ordained Practitioners are sustained through offerings by Household Practitioners. So it is important that they develop their own practice of these Teachings and then share The Teachings with Household Practitioners so they can benefit from The Teachings and improve their life. If Ordained Practitioners are not learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings so that they can then share The Teachings with Household Practitioners, they are benefiting from the offerings and hard work of Household Practitioners without providing anything in return that is beneficial to Household Practitioners. This was not how Gotama Buddha intended The Community of Ordained Practitioners to function, thus, he established many "wrong livelihoods" that involved distracting Ordained Practitioners from their work to develop a life practice and then teach others.

Recently, marijuana has become known as a substance once thought of as a "drug" but now many people are realizing its medicinal qualities. For one to sell this medication through proper legal channels as a "medication" with the intention to help, that would still be considered a "Right Livelihood". You will find more on the topic of marijuana in the Chapter titled "The Five Precepts: A Householders Guide to Daily Practice" (Chapter 7) of the book "Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment" (Volume 1).

Chapter 3

A Monk Who Is Perfected in Morality A Monk Refrains from Such Base Arts and Wrong Means of Livelihood

Venerable Sir, whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins, feeding on the food of the dedicated, make their living by such base arts, such wrong means of livelihood as palmistry, divining by signs, portents, dreams, body-marks, mouse-gnawings, fire-oblations, oblations from a ladle, of husks, rice-powder, rice grains, ghee or oil, from the mouth or of blood, reading the finger-tips, house- and garden-lore, skill in charms, ghost-lore, earth-house lore, snake-lore, poison-lore, rat-lore, bird-lore, crow-lore, foretelling a person's life-span, charms against arrows, knowledge of animals' cries.

A Monk refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood. Thus he is perfected in morality.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as judging the marks of gems, sticks, clothes, swords, spears, arrows, weapons, women, men, boys, girls, male and female slaves, elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, cows, goats, rams, cocks, quail, iguanas, bamboo rats, tortoises, deer.

A Monk refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood. Thus he is perfected in morality.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as predicting: The chiefs will march out - the chiefs will march back, our chiefs will advance and the other chiefs will retreat, our chiefs will win and the other chiefs will lose, the other chiefs will win and ours will lose, thus there will be victory for one side and defeat for the other.

A Monk refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood. Thus he is perfected in morality.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as predicting an eclipse of the moon, the sun, a star, that the sun and moon will go on their proper course - will go astray; that a star will go on its proper course - will go astray; that there will be a shower of meteors, a blaze in the sky, an earthquake, thunder; a rising, setting, darkening, brightening of the moon, the sun, the stars; and such will be the outcome of these things.

A Monk refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood. Thus he is perfected in morality.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as predicting good or bad rainfall; a good or bad harvest; security, danger; disease, health; or accounting, computing, calculating, poetic composition, philosophizing.

A Monk refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood. Thus he is perfected in morality.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as arranging the giving and taking in marriage, engagements and divorces; [declaring the time for] saving and spending, bringing good or bad luck, procuring abortions, using spells to bind the tongue, binding the jaw, making the hands jerk, causing deafness, getting answers with a mirror, a girl-medium, a heavenly being; worshipping the sun or Great Brahmā (God), breathing fire, invoking the goddess of luck.

A Monk refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood. Thus he is perfected in morality.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins, feeding on the food of the dedicated, make their living by such base arts, such wrong means of livelihood as appeasing the heavenly beings and redeeming vows to them, making earth-house spells, causing virility or impotence, preparing and consecrating building-sites, giving ritual rinsings and bathings, making sacrifices, giving emetics, purges, expectorants and phlegmagogues, giving ear-, eye-, nose medicine, ointments and counter-ointments, eye-surgery, surgery, pediatry, using balms to counter the side-effects of previous remedies.

A Monk refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood. Thus he is perfected in morality.

And then, Sir, that Monk who is perfected in morality sees no danger from any side owing to his being restrained by morality. Just as a duly-anointed Khattiya King, having conquered his enemies, by that very fact sees no danger from any side, so the Monk, on account of his morality, sees no danger anywhere. He experiences in himself the blameless bliss that comes from maintaining this Noble morality. In this way, Sir, he is perfected in morality.

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that a Monk (i.e. Ordained Practitioner) should not practice any of the lowly arts and by doing so, will not experience any “danger” (i.e. harm).

He explains that these are all “wrong livelihoods” and that Ordained Practitioner refrains from practicing these as a livelihood. An Ordained Practitioner would be unable to attain Enlightenment if they were practicing any of these “wrong livelihood”.

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins make their living by such base arts as judging the marks of gems, sticks, clothes, swords, spears, arrows, weapons, women, men, boys, girls, male and female slaves, elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, cows, goats, rams, cocks, quail. iguanas, bamboo rats, tortoises, deer.

Gotama Buddha did not accept animals as offerings and guided his Ordained Practitioners to not accept animals as offerings.

Animal Ownership and a Life of Servitude

There is a great need for caring and compassionate people to care for the massive number of pets that have proliferated throughout the world.

It is important to understand, having a pet is not what will bring permanent peaceful, content, joyful, and satisfying feelings into the mind. Oftentimes, when the unEnlightened mind is experiencing painful feelings, an individual can crave/desire a pet thinking this is going to fix the mind. In reality, it is oftentimes just one more craving/desire/attachment that will lead to discontentedness if the mind becomes attached.

There are multiple challenges associated with taking on the responsibility of another being’s life.

The feeding, bathing, caring, medical, and other responsibilities often challenge one to experience freedom of movement and freedom of mind. There are oftentimes expenses beyond what someone is able to support as well as emotional challenges and physical harms that are experienced by an individual as a result of living side-by-side with animals.

Then, end of life decisions can leave one struggling as they observe the pet aging and experiencing sickness. Euthanasia is often considered which brings a whole host of challenges for the individual as euthanasia would conflict with The First Precept of The Five Precepts, but observing end of life struggles also brings significant challenges to a Practitioner’s mind.

While there are many animals that need kind and loving people to care for them, it can be quite a challenge for someone to do so without attachment. If there is craving/desire/attachment, there will be discontentedness that is experienced in the mind.

So while an individual oftentimes considers getting a pet to experience “pleasant feelings”, this will lead to “painful feelings” due to the mind’s own craving/desire/attachment. The unEnlightened mind is going to chase after the objects of its affection thinking that “the next new shiny object around the corner” is going to bring lasting fulfillment, but it never does. Those feelings are only temporary, they are impermanent due to the mind’s craving/desire/attachment.

I would suggest that for someone who has a sincere interest to actively progress towards Enlightenment, to not acquire the responsibility of caring for an animal's life. Instead, focus on improving one's own mind and life, that will be challenging enough, rather than, taking on the added responsibility of caring for another being's life.

But, should someone choose to take on this responsibility, I suggest adopting an animal from a shelter rather than going to a for-profit breeder. If someone purchased an animal from a breeder, this would be supporting another person's "wrong livelihood" which only produces more issues in the world.

The mass production of animals for sale is causing enormous issues in the world as these animals oftentimes lack the care they need from responsible individuals. Animals are not meant to be kept inside homes and with human beings living side-by-side with animals. While we do that today, I suspect that as more people understand the harms we are causing due to our own selfish desires to keep animals with us, that less and less people will choose this option.

Human beings can oftentimes be selfish thinking that animals are here to serve us when they are their own beings and are unable to give their permission for us to keep them in a life of servitude based on our own selfish desires. We oftentimes use animals to fulfill our own selfish desires without the animal providing the ability to give their consent, thus, we keep beings trapped into a life to fulfill our own selfish desires, much like slaves. Whether it is for food, food production, pets, or some other purpose, we are using animals to fulfill our own desires without the ability for the animals to consent to our demands.

How would we feel if there was a being more superior than human beings that captured us, bred us, and trapped us into a life of servitude to meet their demands? Are we comfortable and willing to give our life over to this other class of beings to serve their every demand? Would we give over our children, life partner, or members of our family to this more supreme class of beings to control us?

But, we do have this challenge where there are countless animals in the world that do need caring homes. There are some people who are able to manage this well and find "the middle way" as it relates to caring for an animal.

If you choose to do so, it is important to train the mind that this animal is not going to bring lasting or permanent peaceful, content, joyful, and satisfying feelings into the mind. And, if an individual is choosing to take on this responsibility of caring for a pet thinking it will produce these feelings, that is the wrong reason to get a pet and they are only setting themselves up to fail, as the mind is just having craving/desire/attachment that is going to lead to discontentedness.

If the goal is to eliminate the mind's potential to have craving/desire/attachment, I would suggest not getting a pet. If the mind is well trained and is adopting a pet to provide loving-kindness and compassion for the being's life while ensuring the mind does not acquire craving/desire/attachment, perhaps they can manage having a pet and provide care but this is going to require a deep understanding and practice of these Teachings or else, one is setting themselves up for discontentedness.

At the end of the day, it is a personal choice. A choice that only each individual can make. Perhaps the thoughts shared here can help you as you consider this decision and make the wisest decision for you.

Chapter 4

The Various Kinds of Pointless Talk

Monks, do not engage in the various kinds of pointless talk, that is, talk about Kings, thieves, and ministers of state; talk about armies, dangers, and wars; talk about food, drink, garments, and beds; talk about garlands and scents; talk about relations, vehicles, villages, towns, cities, and countries; talk about women and talk about heroes; street talk and talk by the well; talk about those departed in days gone by; rambling chitchat; speculation about the world and about the sea; talk about becoming this or that.

For what reason?

Because, Monks, this talk is unbeneficial, irrelevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and does not lead to fading away of strong feelings, to freedom from strong feelings, to elimination, to peace, to direct knowledge (experience), to Enlightenment, to Nibbāna.

(Reference: SN 56.10)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that Ordained Practitioners would be unwise to discuss topics such as those mentioned in this Teaching.

Gotama Buddha's objective for Ordained Practitioners was to keep them focused on learning, practicing, and sharing these Teachings so that they could eliminate the discontent mind for themselves and guide humanity in eliminating their discontent mind. Therefore, Ordained Practitioners who discuss these topics of "pointless talk", would be taking away from their effectiveness to share these Teachings with the widest audience possible.

Ordained Practitioners are sustained through offerings by Household Practitioners. So it is important that they develop their own practice of these Teachings and then share The Teachings with Household Practitioners so they can benefit from The Teachings and improve their life. If Ordained Practitioners are speaking in ways that is unbeneficial to those who are interested to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings using "pointless talk", it detracts from one's ability to be an effective Teacher.

Through an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher eliminating these topics of conversation from what they choose to speak about, they will be of more benefit to those who seek to understand these Teachings through staying focused on sharing The Teachings, not "pointless talk".

Additionally, if an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher is looking to have the widest audience possible to be interested in learning with them, if they did speak of these topics, it would alienate a large segment of a population based on having opposing views.

The unEnlightened mind is oftentimes uncomfortable with disagreement and can become angry when an individual disagrees with their point of view or opinion. So if an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher is discussing things like politics, a topic that can draw heated discussion due to one's own craving/desire/attachment, there will be Students who adamantly disagree with a Teachers opinions and this will create a roadblock to their ability to receive guidance on The Path to Enlightenment. The unEnlightened mind will be angered and frustrated that a Teacher does not share their same perspective and, therefore, they will decide to not continue forward to learn and practice these Teachings to experience the results of an Enlightened mind. The Student's unEnlightened mind will falsely attribute their painful feelings of anger, frustration, irritation, etc. to the Teacher and then have aversion distancing themselves from the Teacher based on thinking this will solve their mind's difficulties.

The best approach an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher could take is, to not discuss these topics at all to develop their practice, such that, they only ever discuss The Teachings with their Students rather than politics or other irrelevant topics that do not relate to The Path to Enlightenment and the Student's attainment of Enlightenment.

The goal of an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher should be to openly and freely share these Teachings with all those who seek guidance. In doing so, through one's own practice being developed, they can focus solely on sharing these Teachings rather than having discussion on irrelevant topics that can produce arguments and hostility directed to the Teacher detracting from the goal of sharing these Teachings openly and freely for the benefit of all those who seek guidance.

Political views, discussion of specific criminal court cases, military, wars, and other topics are "irrelevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and does not lead to fading away of strong feelings, to freedom from strong feelings, to elimination, to peace, to direct knowledge (experience), to Enlightenment, to Nibbāna".

These topics and others do not lead to Enlightenment and could only serve for Students to choose to distance themselves from a Teacher should the Teacher choose to discuss these types of topics. Discussing irrelevant topics diminishes one's effectiveness and benefit to the Students. A Teacher needs to develop the ability to share these Teachings in a way that focuses only on these Teachings rather than "street talk and talk by the well; talk about those departed in days gone by; rambling chitchat; speculation about the world and about the sea; talk about becoming this or that".

This will assist a Teacher in being beneficial to those who are seeking guidance rather than giving reasons for Students distance themselves from a Teacher and, thus, The Teachings that are going to ultimately benefit one's life through the attainment of Enlightenment.

Chapter 5

The Ascetic Gotama Refrained from Pointless Talk

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins, feeding on the food of the dedicated, remain addicted to such distasteful conversation as about Kings, thieves, and ministers of state; talk about armies, dangers, and wars; talk about food, drink, garments, and beds; talk about garlands and scents; talk about relations, vehicles, villages, towns, cities, and countries; talk about women and talk about heroes; street talk and talk by the well; talk about those departed in days gone by; rambling chitchat; speculation about the world and about the sea; talk about becoming this or that, the Ascetic Gotama refrains from such conversation.

Thus the worldling would praise The Tathāgata.

(Reference: DN 1)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that he refrains from pointless talk.

The Buddha spoke of topics related to these Teachings and guiding Students to liberation of the mind. Through remaining consistent and dedicated to sharing these Teachings, people around The Buddha gave much significance to his words and his Teachings.

If he had “rambling chitchat”, people would become accustomed to his words and conversations would be meaningless. They would be disinterested in listening to him and understanding the depth of his Teachings.

Therefore, he remained focused on sharing The Teachings, which is The Path to Enlightenment, rather than, various unbeneficial, irrelevant, and pointless talk.

In this way, he could be much more effective as a Teacher helping to guide countless people to Enlightenment because when he spoke, people listened.

Chapter 6

A Monk Refrains from Pointless Talk

Whereas some Ascetics and Brāhmins remain addicted to such unedifying conversation as about Kings, thieves, and ministers of state; talk about armies, dangers, and wars; talk about food, drink, garments, and beds; talk about garlands and scents; talk about relations, vehicles, villages, towns, cities, and countries; talk about women and talk about heroes; street talk and talk by the well; talk about those departed in days gone by; rambling chitchat; speculation about the world and about the sea; talk about becoming this or that, a Monk refrains from such distasteful conversation.

Thus he is perfected in morality...

Monks, do not engage in the various kinds of pointless talk, that is, talk about Kings, thieves, and ministers of state; talk about armies, dangers, and wars; talk about food, drink, garments, and beds; talk about garlands and scents; talk about relations, vehicles, villages, towns, cities, and countries; talk about women and talk about heroes; street talk and talk by the well; talk about those departed in days gone by; rambling chitchat; speculation about the world and about the sea; talk about becoming this or that.

For what reason?

Because, Monks, this talk is unbeneficial, irrelevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and does not lead to fading away of strong feelings, to freedom from strong feelings, to elimination, to peace, to direct knowledge (experience), to Enlightenment, to Nibbāna.

When you talk, Monks, you should talk about: This is discontentedness; you should talk about: This is the cause of discontentedness; you should talk about: This is the elimination of discontentedness; you should talk about: This is the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.

For what reason?

Because, Monks, this talk is beneficial, relevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and leads to fading away of strong feelings, to freedom from strong feelings, to elimination, to peace, to direct knowledge (experience), to Enlightenment, to Nibbāna.

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: DN 1)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that an Ordained Practitioners should not have “pointless talk” but instead, should focus on sharing The Teachings such as The Four Noble Truths.

It is The Four Noble Truths that is beneficial and helpful to Students, not pointless talk.

It is through sharing these Teachings that Students will find benefit in associating with a Teacher and continue to seek guidance.

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).

Lowly Arts Are Not the Wonder of Psychic Potency

Chapter 7

Three Kinds of Wonders (First Discourse)

There are, Brāhmin, these three kinds of wonders.

What three?

- (1) The mystic wonder,
- (2) The wonder of mind-reading, and
- (3) The wonder of instruction.

— — —

- (1) And what, Brāhmin, is the mystic wonder?

Here, a Monk wields the various kinds of mystic potency: having been one, he becomes many; having been many, he becomes one; he appears and vanishes; he goes unhindered through a wall, through a protective barrier, through a mountain as though through space; he dives in and out of the earth as though it were water; he walks on water without sinking as though it were earth; seated cross-legged, he travels in space like a bird; with his hand he touches and strokes the moon and sun so powerful and mighty; he exercises mastery with the body as far as the Brahmā world.

This is called the mystic wonder.

- (2) And what, Brāhmin, is the wonder of mind-reading?

There is one who, by means of some clue, declares: Your thought is thus, such is what you are thinking, your mind is in such and such a state. And even if he makes many declarations, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

Again, someone does not declare [the state of mind] on the basis of a clue, but he hears the sound of people, spirits, or deities [speaking] and then declares: Your thought is thus, such is what you are thinking, your mind is in such and such a state. And even if he makes many declarations, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

Again, someone does not declare [the state of mind] on the basis of a mark, or by hearing the sound of people, spirits, or deities [speaking], but he hears the sound of the diffusion of thought as one is thinking and examining some matter] and then declares: Your thought is thus, such is what you are thinking, your mind is in such and such a state. And even if he makes many declarations, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

Again, someone does not declare [the state of mind] on the basis of a mark, or by hearing the sound of people, spirits, or deities [speaking], or by hearing the sound of the diffusion of thought as one is thinking and examining [some matter], but with his own mind he encompasses the mind of one who has attained concentration without thought and examination and he understands: This person's mental activities are so disposed that immediately afterward he will think this thought. And even if he makes many declarations, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

This is called the wonder of mind-reading.

(3) And what, Brāhmin, is the wonder of instruction?

Here, someone instructs [others] thus: Think in this way and not in that way! Attend to this and not to that! Abandon this and enter and dwell in that!

This is called the wonder of instruction.

(Reference: AN 3.60)

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.

(2) The Wonder of Mind-Reading is to be able to read someone's mind knowing their feelings, thoughts, and emotions.

(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.

Chapter 8

Three Kinds of Wonders (Second Discourse)

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 Brahmas, and the Māras, and the world below with its Ascetics and Brahmans, 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.

Monk's Way of Conduct Towards Wonder of Mystic Power and Other Kinds of Power

Chapter 9

The Perfectly Enlightened One Prohibits Monks from Exhibiting a Wonder of Mystic Power

(The Venerable Pindola the Bhāradvāja, shown his mystic power, having risen above the ground, having taken hold of that the bowl of the (great) merchant of Rājagaha was brought down by him, circled three times around Rājagaha.)

Then The Perfectly Enlightened One on this occasion, in this connection, having had The Community of Monks gather, questioned the Venerable Pindola the Bhāradvāja, saying:

Is it true, as is said, Bhāradvāja, that the bowl of the (great) merchant of Rājagaha was fetched down by you?

‘It is true, Venerable Sir.’

It is not suiting, Bhāradvāja, it is not becoming, it is not fitting, it is not worthy of an Ascetic, it is not allowable, it is not to be done. How can you, Bhāradvāja, on account of a cheap wooden bowl exhibit a condition of further-men, a wonder of mystic power to Householders? As, Bhāradvāja, a woman exhibits her loin-cloth on account of a cheaply stamped māśaka (a small bean, used as a standard of weight and value; hence a small coin of very low value), even so by you, Bhāradvāja, was a condition of further-men, a wonder of mystic power exhibited to Householders on account of a cheap wooden bowl. It is not, Bhāradvāja, for pleasing those who are not (yet) pleased nor for increasing the number of those who are pleased, but, Bhāradvāja, it is displeasing to those who are not pleased as well as to those who are pleased, and it causes wavering in some.

Having guided him, having given reasoned talk, he addressed the Monks, saying:

Monks, a condition of further-men, a wonder of mystic power is not to be exhibited to Householders.

Whoever should exhibit them, there is an offense of wrong-doing.

Break, Monks, this wooden bowl; having reduced it to fragments, give them to Monks as perfume to mix with ointment. And, Monks, a wooden bowl should not be used. Whoever should use one, there is an offense of wrongdoing.

(Reference: Cv 5.8)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that the Ordained Practitioners should not show or exhibit “mystic power” to Household Practitioners.

As the mind awakens to Enlightenment, some beings will experience various abilities such as those described by The Buddha in this Chapter and other Chapters.

Mystic power and mind-reading are just a few special abilities that can be experienced by a being whose mind is purified and awakened.

As these special abilities are experienced by a Practitioner, either Ordained or a Householder, they should not be used to amaze people or for financial gain. These special abilities should only be used for purposes that help others attain Enlightenment.

Displaying one’s special abilities would be to do so out of arrogance or pride. There is no need to tell others or display for others any special abilities that are experienced as a result of awakening the mind to Enlightenment. To continue further progress on The Path to Enlightenment, a Practitioner will need to not cling to these special abilities or have the craving/desire to display them for others. Even discussing one’s special abilities is not needed.

If one has developed special abilities, remain humble using them only in situations that would provide benefit, not to project arrogance or pride. If there is arrogance and pride, the mind will not experience Enlightenment.

Chapter 10

The Perfectly Enlightened One Prohibits Monks from Boasting about a Non-Existence of State of Further-Men in Oneself

Whatever Monk should boast, with reference to himself of a state of further-men (attainment of Jhānas or Stage of Enlightenment), sufficient noble wisdom and insight, though not knowing it fully, and saying: This I know, this I see, then if later on, he, being pressed or not being pressed, fallen, should aspire to be purified, and should say: Your Venerable Sir, I said that I know what I do not know, see what I do not see, I spoke idly, falsely, with conceit apart from the undue estimate of himself, he also is one who is defeated, he is not in communion.

(Reference: Pi Tv Bu Vb Pj 4)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a Practitioner should not boast about their attainments on The Path to Enlightenment. In reality, there is no need to even discuss one's own attainments on The Path to Enlightenment.

If a Practitioner is experiencing the Jhānas or a Stage of Enlightenment, then continue to focus on development of one's own life practice to further awaken the mind. Being boastful, arrogant, prideful, or even discussing one's own attainments with anyone other than one's own Teacher, would be to do so with arrogance and pride, therefore, inhibiting progress to Enlightenment.

While attaining the Jhānas or any Stage of Enlightenment is outstanding for that individual, the goal is to attain Enlightenment as an Arahant, not to become boastful about experiencing any aspect of these attainments. Allowing the ego to arise based on one's attainments is to create further obstacles that will need to be overcome.

It is only Enlightenment itself, as an Arahant, that is permanent. All the other attainments are impermanent and the mind is not meant to dwell there but instead, one should continue to remain determined, dedicated, and diligent to progress to Enlightenment. That will not occur if one becomes boastful of the lesser attainments or the first, second, or third Stages of Enlightenment.

As the mind experiences increasingly high degrees of focus, concentration, memorization, and clarity, always remain humble and appreciative of having discovered these Teachings and being able to learn, reflect, and practice in such a way that you can experience the results of the attainments. There are countless beings who have not yet been able to discover these Teachings, and they continue to suffer as a result. Rather than being boastful, arrogant, or prideful, cultivate loving-kindness and compassion for all those who have not yet been able to realize the attainments experienced on The Path to Enlightenment.

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 1-10)

<https://youtu.be/EsugiByReTM>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 379 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 1-10)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--379---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---Lowly-Arts---Volume-12---Chapter-1-10-e1plq80/a-a8o4gab>

Chapter 11

The Perfectly Enlightened One Prohibits Monks from Boasting About a Non-Existence of State of Further-Men in Oneself

Whatever Monk should speak of a condition of further-men (attainment of Jhānas or Stage of Enlightenment) to one who is not ordained - if it is a fact there is an offense of wrongdoing.

(Reference: Pi Tv Bu Vb Pc 8)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that Ordained Practitioners should not discuss their attainments with anyone who is not ordained.

Chapter 12

Do Not Be Judgmental Regarding People

The Perfectly Enlightened One said to the Venerable Ānanda, by reason of the female Household Practitioner Migasālā states disagreement to The Fortunate One that her father Purāṇa was celibate, living apart, abstaining from sexual intercourse but her paternal uncle Isidatta was not celibate, not abstaining from sexual intercourse, but lived a contented married life. When they died, The Fortunate One also declared: They attained to the state of a Once-Returner and have been reborn in the Tusita group [of heavenly beings].

Judgmental people compare them, saying: ‘This one has just the same qualities as the other, so why is one worse and one better?’ This will be for their lasting harm and suffering.

In this case, the person who is sweet-natured ... and has listened, learned, comprehended theoretically, and found temporary freedom is better and finer than the other person.

Why is that?

Because the Teachings-stream carries him along. But who can know this difference except The Tathāgata?

Therefore, Ānanda, do not be judgmental regarding people.

Do not pass judgment on people.

Those who pass judgment on people harm themselves.

I alone, or one like me, may pass judgment on people.

(Reference: AN 6.44)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that a Practitioner should not be judgmental towards people. Being judgmental towards others only harms one’s own mind.

Passing judgment on others only serves to cause separation and division. An Enlightened being would not be judgmental towards others understanding that this would not create harmony and unity in relationships.

Judgment: attempting to determine what is right or wrong for another person while placing oneself above others with arrogance or pride (i.e. the ego). Comparing that one is superior or inferior to another person. Attempting to declare who is wholesome or unwholesome, good or bad. Judgment is based in “conceit”. Judgment is harmful to the mind and needs to be eliminated to attain Enlightenment.

Discernment: is wise decision making based in wisdom. Discernment is helpful to the mind and needs to be cultivated to attain Enlightenment.

The Buddha is helping one of his closest Students Ānanda understand that he is incapable of judging what is wholesome and unwholesome and where one might be reborn upon death. He explains that only a Buddha would be capable of determining where one is going to be reborn using the following sentence: “I alone, or one like me, may pass judgment on people”.

Here, The Buddha was not saying that he would look down on others but instead, that he is able to assess one’s mind to determine what realm they would be reborn and only a Buddha would be capable of being able to determine one’s next rebirth.

What is a Buddha?

A “Buddha” is not a Stage of Enlightenment but instead, is a unique type of Enlightened being. A Buddha is an Arahant who has attained Enlightenment without any assistance of Teachers but only through their own efforts of using the world as their Teacher and perhaps Teachings of a previously awakened Buddha.

There are three primary criteria of what makes a Buddha a Buddha.

1.) A Buddha awakens to Enlightenment through their own independent journey without the assistance of any Teachers, independently discovering The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment.

A Buddha has fully eliminated The Ten Fetters to attain Enlightenment as an Arahant but they have done so through their own independent journey without the assistance of any Teachers, developing deep wisdom of what is needed to attain Enlightenment.

2.) A Buddha guides countless others to Enlightenment during their lifetime through sharing their independently discovered Teachings that led to their own Enlightenment during their independent journey.

A Buddha has the ability to guide countless beings to the attainment of Enlightenment during their lifetime and after their death. A Buddha will dedicate the remaining time of their life towards sharing their Teachings and guiding countless beings to Enlightenment.

3.) Upon a Buddha’s death, they will leave their Teachings in a condition that can be continually shared assisting countless more beings to Enlightenment after their death.

A Buddha’s Teachings and Students will continue to guide countless people to Enlightenment after a Buddha’s death. 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.

A Buddha is referred to as a Fully Perfectly Enlightened Buddha, a Perfectly Enlightened One, or a Tathāgata. They are a human being, a Teacher, one with deep compassion for all beings and the world. They have deep wisdom to help the world through individuals choosing to learn and practice their Teachings to attain Enlightenment.

They are considered Perfectly Enlightened because there are no outside influences that have led to their awakening, so they have “Perfect Enlightenment” where their mind is unaffected by any teachings outside of their own independently discovered Teachings that led to their awakening.

A Buddha will have an excellent memory being able to recall countless past events and situations with stunning accuracy. Unlike other humans, their memory does not fade and is not overwritten.

A Buddha will need to weave their way through a previous Buddha’s Teachings as all things are affected by impermanence, thus, a previous Buddha’s Teachings will not be in a pure condition.

A Buddha will be able to easily determine the condition of the mind of another person, then be able to help them with Teachings to eliminate the unwholesome qualities of the mind and cultivate wholesome qualities of the mind. A Buddha will be able to observe the condition of another being’s mind but only does so with an interest to help the other being eliminate the unwholesome qualities from the mind and cultivate wholesome qualities in the mind to guide one towards Enlightenment.

A Buddha will have a deep practice of their own Teachings, leading by example as a living, breathing, walking example of their Teachings.

A Buddha will be able to make predictions of the future and understand the future progress of the world as a whole while explaining past events and the current condition of the world through their Teachings.

A Buddha will know this is their last life without being reborn into any realm of existence. They will have insight into their previous lives and knowledge of their existence in those previous lives. Their only goal will be to lead as many people to Enlightenment as possible and to create a strong Community of humans with Enlightenment who will assist others to attain Enlightenment and leave strong Teachings that will assist unEnlightened beings to become Enlightened after a Buddha’s death.

When a Buddha arises in the world, this is your best opportunity to attain Enlightenment. A Buddha will have independently realized their Enlightenment and will be experiencing “Perfect Enlightenment”. A Buddha will have deep knowledge, deep understanding, and deep wisdom of how to attain Enlightenment through their independent realization of Enlightenment.

A Buddha will be able to teach and guide all humans, who are interested to learn, towards Enlightenment.

A Buddha arising in the world is extremely rare. The last Buddha currently known to the world was Gotama Buddha who died over 2,500 years ago.

Chapter 13

The Five Great Thieves

Monks, there are these five great thieves to be found in the world.

What are the five?

(1) Monks, here a certain one of the great thieves thought: To be sure, will I, surrounded by a hundred or by a thousand, wander about among villages, towns, and the possessions of Kings, slaying and causing to be slain, destroying and causing destruction, tormenting and causing torment. He, in the course of time, surrounded by a hundred or by a thousand, wanders about among villages, towns, and the possessions of Kings, **slaying and causing to be slain, destroying and causing destruction, tormenting and causing torment.**

Now indeed, Monks, a certain unwholesome Monk thought: To be sure, I, surrounded by a hundred or by a thousand, will make an alms-tour among villages, towns and the possessions of Kings, honored, respected, appreciated, worshipped, admired, supported by Householders, by those who have gone forth into homelessness, and by the requisites of robes, almsfood, bedding and medicine. He, in the course of time, surrounded by a hundred, by a thousand, made an alms-tour among villages, towns and the possessions of Kings, **honored, respected, appreciated, worshipped, admired, supported by Householders and receiving the requisites of robes, almsfood, bedding and medicine for those who go forth into homelessness.**

This, Monks, is the first great thief found existing in the world.

(2) Again, Monks, here a certain unwholesome Monk, having mastered thoroughly Teachings and the discipline made known by The Tathāgata, takes it for his own.

This, Monks, is the second great thief found existing in the world.

(3) Again, Monks, here a certain unwholesome Monk, blames a follower of the pure Brahma-life, one leading the absolutely pure Brahma-life, for an unfounded breach of the Brahma-life.

This, Monks, is the third great thief found existing in the world.

(4) Again, Monks, a certain unwholesome Monk favors and persuades a Householder on account of those things which are important possessions of The Community, on account of those things which are its important requisites, that is to say, a park, a site for a park, a vihāra (monastery), a site for a vihāra, a couch, a chair, a bolster, a pillow, a brass vessel, a brass jar, a brass pot, a brass receptacle, a razor, an axe, a hatchet, a hoe, a spade, a creeper, bamboo, muñja-grass, babbaja-grass, tina-grass, clay, wooden articles, earthen-ware articles.

This, Monks, is the fourth great thief found existing in the world.

(5) Monks, in the world with the heavenly beings and including Māra, including the Brahmā-world, including Ascetics and Brāhmīns, including breathing things, including heavenly beings and men, this is the chief great thief: he who claims a non-existent state of further-men (Enlightenment), which has not been attained.

What is the reason for this?

Monks, you have eaten the country's almsfood by theft.

(Reference: Pi Tv Bu Vb Pj 4)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how unwholesome Ordained Practitioners can be considered a thief and would be eating the country's almsfood by theft.

It requires an extensive amount of time, effort, energy, and resources for Household Practitioners to support a Community of Ordained Practitioners. Household Practitioners apply time, effort, energy, and resources towards the sustaining of their own life and choose to generously share with Ordained Practitioners and Teachers to support them in further progress towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

Through the support provided by the Household Practitioners, Ordained Practitioners and Teachers should then provide Household Practitioners with Teachings to benefit and improve their life. In this way, there is a beneficial exchange through a practice of generosity by all.

For the benefit of the Ordained Practitioners and Teachers to have all the basic necessities provided by their Students, Ordained Practitioners and Teachers should have an enormous amount of gratitude, appreciation, and respect for all Household Practitioners as they are providing the hard work and generosity to accumulate and share life sustaining necessities.

Therefore, all Ordained Practitioners and Teachers should ensure they are determinate, dedicated, and diligent in the development of the life practice so that they will then be able to offer Teachings back to the Household Practitioners. In this way, there is an

exchange that allows a community of people to progress and grow within these Teachings.

But, if an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher is not taking the role they have chosen to seriously learn, reflect, and practice but instead, are continuing their unwholesome ways lacking diligence to develop their practice, they are “stealing” from the Household Practitioners.

The Buddha described five (5) types of thieves and how Ordained Practitioners are stealing.

1.) The Buddha describes unwholesome Ordained Practitioners who are actively working to cause death, destruction, and torment within The Community of Household Practitioners as a thief. While their actions are to cause destruction, they still collect donations from The Community. They are not actively working to build up The Community through sharing these wholesome Teachings, but instead, are actively working to conspire against The Community through attempting to bring destruction. An individual who functions in this way is being described as a thief by Gotama Buddha.

2.) The Buddha describes unwholesome Ordained Practitioners who deeply learn his Teachings and then steal them by claiming those Teachings originate with them, not The Buddha. Anyone who learns and practices these Teachings experiencing the results of any attainments to include Enlightenment would have deep gratitude, appreciation, and respect for Gotama Buddha while providing him all the credit for his hard work to bring these Teachings into the world. An individual who claims these Teachings are their own is being described as a thief by Gotama Buddha.

3.) The Buddha describes unwholesome Ordained Practitioners who blame people of other traditions that they have broken their practice of those Teachings without evidence or proof. In reality, it is not the role or responsibility of one person to point out the lack of wisdom or practice of another. This would only lead to difficulties in ones relationships. Instead, an individual should only share guidance on The Path to Enlightenment if someone has asked for guidance. Offering unsolicited guidance to another person would be to do so based on one’s own craving/desire/attachment including conceit. If there is arrogance or pride in the mind, one might attempt to provide unsolicited guidance to others. This will only lead to complications. A wise Practitioner should only share Teachings with others when guidance is requested. An individual who functions in this way is being described as a thief by Gotama Buddha.

4.) The Buddha describes unwholesome Ordained Practitioners who specifically ask Household Practitioners for specific offerings attempting to persuade someone to make certain offerings. Instead, a wholesome Ordained Practitioner would practice The Second Precept and await what is given, rather than, make specific requests of others. An individual who functions in this way is being described as a thief by Gotama Buddha.

5.) The Buddha describes an Ordained Practitioner who claims to be Enlightened as “the chief great thief”. There is no reason to declare to another person that one feels they are Enlightened. One of the best ways to know someone is not Enlightened is that they will tell you they are Enlightened.

An Enlightened being’s mind is so peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy, that they have no craving/desire to tell others they are Enlightened. There is no purpose to telling

others that one feels they are Enlightened. Doing so would mean that one has arrogance and pride (i.e. conceit), therefore, they could not be Enlightened. An individual who functions in this way is being described as a thief by Gotama Buddha.

Boasting About One's Attainments

You should not compare or profess to another person which Stage of Enlightenment you feel you have attained. Self declared attainment has no beneficial purpose and oftentimes comes from arrogance and pride, the ego, while being fraught and filled with errors.

One goal of these Teachings is to eliminate arrogance and pride, the ego, therefore, if a Practitioner is declaring their self determined Stage of Enlightenment, there is still arrogance and pride. A Practitioner sharing with others what they feel they have attained is an indication that the mind is not yet Enlightened.

An Enlightened being would have no need or desire to profess what they feel the mind has attained. An Enlightened mind is so peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy that an Enlightened being will just be enjoying life rather than attempting to convince others or boasting about what they feel they have attained.

Self determination of attainment of any Stage of Enlightenment is fraught and filled with errors.

While one should consistently apply effort towards learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings to include understanding The Four Stages of Enlightenment, these are used for personal development to guide a Practitioner's journey assisting you on the path to higher and higher degrees of attainment not as a way to brag, show off or profess to others what you feel you have attained. Convincing the mind that it has attained any of these Stages of Enlightenment or that the mind is actually Enlightened is dangerous for the mind.

The ego is constantly going to be interested to convince the mind it is more Enlightened than it really is. The ego is equivalent to a "bad tenant" who never pays rent and doesn't want to leave the residence. The bad tenant, the ego, needs to be evicted but every time things move in that direction it tries to convince the mind it is more Enlightened than it really is because the ego does not want to leave. The bad tenant keeps wanting to stay but yet provides no benefit whatsoever and continually attempts to convince the mind it is Enlightened so that the bad tenant, the ego, can stick around.

You need to evict the ego and as long as the mind is convinced that it is experiencing higher and higher degrees of attainment, then there is the risk or danger that arrogance and pride will arise, thus, halting any forward progress. With arrogance and pride (i.e. the ego), the mind will want to measure and compare what it feels it has attained to others creating unwholesome decisions that produce separation rather than harmony amongst friendly Practitioners and "all beings". The mind could become judgmental looking down on others rather than practicing loving-kindness and compassion with an interest in seeing all beings attain Enlightenment.

You should never believe you have attained Enlightenment and continuously pursue this path your entire life. Should you ever feel you have attained Enlightenment and are "done", the mind can become "sluggish or complacent" and halt your progress on this path.

Arrogance and pride can arise in the mind if one becomes absorbed, engrossed or fascinated with progressing through The Four Stages of Enlightenment. As soon as any arrogance, pride, or ego arises, the mind is not experiencing Enlightenment. If any of this is occurring in the mind, the mind is not Enlightened and is essentially sabotaging a Practitioner's ability to experience more progress. Through never convincing the mind that it is truly Enlightened, even when all discontentedness has been eliminated, then, the mind can continue to reside protected from any potential arising of arrogance and pride (i.e. the ego), and continue to experience increased benefits as the mind becomes more and more Enlightened.

While we use the term Enlightenment, this mental state is not a destination that once one arrives, everything is complete. Instead, as the mind arrives to Enlightenment having eliminated all discontentedness, a Practitioner can experience increased benefits of the Enlightened mind as the brilliance and brightness of the Enlightened mind shine through more and more. If one convinces themselves they are Enlightened and are actually "done", then they would not experience the continued and increasing benefits of the mind entering into an even higher degree of Enlightenment.

There will be glimpses of Enlightenment as you develop your practice. Whether it be in meditation, during the daily activities, or for multiple minutes, hours, weeks, months, etc. as one progresses. These glimpses are similar to a flickering lightbulb that is struggling to shine bright on a consistent and ongoing basis. These glimpses of Enlightenment help a Practitioner to observe the possibilities of what one is headed towards and that they are headed in the right direction. But the mind needs to remain unaffected by these momentary or elongated and impermanent experiences. The mind needs to remain unaffected by the improved condition of the mind to be able to experience more and more awakening of the mind.

The mind could experience multiple minutes, hours, weeks, months, etc. with the returning of discontentedness at any moment. A wise Practitioner needs to remain determined, dedicated, and diligent to apply effort watching over the mind with mindfulness or awareness of mind. If one proceeds without guarding the mind with mindfulness, then cravings/desires/attachments can emerge from the corners of the mind producing discontentedness.

Just like the mind will experience flickering and glimpses of Enlightenment as the mind is developed, the mind will also experience a flickering diminishing of cravings/desires/attachments and discontentedness.

As discontentedness is gradually being extinguished, the qualities of the Enlightened mind are continuing to increase. All the while, the Practitioner is having experiences in the mind they never knew existed and the mind can become quite blissful and elated. It is important to reside unaffected by these experiences continuing to bring the mind back to the middle. If the mind takes great pleasure in what it is experiencing, this is dangerous and risky as the mind then continues to crave these pleasant feelings stalling progress.

This is yet another reason guidance with a Teacher is so important. As the mind moves and shifts through the preliminary phases of the Jhānas and into The Four Stages of Enlightenment, a Practitioner is going to need support from someone who has experienced what they are experiencing. This will allow a Practitioner to gain the insight and Teachings needed to continue forward development through seeking guidance of how to continue the mind's cultivation.

An Enlightened being is not going to profess or boast that they are Enlightened. There are many reasons why an Enlightened being would not share they are Enlightened. Some of those reasons are shared in the following:

1.) To declare one is Enlightened is to do so with arrogance, pride, and ego. An Enlightened being does not have arrogance, pride, or ego. So if someone declares they are Enlightened, you can be sure they are not Enlightened.

2.) If an Enlightened being says they are Enlightened, an unEnlightened being has no way to determine if that is true or false. So it is unbeneficial for one to declare they are Enlightened as this would be unbeneficial speech and an Enlightened being does not speak in unbeneficial ways.

Enlightened beings or those close to Enlightenment can determine for themselves if one is or is not Enlightened so an Enlightened being has no need to share with an Enlightened being whether they are or are not Enlightened because they can determine it for themselves.

3.) An Enlightened being is not interested in declaring that they are Enlightened but instead, would be more interested in assisting others to attain Enlightenment. Declaring one is Enlightened is to seek admiration from others rather than helping others to attain Enlightenment. An individual who shares that they are Enlightened is seeking attention and admiration from others, rather than finding ways to share these Teachings in a way that invites people to learn, reflect, and practice to experience the results for themselves.

If an individual is seeking attention and admiration, there is still craving/desire in the mind, therefore, they are not yet Enlightened.

An Enlightened being does not need others to know they are Enlightened to help people towards the attainment of Enlightenment. They are wise enough to be able to help others without the requirement of others knowing they are Enlightened.

Discussion of one's own Stage of Enlightenment serves no wholesome purpose, so there is no need to discuss it. The Buddha established a guideline to not declare, profess, boast, or discuss about one's own attainments as described in this Teaching.

A Noble Disciple Abandons Acts of Lowly Arts

Chapter 14

A Noble Disciple Abandons Wrong Livelihood

Therein, Monks, Right View comes first.

And how does Right View come first?

One understands wrong livelihood as wrong livelihood, and Right Livelihood as Right Livelihood; this is one's Right View.

And what, Monks, is wrong livelihood?

Scheming, flattery, hinting, belittling, pursuing gain with gain: this is wrong livelihood.

And what, Monks, is Right Livelihood?

Right Livelihood, I say, is twofold: there is Right Livelihood that is affected by taints (fetters), taking part in merit, ripening in the material gain; and there is Right Livelihood that is noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path.

And what, Monks, is Right Livelihood that is affected by taints, taking part in merit, ripening in the material gain?

Here, Monks, a Noble Disciple abandons wrong livelihood and gains his living by Right Livelihood: this is Right Livelihood that is affected by taints, taking part in merit, ripening in the material gain.

And what, Monks, is Right Livelihood that is noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path?

The desisting from wrong livelihood, the abstaining, refraining, withholding from it in one whose mind is noble, whose mind is taintless, who possesses the noble path and is developing the noble path: this is Right Livelihood that is noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path.

One makes an effort to abandon wrong livelihood and to enter upon Right Livelihood; this is one's Right Effort.

Mindfully one abandons wrong livelihood, mindfully one enters upon and resides in Right Livelihood; this is one's Right Mindfulness.

Thus these three states run and circle around Right Livelihood, that is, Right View, Right Effort, and Right Mindfulness.

Therein, Monks, Right View comes first.

And how does Right View come first?

In one of Right View, Right Intention comes into being;
in one of Right Intention, Right Speech comes into being;
in one of Right Speech, Right Action comes into being;
in one of Right Action, Right Livelihood comes into being;
in one of Right Livelihood, Right Effort comes into being;
in one of Right Effort, Right Mindfulness comes into being;
in one of Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration comes into being;
in one of Right Concentration, Right Wisdom comes into being;
in one of Right Wisdom, Right Liberation comes into being.

Thus, Monks, the path of the disciple in higher training possesses eight factors, the Arahant possesses ten factors.

Therein, Monks, Right View comes first.

And how does Right View come first?

In one of Right View, wrong view is abolished, and the many evil unwholesome states that originate with wrong view as condition are also abolished, and the many wholesome states that originate with Right View as condition come to fulfillment by development.

In one of Right Intention, wrong intention is abolished, and the many evil unwholesome states that originate with wrong intention as condition are also abolished, and the many wholesome states that originate with Right Intention as condition come to fulfillment by development.

In one of Right Speech, wrong speech is abolished...

In one of Right Action, wrong action is abolished...

In one of Right Livelihood, wrong livelihood is abolished...

In one of Right Effort, wrong effort is abolished...

In one of Right Mindfulness, wrong mindfulness is abolished...

In one of Right Concentration, wrong concentration is abolished...

In one of Right Wisdom, wrong wisdom is abolished...

In one of Right Liberation, wrong liberation is abolished, and the many evil unwholesome states that originate with wrong liberation as condition are

also abolished, and the many wholesome states that originate with Right Liberation as condition come to fulfillment by development.

Thus, Monks, there are twenty factors on the side of the wholesome, and twenty factors on the side of the unwholesome.

This Teachings discourse on the Great Forty has been set rolling and cannot be stopped by any Ascetic or Brāhmin or god or Māra or Brahmā or anyone in the world.

Monks, if any Ascetic or Brāhmin thinks that this Teachings discourse on the Great Forty should be criticized and rejected, then there are ten legitimate deductions from his assertions that would provide grounds for finding fault with him here and now.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right View, then he would honor and praise those Ascetic and Brāhmins who are of wrong view.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right Intention, then he would honor and praise those Ascetics and Brāhmins who are of wrong intention.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right Speech, then he would honor and praise those Ascetics and Brāhmins who are of wrong speech.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right Action, then he would honor and praise those Ascetics and Brāhmins who are of wrong action.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right Livelihood, then he would honor and praise those Ascetics and Brāhmins who are of wrong livelihood.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right Effort, then he would honor and praise those Ascetics and Brāhmins who are of wrong effort.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right Mindfulness, then he would honor and praise those Ascetics and Brāhmins who are of wrong mindfulness.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right Concentration, then he would honor and praise those Ascetics and Brāhmins who are of wrong concentration.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right Wisdom, then he would honor and praise those Ascetics and Brāhmins who are of wrong wisdom.

If that worthy one finds fault with Right Liberation, then he would honor and praise those Ascetics and Brāhmins who are of wrong liberation.

If any Ascetic or Brāhmin thinks that this Teachings discourse on the Great Forty should be criticized and rejected, then these are ten legitimate deductions from his assertions that would provide grounds for finding fault with him here and now.

Monks, even those Teachers from Okkala, Vassa and Bhañña, who held the doctrine of non-causality, the doctrine of non-action, and the doctrine of nihilism, would not think that this discourse of the Teachings on the Great Forty should be criticized and rejected.

Why is that?

For fear of blame, attack, and evidence that they are incorrect.

(Reference: MN 117)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares more details about Right Livelihood and Wrong Livelihood.

To understand this Teaching, it is helpful to explore other Teachings The Buddha shared related to Right Livelihood and to fully understand “What is Right Livelihood”.

Right Livelihood: A livelihood is how you earn your living through daily life to sustain your life in a career, profession, or lifestyle. Our livelihood is the work or activities we do on a daily basis such as an occupation or lifestyle to sustain our life (i.e. stay at home parent, volunteer, retired person, holy life, administrative support, waste removal, cleaning services, doctor, politician, entrepreneur, etc.). A livelihood to sustain our life should not cause any harm to other beings. If we cause harm to other beings in order to sustain our own life, this is going to produce harm in our own life.

For example, are you a doctor, nurse, auto mechanic, street cleaning engineer, food server, waste removal technician, etc. Are you conducting a livelihood that is wholesome and helpful to society and humanity, “yes”, this is a Right Livelihood. You should not cause any harm through your livelihood.

Each person has a livelihood whether the goal is to acquire financial support or not. A livelihood is the career, profession, or lifestyle one chooses. In some cases, a person may choose to pursue personal interests and skills rather than financial goals or a career. A stay at home parent is still a livelihood as this is a contribution to society and humanity providing life sustaining activities but may not have a direct salary associated with the day-to-day responsibilities.

A livelihood is not necessarily solely to make money or produce wealth but instead is how we choose to contribute our time, effort, and energy towards life sustaining activities for us and our family. Finding life supporting activities, a livelihood, that allow us to generate income to support our life through helping others or just purely providing life sustaining activities that we perform as a role in society, is our livelihood. Through finding a livelihood that you enjoy while also providing income or life sustaining needs will ensure a successful livelihood.

For those who do generate income through their livelihood, focus on finding something you enjoy that happens to also provide financial support. This will ensure the best outcome and enthusiasm for your daily life. If you select a livelihood solely on the bases of making money, acquiring wealth, power, prestige, or a specific title, then you will find the mind will struggle to perform your duties and responsibilities on an ongoing consistent basis perhaps even becoming bored or disinterested.

If you find a livelihood that is helping others, you enjoy the profession, and you happen to be able to acquire financial income to sustain your life and the life of those close to you, this will be the best match.

The mind will be motivated and enthusiastic to perform the daily responsibilities of the livelihood with ease. Finding a livelihood where you can acquire an income, help others, and you enjoy the activities required on a daily basis, will ensure that you never “work” one day in your life. Your profession will not feel like “work” but instead it is just one way that you help the world through your daily efforts and it happens to generate life sustaining resources for you and your family. Your livelihood is part of your life practice and we can make conscious and wise choices to ensure we are meeting our goals while also helping others through our livelihood.

Gotama Buddha gave us five livelihoods that we should not engage in as they cause harm to other beings, thus, unwholesome Kamma production: business in weapons, business in living beings (animals, slaves, human trafficking), business in meat, business in substances that cause heedlessness, and business in poisons. These all cause harm in the world, thus, if we choose to sustain our life based on these “wrong livelihoods” then we will experience harm.

Trades Not to Be Plied

Monks, a Household Practitioner should not engage in these five trades.

What five?

Business in weapons,
business in living beings,
business in meat,
business in substances that cause heedlessness,
and business in poisons.

A Household Practitioner should not engage in these five trades.

(Reference: AN 5.177)

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And what, Monks, is wrong livelihood?

Scheming, flattery, hinting, belittling, pursuing gain with gain: this is wrong livelihood.

(Gotama Buddha)

(Reference: MN 117)

These are aspects of practice that one is being guided to avoid while practicing one's livelihood.

Scheming: corruption or deception.

Flattery: excessive and insincere praise, given especially to further one's own interests.

Hinting: suggest or indicate something indirectly or covertly. Not being direct, clear, and to the point with one's work activities.

Belittling: talking down to others in negative and disparaging ways in the attempt to diminish others' work.

Pursuing gain with gain: doing work just for profit or greed, without a real interest to provide benefit to humanity through one's livelihood.

As long as your livelihood is not involved in any of these five (5) wrong livelihoods, you are not pursuing a livelihood solely for the purpose of "gain" or selfish desires (i.e. solely for fame or fortune), and you conduct your livelihood with high ethics (i.e. without scheming or corruption), you are practicing "Right Livelihood".

Ordained Practitioners have guidance from Gotama Buddha beyond these five (5) livelihoods that are considered "wrong livelihood". For example, Gotama Buddha provided guidance that Ordained Practitioners who provide tattoos, palm reading, spells, predictions based on astronomy, and other types of "livelihoods" are practicing "wrong

livelihood”. Gotama Buddha’s Teachings have much more details on “Right Livelihood” for Ordained Practitioners.

Gotama Buddha’s objectives for Ordained Practitioners was to keep them focused on learning, practicing, and sharing these Teachings so that they could eliminate discontentedness in the mind for themselves and guide humanity in eliminating discontentedness in their mind. Therefore, Ordained Practitioners who focus on livelihoods other than learning, practicing, and sharing The Teachings are not practicing “Right Livelihood”.

Ordained Practitioners are sustained through offerings by Household Practitioners. So it is important that they develop their own practice of these Teachings and then share those Teachings with Household Practitioners so they can benefit from The Teachings and improve their life. If Ordained Practitioners are not learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings so that they can then share The Teachings with Household Practitioners, they are benefiting from the offerings and hard work of Household Practitioners without providing anything in return that is beneficial to Household Practitioners. This was not how Gotama Buddha intended The Community of Ordained Practitioners to function, thus, he established many “wrong livelihoods” that involved distracting Ordained Practitioners from their work to develop a life practice and then teach others.

Recently, marijuana has become known as a substance once thought of as a “drug” but now many people are realizing its medicinal qualities. For one to sell this medication through proper legal channels as a “medication” with the intention to help, that would still be considered a “Right Livelihood”. You will find more on the topic of marijuana in the Chapter titled “The Five Precepts: A Householders Guide to Daily Practice” (Chapter 7) of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

The Buddha explains in this Teaching how it is important to establish Right View in order to understand and practice Right Livelihood. Once someone is practicing a livelihood that is not one of the “Trades Not to Be Plied”, to fully practice Right Livelihood, a Practitioner will then need to dig deeper into their life practice to fully establish Right Livelihood as is being described in this Teaching.

The Buddha further describes Right Livelihood beyond “Trades Not to Be Plied” describing specific details about Right Livelihood. He shares that Right Livelihood “is twofold: there is Right Livelihood that is affected by taints (fetters), taking part in merit, ripening in the material gain; and there is Right Livelihood that is noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path”.

1.) Right Livelihood that is affected by taints, taking part in merit, ripening in the material gain: is to “abandon wrong livelihood and gains his living by Right Livelihood: this is Right Livelihood that is affected by taints, taking part in merit, ripening in the material gain”. In other words, a Practitioner is not practicing any of the “Trades Not to Be Plied” but yet, their livelihood is still affected by The Ten Fetters, they provide generous offerings to support the continuation of these Teachings to accumulate merit, and the goal is to acquire wealth.

- Affected by taints: affected by The Ten Fetters to include craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality). A Practitioner could be in a livelihood that they are only doing out of a craving/desire for money but they lack enthusiasm and deep interest to fulfill their role in this livelihood. The livelihood could feel dull, boring, as if there is no future or real

purpose to what they are doing on a daily basis to contribute to society. The mind can struggle to perform the livelihood on a regular basis and the individual feels at a loss for a real sense of purpose in their livelihood.

- Taking part in merit: providing generous offerings to support the continuation of these Teachings to accumulate merit (i.e. wholesome Kamma). Through providing meritorious offerings to continue these Teachings, an individual would be coming in close contact with Teachers who are able to then guide them in improving their practice so that they can move towards an improved life practice and further improving the condition of the mind and their life. This would help a Practitioner move towards a “taintless” livelihood to be able to fully practice Right Livelihood.

- Ripening in the material gain: a goal to acquire material wealth.

As long as a Practitioner is performing a livelihood in this way, the mind will not yet be completely Enlightened. The mind is still affected by The Ten Fetters and defilements of craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality). Therefore, life will not be fully and completely fulfilling due to one’s choice to remain in a livelihood that is affected by the taints (i.e. craving, anger, and ignorance) and only to seek material gain. Moving to practicing a livelihood as described in the second part of this Teaching will improve the condition of the mind and one’s life as their livelihood would be taintless (i.e. no longer affected by craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality)).

2.) Right Livelihood that is noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path: is to “desist from wrong livelihood, the abstaining, refraining, withholding from it in one whose mind is noble, whose mind is taintless, who possesses the noble path and is developing the noble path: this is Right Livelihood that is noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path”. In other words, a Practitioner is not practicing any of the “Trades Not to Be Plied”, the Practitioner is Enlightened (i.e. noble), therefore, their mind is not affected by The Ten Fetters (i.e. taintless) in the selection and execution of their livelihood.

- Whose mind is taintless: a Practitioner’s mind is no longer affected by The Ten Fetters to include craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality). The livelihood one has selected is meaningful and they have enthusiasm with deep interest to fulfill their role in this livelihood. The livelihood will feel inspiring, uplifting, motivating, and there will be a real purpose that is contributing to society. The mind will be at ease and enjoy fulfilling the livelihood on a regular basis and the individual will feel that they have found their true purpose, such that, the livelihood will not even feel like “work”.

“Right Livelihood that is noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path” is to practice a livelihood that is not affected by craving, anger, or ignorance (unknowing of true reality). While a “taintless” livelihood would not be one of the five wrong livelihoods, one would also have developed a livelihood that is not based on decision making involving any of the fetters/taints/pollution of mind described in The Ten Fetters. By the time one is experiencing Enlightenment, they would have understood and be practicing a Right Livelihood that is life sustaining but also fulfilling, motivating, and one is enthusiastically performing the daily responsibilities of the livelihood with ease.

The Practitioner is not performing the livelihood based on craving/desire to experience conditioned pleasant feelings but instead, they have selected a livelihood that is fulfilling, motivating, and one has enthusiasm to perform the livelihood without any craving/desire

in the mind. A Practitioner who has selected and is performing a livelihood that is “noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path” will not experience any discontentedness related to the livelihood they have selected and they will not experience any discontentedness while performing that livelihood. One’s livelihood essentially becomes part of the Practitioner’s lifestyle and what they do to contribute to the world while sustaining their life through a completely purified Right Livelihood with complete and total inner fulfillment.

You may or may not be practicing this livelihood now which means, there could be work for you to do that involves making decisions to move towards a completely purified Right Livelihood.

To accomplish this goal, one needs to deeply investigate the mind to determine what it is that truly makes it “tick”. What is it that creates inspiration, enthusiasm, with a sense of meaning and purpose in your life where you feel that you are contributing to society in your day-to-day activities as part of your Right Livelihood? You may not know the answer to this question right now, but through training the mind on The Path to Enlightenment to eliminate the “taints”, a Practitioner can gradually come to the understanding and realization of exactly what they would like to do for the rest of this life and be completely and entirely content with that decision while having deep interest to contribute to the world in this way through one’s Right Livelihood. An individual who is practicing a livelihood such as this, will be extra motivated each day to perform their livelihood, such that, it no longer feels like “work” but instead, it is just one more way that you contribute to the harmonious way the world works. It is a livelihood, not a job.

- Who possesses the noble path and is developing the noble path: A Practitioner who is fully understanding and practicing The Eight Fold Path through a livelihood that is supportive of their journey towards Enlightenment so that they can be practicing qualities such as loving-kindness, compassion, generosity, and others, even while functioning in their livelihood. This does not mean that others will necessarily be supportive of your life practice, but that as an individual in this livelihood, you will be able to fully and completely be at ease and practice these good wholesome Teachings without reservation.

One makes an effort to abandon wrong livelihood and to enter upon Right Livelihood; this is one’s Right Effort: is to apply Right Effort to abandon The Ten Fetters and a craving/desire for material gain so that one can move towards Right Livelihood that is taintless (i.e. unaffected by The Ten Fetters and craving, anger, or ignorance (unknowing of true reality)).

Mindfully one abandons wrong livelihood, mindfully one enters upon and resides in Right Livelihood; this is one’s Right Mindfulness. Right Mindfulness is to be aware of the mind practicing The Four Foundations of Mindfulness. One would need to be practicing Right Mindfulness from The Eight Fold Path to accomplish the goal of establishing Right Livelihood. Therefore, if one is to abandon “wrong livelihood”, they would need to have Right Mindfulness established practicing this quality of mind continuously.

Thus these three states run and circle around Right Livelihood, that is, Right View, Right Effort, and Right Mindfulness. The Buddha is helping Practitioners to understand the connection between Right View, Right Effort, and Right Mindfulness in order to practice Right Livelihood. It is Right View, Right Effort, and Right Mindfulness that would help a Practitioner to fully practice Right Livelihood.

In developing a “life practice” and actively working towards Enlightenment, it is important to understand as The Buddha says “Right View comes first”. Through developing a deep understanding and practice of Right View, a Practitioner will have a foundation in which to develop the rest of their life practice. The mind needs to be well established in Right View to develop all the steps on The Eight Fold Path including Right Livelihood.

Detailed explanation of Establishing Right View 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).

Thus, Monks, the path of the disciple in higher training possesses eight factors, the Arahant possesses ten factors. The Buddha is explaining that as one progresses to the higher training on The Path to Enlightenment, a Practitioner will need to understand and practice The Eight Fold Path - all eight steps of The Eight Fold Path. But, an Enlightened being (i.e. an Arahant) will understand and practice The Ten Fold Path consisting of ten steps.

Through developing a deep understanding and practice of The Eight Fold Path, a Practitioner can train the mind to attain Enlightenment where one will then be practicing The Ten Fold Path.

Detailed explanation of The Eight Fold Path and The Ten 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).

This Teachings discourse on the Great Forty has been set rolling and cannot be stopped by any Ascetic or Brāhmin or god or Māra or Brahmā or anyone in the world. The Buddha is explaining, now that he has shared these Teachings into the world, there is no being who can stop these Teachings from taking root in the world and from helping beings attain Enlightenment. It is not possible for any being or group of beings to stop these Teachings from being learned and practiced by people in the world.

Practitioners can observe the truth for themselves that these Teachings are improving the condition of the mind and it is not possible for anyone to apply any amount of time, effort, energy, or resources to destroy these Teachings because they are too vibrant and stand on their own merits. These Teachings will continue to go forward into the world and there is nothing or no one who can stop that from occurring. The truth in these Teachings is discernible by anyone who takes a sincere interest to learn, reflect, and practice them. Those who choose to learn, reflect, and practice will ensure their continuation in the world.

Monks, if any Ascetic or Brāhmin thinks that this Teachings discourse on the Great Forty should be criticized and rejected, then there are ten legitimate deductions from his assertions that would provide grounds for finding fault with him here and now. The Buddha is explaining that his Teachings in this discourse related to The Ten Fold Path are thorough and are the clear Teachings that lead to Enlightenment. If there is anyone who criticizes them or thinks that these Teachings should be rejected for any reason, then The Ten Fold Path itself is “ten legitimate” reasons that would prove them wrong.

Through deeply learning, reflecting, and practicing each step of this Path, an individual can observe for themselves that The Teachings work to improve the condition of the mind and your life. Therefore, if one is to criticize or reject these Teachings, that means they have

not yet fully understood and practiced them. It would be one's own fault for doing so and lead to their own harm and discontentedness along with the suffering it causes. Through learning and practicing these Teachings, it will lead to one's peacefulness and welfare which is independently observable as one learns and practices to improve the condition of the mind and their life.

If an individual would criticize or reject Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration, Right Wisdom, or Right Liberation, that means they would be supporting and encouraging wrong view, wrong intention, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, wrong concentration, wrong wisdom, or wrong liberation. One would be honoring and praising these wrong ways of practice rather than observing the benefits and result of these wholesome Teachings.

This means, that one who supports wrong mindfulness, wrong concentration, wrong wisdom, or wrong liberation, does not truly and deeply understand these Teachings or else they would know the truth that they work and are the true Path to Enlightenment. The individual lacks wisdom of these Teachings and is why they choose to criticize and reject them. But The Ten Fold Path stands on its own merits and through applying energy with proper investigation, an individual can observe the truth for themselves that these Teachings lead exactly where Gotama Buddha said they would - to Enlightenment which is a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy that is permanent.

Monks, even those Teachers from Okkala, Vassa and Bhañña, who held the doctrine of non-causality, the doctrine of non-action, and the doctrine of nihilism, would not think that this discourse of the Teachings on the Great Forty should be criticized and rejected. Why is that? For fear of blame, attack, and evidence that they are incorrect. The Buddha mentions three (3) other Teachers, that taught teachings opposite of his during his lifetime, that would not even find fault in his Teachings. The Teachers from the communities of "Okkala, Vassa and Bhañña" who are not sharing teachings based on The Natural Law of Kamma would not criticize or reject The Buddha's Teachings on The Ten Fold Path because they would fear "blame, attack, and evidence that they are incorrect".

During the lifetime of The Buddha, there were many other Teachers and communities who were sharing teachings that claimed it was their wisdom that leads to Enlightenment. They thought they had found The Path to Enlightenment. The Buddha knew it was his Teachings that lead to Enlightenment and would always welcome others in his Community to learn what he was sharing. He knew what others were sharing, especially those teachings that there is no such thing as The Natural Law of Kamma, did not lead to Enlightenment. But, he maintained a healthy and respectful relationship with others from the other communities. He prioritized the Students in his own Community but was willing to share with others as well.

Through their lack of determination, dedication, and diligence to learn, reflect, and practice his Teachings, he decided to not put much significance or effort into sharing with the Students who were not committed to learning The Teachings he shared. In doing so, he ensured his time, effort, energy, and resources was put to good use with those who were truly dedicated to progressing to Enlightenment through his Teachings.

While The Buddha knew he was a Buddha and some of his Students did as well, others during his lifetime did not know he was a Buddha. A Buddha does not perform countless

miracles to convince others that he is a Buddha, but instead, shares Teachings to help people so that they can see the truth for themselves that The Teachings he shares lead to Enlightenment. Through their own observation of the improvements to the condition of their mind, they could understand that it was his Teachings that accomplished the goal of guiding them to Enlightenment. In this way, people gradually discovered that he was, in fact, a Buddha.

But, a Buddha does not need others to know they are a Buddha to be successful. In fact, with people not knowing he was a Buddha, he could more directly observe the mind of Students and potential Students to assess the condition of their mind and assist them with Teachings to help improve the condition of their mind. If massive numbers of people knew he was a Buddha, he would lose the ability to clearly observe his Students' mind because they would honor and respect him so highly, he would find it difficult to observe Students' natural way of being and the way they function in the world. Through Students and potential Students not knowing he was a Buddha, some people will choose to disrespect him or get angry for various reason. Then, he could observe the pollution of mind that led to this disrespect and anger. In this way, he could be more effective in assessing, monitoring, and helping Students and potential Students through people not knowing he is a Buddha.

A Buddha arising in the world today would function in the same way. They would not walk around attempting to convince people that they are a Buddha, but instead, just start sharing their Teachings helping others to develop their life practice and help them progress to Enlightenment. A Buddha, and any Enlightened being, would be wise enough to know how to provide these Teachings without others needing to know that they are Enlightened or a Buddha.

A Buddha's success is not dependent on others knowing he is a Buddha. Conversely, a Buddha's success is more readily achieved through people not knowing they are a Buddha. In this way, a Buddha can clearly see a more honest observation of the condition of his Students' mind to be able to support, encourage, and assist them to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to attain Enlightenment.

Six Cases of Incapability by One Accomplished by View

Chapter 15

Six Cases of Incapability by One Accomplished in View (First Discourse)

Monks, there are these six cases of incapability.

What six?

One accomplished in view is:

- (1) incapable of considering any conditioned phenomenon (thing) as permanent;
- (2) incapable of considering any conditioned phenomenon (thing) as pleasurable;
- (3) incapable of considering any phenomenon (thing) as a self;
- (4) incapable of doing a grave act that brings immediate results;
- (5) incapable of resorting to [the belief] that purity (Enlightenment) comes about through superstitious and auspicious acts;
- (6) incapable of seeking a person worthy of offerings outside here.

These are the six cases of incapability.

(Reference: AN 6.93)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares six (6) cases of incapability of one accomplished in view (First Discourse).

“Accomplished in view” is one who is firm established in Right View deeply understanding and practicing The Four Noble Truths. A Practitioner who understands and is deeply practicing The Four Noble Truths will not be capable of any of these “six incapacabilities”.

A Practitioner who has attained the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer would be “accomplished in view”.

(1) Incapable of considering any conditioned phenomenon (thing) as permanent: A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would deeply understand and practice The Universal Truth of Impermanence, therefore, they would not be capable of seeing any conditioned phenomenon (thing) as permanent.

A Practitioner would have learned, reflected, and practiced The Universal Truth of Impermanence understanding that there is no conditioned feeling, object, or thing that is permanent.

A conditioned feeling, object, or thing is going to arise, change, and then fade away (i.e. cease to exist). An unconditioned feeling, object, or thing is not going to arise, change, or fade away (i.e. cease to exist).

Detailed explanation of The Universal Truth of Impermanence 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).

(2) Incapable of considering any conditioned phenomenon (thing) as pleasurable: A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would deeply understand The Universal Truth of Discontentedness, therefore, they would not be capable of seeing any conditioned phenomenon (thing) as pleasurable. The mind would understand that basing inner feelings on impermanent conditions would cause pleasant feelings such as happiness, excitement, elation, thrill, exhilaration, euphoria, etc.

Pleasant feelings arising from impermanent conditions are temporary and thus, ultimately unsatisfactory. They do not last permanently and therefore, are dissatisfying to the mind leading to painful feelings when the pleasant feelings no longer exist.

An Enlightened mind will be trained to no longer seek pleasant feelings based on impermanent conditions. A Practitioner “accomplish in view” who is unEnlightened will still be experiencing pleasant feelings based on impermanent conditions but they will intellectually know that these are not “pleasurable” and are ultimately dissatisfying because the pleasant feelings are not permanent.

The Practitioner would be working towards attaining permanent joy where the mind is unconditioned no longer basing its inner feelings on impermanent conditions.

Detailed explanation of The Universal Truth of Discontentedness 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).

(3) Incapable of considering any phenomenon (thing) as a self: A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would deeply understand and be practicing The Universal Truth of Non-self, therefore, they would not be capable of seeing any conditioned phenomenon (thing) as a self. The mind would understand that there is no permanent self and would have eliminated the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as “Personal Existence View”.

Personal existence view (Eliminating the concept of a permanent self from the mind. Realization of The Universal Truth of Non-self.)

Detailed explanation of The Universal Truth of Non-self is available in this same book series found in Chapter 4 and 16 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

(4) Incapable of doing a grave act that brings immediate results: A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would deeply understand The Five Heinous Unwholesome Acts (i.e. The Five Heinous Crimes), therefore, they would not be capable of doing a grave act that brings immediate results.

The mind would understand that doing any of the following would bring immediate unwholesome results and would choose to not do any of these unwholesome acts:

- Kill one’s mother.
- Kill one’s father.
- Kill an Arahant (Enlightened being).
- Harm a Buddha (Tathāgata).
- Create division in The Community of Practitioners.

A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would understand that each of these unwholesome acts would bring about harm to others and harm to themselves, therefore, they would not be capable of performing any of these actions.

(5) Incapable of resorting to [the belief] that purity (Enlightenment) comes about through superstitious and auspicious acts: A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would deeply understand the fetter/taint/pollution of mind and would have eliminated the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as “Wrong Behavior and Observances”.

Wrong behavior and observances (Elimination of the mind’s belief that rites, rituals, ceremonies, and worship will help a Practitioner to attain Enlightenment. Well developed practice of The Eight Fold Path.)

(6) Incapable of seeking a person worthy of offerings outside here: A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would deeply understand the fetter/taint/pollution of mind and would have eliminated the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as “Doubt”.

A Practitioner would have learned, reflected, and practiced The Teachings so well that they would have experienced significant improvements to the condition of the mind. There would be observable evidence that the Practitioner would be able to see that these Teachings have led to dramatic improvements in focus, concentration, and clarity of mind that they would know these Teachings are leading them towards Enlightenment and they would be interested in supporting these Teachings through making meritorious offerings to The Community of Practitioners who are sharing these Teachings.

Meritorious offerings can be made to ordained male and female Practitioners or Teachers as well as anyone who has attained one of The Four Stages of Enlightenment. These offerings help to support the continued learning and sharing of these Teachings in the world for the benefit of all beings.

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.)

Detailed explanation of “What is Merit?” is available in this same book series found in Chapter 10 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

Detailed explanation of making meritorious offerings is available in this same book series found in the book “Generosity” (Volume 13).

Chapter 16

Six Cases of Incapability by One Accomplished in View (Second Discourse)

Monks, there are these six cases of incapability.

What six?

One accomplished in view is:

- (1) incapable of residing without deep respect and politeness toward The Teacher;
- (2) incapable of residing without deep respect and politeness toward The Teachings;
- (3) incapable of residing without deep respect and politeness toward The Community;
- (4) incapable of residing without deep respect and politeness toward the training;
- (5) incapable of resorting to anything that should not be relied upon;
- (6) incapable of undergoing an eighth existence.

These are the six cases of incapability.

(Reference: AN 6.92)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares six (6) cases of incapability of one accomplished in view (Second Discourse).

(1) Incapable of residing without deep respect and politeness toward The Teacher: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be capable of disrespect towards The Buddha or their Teacher who guided them to establishing Right View.

The mind of the Practitioner would be experiencing significant improvements and they would only have gratitude, appreciation, and respect practicing politeness towards The Buddha and their Teacher.

(2) Incapable of residing without deep respect and politeness toward The Teachings: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be capable of disrespect towards The Teachings which they are learning, reflecting, and practicing on The Path to Enlightenment guiding them to establish Right View.

The mind of the Practitioner would be experiencing significant improvements and they would only have gratitude, appreciation, and respect practicing politeness towards The Teachings.

(3) Incapable of residing without deep respect and politeness toward The Community: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be capable of disrespect towards The Community of Practitioners who are assisting them in learning, reflecting, and practicing on The Path to Enlightenment guiding them to establish Right View.

The mind of the Practitioner would be experiencing significant improvements and they would only have gratitude, appreciation, and respect practicing politeness towards The Community.

(4) Incapable of residing without deep respect and politeness toward the training: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be capable of disrespect towards the training which is assisting them in learning, reflecting, and practicing on The Path to Enlightenment guiding them to establish Right View.

The mind of the Practitioner would be experiencing significant improvements and they would only have gratitude, appreciation, and respect practicing politeness towards the training methods employed to assist them on The Path to Enlightenment.

(5) Incapable of resorting to anything that should not be relied upon: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would have needed to investigate many aspects of these Teachings to discover the truth to acquire wisdom. In doing so, the mind would not be capable of relying on falsehoods or non-truths. The Practitioner would be able to independently investigate to determine what is truth and non-truth of information shared with them.

It would not be possible for a Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” to believe in unfounded conspiracy theories or any other beliefs. They would only be interested in discovering the truth so that all their decisions are based on wisdom producing the best possible outcomes.

(6) Incapable of undergoing an eighth existence: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would have attained the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer destined for Enlightenment. They would not be capable of experiencing an eighth existence.

A Stream-Enterer is reborn no more than seven (7) times before they will attain Enlightenment being incapable of an eighth existence.

Chapter 17

Six Cases of Incapability by One Accomplished in View (Third Discourse)

Monks, there are these six cases of incapability.

What six?

One accomplished in view is:

- (1) incapable of depriving his mother of life;
- (2) incapable of depriving his father of life;
- (3) incapable of depriving an Arahant of life;
- (4) incapable of shedding The Tathāgata's blood with a mind of hatred;
- (5) incapable of creating a division in The Community;
- (6) incapable of acknowledging another Teacher.

These are the six cases of incapability.

(Reference: AN 6.94)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares six (6) cases of incapability of one accomplished in view (Third Discourse).

(1) Incapable of depriving his mother of life: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be able to kill their own mother.

(2) Incapable of depriving his father of life: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be able to kill their own father.

(3) Incapable of depriving an Arahant of life: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be able to kill an Enlightened being, an Arahant.

(4) Incapable of shedding The Tathāgata’s blood with a mind of hatred: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be able to harm a Buddha, a Tathāgata.

(5) Incapable of creating a division in The Community: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be able to create separation, arguments, or breaking up of The Community of Practitioners learning and practicing these Teachings.

(6) Incapable of acknowledging another Teacher: A Practitioner who is “accomplished in view” would not be able to learn with a Teacher other than The Buddha or a Teacher of his Teachings.

For a person who has deeply learned, reflected, and practiced these Teachings establishing “Right View”, they would be incapable of any of these six deeds. They would deeply understand the harm these deeds would cause and in doing so, they would cause harm to themselves. They would deeply understand that these Teachings are leading to the diminishing of their own discontentedness and is The Path to Enlightenment, therefore, they would be unable to acknowledge another Teacher as their Teacher because they would know that these Teachings are the truth leading to wisdom. They would observe that their mind is becoming liberated through these Teachings and unable to recognize another Teacher.

(1-5) of this list are referred to as The Five Heinous Crimes or The Five Heinous Unwholesome Acts.

Chapter 18

Six Cases of Incapability by One Accomplished in View (Fourth Discourse)

Monks, there are these six cases of incapability.

What six?

One accomplished in view is:

- (1) incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are made by oneself;
- (2) incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are made by another;
- (3) incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are both made by oneself and made by another;
- (4) incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are not made by oneself but have arisen by accident or chance;
- (5) incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are not made by another but have arisen by accident or chance;
- (6) incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are made neither by oneself nor by another but have arisen by accident or chance.

These are the six cases of incapability.

For what reason?

Because the person accomplished in view has clearly seen causation and causally arisen objects. These are the six cases of incapability.

(Reference: AN 6.95)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares six (6) cases of incapability of one accomplished in view (Fourth Discourse).

(1) Incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are made by oneself: A Practitioner accomplished in view would understand The Universal Truth of Non-self and understand that pleasure and pain are not created (i.e. made) by one's self but instead, pleasant feelings and painful feelings are caused by craving/desire/attachment.

A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would be incapable of having the view that pleasure and pain are created by oneself because there is no self and pleasant feelings and painful feelings are created by craving/desire/attachment.

(2) Incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are made by another: A Practitioner accomplished in view would understand that pleasure and pain are not created (i.e. made) by another person but instead, pleasant feelings and painful feelings are caused by craving/desire/attachment.

A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would be incapable of having the view that pleasure and pain are created by another person because pleasant feelings and painful feelings are created by craving/desire/attachment.

(3) Incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are both made by oneself and made by another: A Practitioner accomplished in view would understand that pleasure and pain are not created (i.e. made) by one's self and made by another person but instead, pleasant feelings and painful feelings are caused by craving/desire/attachment.

A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would be incapable of having the view that pleasure and pain are created by oneself and another person because pleasant feelings and painful feelings are created by craving/desire/attachment.

(4) Incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are not made by oneself but have arisen by accident or chance: A Practitioner accomplished in view would understand that pleasure and pain are not created (i.e. made) by one's self nor have arisen by accident or chance, instead, pleasant feelings and painful feelings are caused by craving/desire/attachment.

A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would be incapable of having the view that pleasure and pain are not created (i.e. made) by one's self but have arisen by accident or chance because pleasant feelings and painful feelings are created by craving/desire/attachment.

(5) Incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are not made by another but have arisen by accident or chance: A Practitioner accomplished in view would understand that pleasure and pain are not created (i.e. made) by another person nor have arisen by accident or chance, instead, pleasant feelings and painful feelings are caused by craving/desire/attachment.

A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would be incapable of having the view that pleasure and pain are not created (i.e. made) by another but have arisen by accident or chance because pleasant feelings and painful feelings are created by craving/desire/attachment.

(6) Incapable of resorting to [the view that] pleasure and pain are made neither by oneself nor by another but have arisen by accident or chance: A Practitioner accomplished in view would understand that pleasure and pain are not created (i.e. made) by one's self or another person nor have arisen by accident or chance, instead, pleasant feelings and painful feelings are caused by craving/desire/attachment.

A Practitioner who is accomplished in view would be incapable of having the view that pleasure and pain are created (i.e. made) by one's self or another but have arisen by accident or chance because pleasant feelings and painful feelings are created by craving/desire/attachment.

Overall, A Practitioner accomplished in view would understand The Four Noble Truths and Dependent Origination. They would have "clearly seen causation and causally arisen objects" and be incapable of having the view that pleasant feelings or painful feelings have arisen from anything other than craving/desire/attachment (The Four Noble Truths) and contact through The Six Sense Bases (Dependent Origination).

The Practitioner would have needed to deeply investigate these Teachings to observe the truth and independently verified that truth to acquire wisdom, therefore, they would be incapable of having the view that anything other than craving/desire/attachment and contact through The Six Sense Bases is what causes pleasant feelings or painful feelings (i.e. discontentedness).

A Practitioner who does not understand this essential truth and has not acquired this wisdom would be incapable of attaining Enlightenment. It is important for every Practitioner who plans to progress to Enlightenment to start with a deep understanding and practice of The Four Noble Truths and then at the appropriate time learn, reflect, and practice Dependent Origination with the guidance of a Teacher.

Dependent Origination is typically a Teaching that one approaches after they have already started to deeply understand and practice the core and central Teachings of the following:

- A.) The Three Universal Truths
- B.) The Four Noble Truths
- C.) The Eight Fold Path
- D.) The Five Precepts
- E.) The Brahma-viharas
- F.) The Ten Fetters
- G.) The Seven Factors of Enlightenment
- H.) Extensive Meditation Training

Chapter 19

Six Benefits in Realizing the Fruit of Stream-Entry

Monks, these are the six benefits in realizing the fruit of Stream-Entry.

What six?

- (1) One is fixed in the wholesome Teachings;
- (2) one is incapable of decline;
- (3) one's discontentedness is limited;
- (4) one comes to possess wisdom not shared by others;
- (5) one has clearly seen causation;
- (6) one has clearly seen causally arisen objects.

These are the six benefits in realizing the fruit of Stream-Entry.

(Reference: AN 6.97)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the benefits of attaining the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer. These are not the only benefits but the significant benefits that one will experience.

(1) One is fixed in the wholesome Teachings: A Practitioner will have experienced so many benefits to the condition of the mind as a result of attaining the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer that the mind knows these “wholesome Teachings” are what is leading to an improved condition of mind. The Practitioner will be “fixed” in that they will know it is a matter of continuing to learn, reflect, and practice to continue to experience the results of the Enlightened mind.

Their practice will be consistent and steady towards the attainment of increased Stages of Enlightenment and experiencing the benefits associated with continued progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

(2) One is incapable of decline: A Practitioner who has attained the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer is not capable of backsliding or falling out of the first Stage of Enlightenment. The mind is “incapable of decline” or regression back to a lower attainment.

This is not the case for a Practitioner who is experiencing the Jhānas. The Jhānas are preliminary phases the mind experiences prior to the attainment of the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer. It is not until the mind has fully attained the first Stage of Enlightenment that it will be incapable of regression, backsliding, or decline.

(3) One’s discontentedness is limited: A Practitioner who has attained the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer will be experiencing a significant reduction of discontentedness in the mind. They are still experiencing discontentedness because the mind is not yet Enlightened but the mind will have drastically reduced discontentedness in comparison to when the mind was not on The Path to Enlightenment.

Situations where the mind once experienced discontentedness a Stream-Enterer will no longer be experiencing those same strong feelings but instead, they have been “limited”, diminished, or it can be observed that in those same situations the strong feelings of discontentedness are fading away.

(4) One comes to possess wisdom not shared by others: A Practitioner who has attained the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer will have needed to investigate these Teachings learning, reflecting, and practicing them closely to acquire wisdom. The wisdom acquired to attain the first Stage of Enlightenment is not widely known or understood by most people in the world. It is important to keep this in mind as one will need to be humble with the wisdom acquired ensuring to eliminate conceit so that you can progress further on The Path to Enlightenment.

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

Conceit is a higher fetter that needs to be eliminated to attain Enlightenment.

A Practitioner who is to attain the first Stage of Enlightenment will need to realize that while you may understand discontentedness, the cause of discontentedness, the elimination of discontentedness, and the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness, this wisdom will not be known to others. People may choose to blame you for their own discontentedness being unaware they are causing it themselves.

You will need to exercise restraint such that while people will be causing their own discontentedness and blaming you, the mind will need to understand that you will be unable to explain or help them to understand and eliminate their discontentedness because they will need to decide to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings on their own. You will be unable to force someone to attain Enlightenment through pursuing The Path to Enlightenment and you should not even try as that would only be a decision from your own craving/desire/attachment leading to your own discontentedness and hinder progress towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

(5) One has clearly seen causation: A Practitioner who has attained the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer will understand The Natural Law of Kamma and be able to observe “cause and effect” within daily life. They will know that anything they are experiencing in life is a result of their decisions “action and result”, essentially the result of their decisions.

Detailed explanation of The Natural Law of Kamma is available in this same book series found in Chapter 9 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1) and in the book “The Natural Law of Kamma” (Volume 6).

(6) One has clearly seen causally arisen objects: A Practitioner who has attained the first Stage of Enlightenment as a Stream-Enterer will be able to see the “cause and effect” relationship of all physical and mental objects that arise or come to be understanding Dependent Origination as the highest law of nature.

Chapter 20

Three Wrong Views about Sectarian Tenets That a Noble Disciple Must Abandon

Monks, there are these three sectarian tenets which, when questioned, interrogated, and cross-examined by the wise, and taken to their conclusion, will eventuate in non-action.

What are the three?

- (1) There are, Monks, some Ascetics and Brāhmins who hold such a doctrine and view as this: Whatever this person experiences whether pleasure, pain, or neither pain-nor-pleasure all that is caused by what was done in the past.
- (2) There are other Ascetics and Brāhmins who hold such a doctrine and view as this: Whatever this person experiences whether pleasure, pain, or neither pain-nor-pleasure all that is caused by God's creative activity.
- (3) And there are still other Ascetics and Brāhmins who hold such a doctrine and view as this: Whatever this person experiences whether pleasure, pain, or neither pain-nor-pleasure all that occurs without a cause or condition.

A View That Whether Pleasure or Pain Are All Caused by Past Deeds

(1) Monks, I approached those Ascetics and Brāhmins who hold such a doctrine and view as this: 'Whatever this person experiences — whether pleasure, pain, or neither pain-nor-pleasure — all that is caused by past deeds' and I said to them: 'Is it true that you Venerable Ones hold such a doctrine and view?' When I ask them this, they affirm it.

Then I say to them: 'In such a case, it is due to past deeds that you might destroy life, take what is not given, indulge in sexual activity, speak falsehood, produce argumentative speech, speak harshly, indulge in idle chatter; that you might be full of longing, have a mind of ill will, and hold wrong view'.

Those who fall back on past deeds as the essential truth have no interest [to do] what should be done and [to avoid doing] what should not be done, nor do they make an effort in this respect.

Since they do not apprehend as true and valid anything that should be done or should not be done, they are muddle-minded, they do not guard the mind, and even the personal designation ‘Ascetic’ could not be legitimately applied to them.

This was my first legitimate confirming falsehoods of those Ascetics and Brāhmins who hold such a doctrine and view.

A View That Whether Pleasure or Pain Are All Caused by God’s Creative Activity

(2) Then, Monks, I approached those Ascetics and Brāhmins who hold such a doctrine and view as this: ‘Whatever this person experiences — whether pleasure, pain, or neither pain-nor-pleasure — all that is caused by God’s creative activity,’ and I said to them: ‘Is it true that you Venerable Ones hold such a doctrine and view?’

When I ask them this, they affirm it. Then I say to them: ‘In such a case, it is due to God’s creative activity that you might destroy life, take what is not given, indulge in sexual activity, speak falsehood, produce argumentative speech, speak harshly, indulge in idle chatter; that you might be full of longing, have a mind of ill will and hold wrong view’.

Those who fall back on God’s creative activity as the essential truth have no interest [to do] what should be done and [to avoid doing] what should not be done, nor do they make an effort in this respect.

Since they do not apprehend as true and valid anything that should be done or should not be done, they are muddle-minded, they do not guard the mind, and even the personal designation “Ascetic” could not be legitimately applied to them

This was my second legitimate confirming falsehoods of those Ascetics and Brāhmins who hold such a doctrine and view.

A View That Whether Pleasure or Pain All Occur Without a Cause or Condition

(3) Then, Monks, I approached those Ascetics and Brāhmins who hold such a doctrine and view as this: ‘Whatever this person experiences — whether pleasure, pain, or neither pain-nor-pleasure — all that occurs without a cause or condition,’ and I said to them: ‘Is it true that you Venerable Ones hold such a doctrine and view?’

When I ask them this, they affirm it. Then I say to them: ‘In such a case, it is without a cause or condition that you might destroy life, take what is not given, indulge in sexual activity, speak falsehood, produce argumentative speech, speak harshly, indulge in idle chatter; that you might be full of longing, have a mind of ill will, and hold wrong view’.

Those who fall back on absence of cause and condition as the essential truth have no interest [to do] what should be done and [to avoid doing] what should not be done, nor do they make an effort in this respect.

Since they do not apprehend as true and valid anything that should be done or should not be done, they are muddle-minded, they do not guard the mind, and even the personal designation ‘Ascetic’ could not be legitimately applied to them.

This was my third legitimate confirming falsehoods of those Ascetics and Brāhmins who hold such a doctrine and view.

(Reference: AN 3.61)

The Teachings of The Buddha on The Path to Enlightenment, referred to as The Natural Laws of Existence, center on The Natural Law of Kamma. It is through “cause and effect” or “action and result” that all things occur. Nothing occurs without an initial cause or action which creates an effect or result. Kamma is essentially the results of our decisions.

All our decisions either wholesome or unwholesome will have a result. Nothing in this life is predetermined, and through making wise decisions, a Practitioner can improve the condition of the mind and their life.

In these three (3) Teachings from Gotama Buddha, he shares how what one has done in the past is not what causes discontentedness, God does not cause discontentedness, and that there is a cause for all results we experience in this life.

These three (3) Teachings comprise a Teaching that is crucial in your development of wisdom on The Path to Enlightenment.

It is your decisions that are either wholesome or unwholesome that lead to the results you experience in this life. If you do not see this clearly, you will need to investigate this

deeply until you can observe and understand that everything experienced in life is a result of your own decisions. This would be part of Right View.

Without establishing Right View, you would be unable to ever experience Enlightenment.

If it was all the decisions of the past that creates discontentedness in the mind, then you could do nothing to attain a peaceful and content mind now.

If it was all God's decisions that creates discontentedness in the mind, then you could do nothing to attain a peaceful and content mind now.

If there is no "cause and effect" or "action and results", in other words, The Natural Law of Kamma does not exist, then you could do nothing to improve your own decision making to attain a peaceful and content mind now.

So why learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to acquire wisdom to improve your decision making if everything that you are experiencing is due to someone or something else that is out of your control or ability to improve? It would be pointless, right?

These three (3) Teachings from Gotama Buddha help a Practitioner learn, reflect, and practice to be able to see the truth that it is your own decisions that lead to the results you experience in this life. Through accepting responsibility for the decisions you make that are causing discontentedness in the mind, this then empowers you to gain wisdom, make wise decisions, and through improved decision making you can improve the condition of the mind and your life.

If the cause of discontentedness was from the past, God, or from no cause at all, you would be powerless to ever improve the condition of the mind and your life. But this is not true reality and to awaken to eliminating ignorance (unknowing of true reality) to attain Enlightenment, you will need to see the truth and acquire the wisdom that you can improve the condition of the mind and your life.

In these Teachings, The Buddha discusses with Ascetics and Brāhmins their view on whether discontentedness (i.e. pleasure, pain, neither pain-nor-pleasure) is caused by all that was done in the past, God, or no cause at all.

When they affirm this as being true, the way they see it, The Buddha shares that they have "no interest [to do] what should be done and [to avoid doing] what should not be done, nor do they make an effort in this respect". Essentially, they are complacent and unwilling to take action to improve their life practice because they feel that improvements to their life is out of their control and abilities.

The Buddha explains that they "do not apprehend as true and valid anything that should be done or should not be done, they are muddle-minded, they do not guard the mind, and even the personal designation 'Ascetic' could not be legitimately applied to them".

An Ascetic is one who has given up the household life entering into homelessness in search of the truth. If one has resorted to think that they have no ability to improve their life through acquiring wisdom and making wise decisions, then The Buddha shares that "the personal designation 'Ascetic' could not be legitimately applied to them". Essentially, they are not even trying to learn, reflect, and practice to attain Enlightenment if they are of

the view that it is past decisions, God, or no cause at all that discontentedness arises in the mind.

A View That Whether Pleasure or Pain Are All Caused by God's Creative Activity

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that it is not God's creative activity that causes discontentedness in the mind (i.e. pleasure, pain, neither pain-nor-pleasure). Oftentimes some people assume that The Buddha did not share Teachings related to God. However, The Buddha did share Teachings to help people during his lifetime to understand God but guided them to understand that the attainment of Enlightenment is not dependent on God.

This Teaching helps a Practitioner understand that it is their own decisions that lead to the improvement to the condition of one's mind and life, not based on the creative activity of God.

While one might choose to maintain a relationship with God on The Path to Enlightenment, if they have one or would like to develop one, a Practitioner will need to understand that rites, rituals, ceremonies, and worship is not what produces Enlightenment. And, one might also choose to have no relationship with God as part of their journey to Enlightenment. Both approaches can be explored but one would need to deeply understand how to improve their life practice if they are going to maintain a relationship with God.

If you've been taught that all is caused based on God's creative activities, this is not true reality and a Practitioner will need to understand this observing the truth so that with that wisdom, they can become determined, dedicated, and diligent to learning, reflecting, and practicing wise decision making to improve the condition of the mind and their life.

If a Practitioner continued to believe that God was controlling all that happens in this life and your day-to-day decisions, then there would be no interest to do what is wholesome and eliminate what is unwholesome. There is "no interest [to do] what should be done and [to avoid doing] what should not be done, nor do they make an effort in this respect". The mind will become complacent dwelling in ignorance (unknowing of true reality) inhibiting a Practitioner from awakening to Enlightenment.

Detailed explanation of God's Creative Action: You Have Free Will is available in this same book series found in Chapter 18 of the book "Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment" (Volume 1).

A View That Whether Pleasure or Pain All Occur Without a Cause or Condition

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that the cause of discontentedness in the mind (i.e. pleasure, pain, neither pain-nor-pleasure) is not “absent of cause and condition”. The Natural Law of Kamma is an essential truth that one needs to deeply understand to improve their decision making.

This Teaching helps a Practitioner understand that it is their own decisions that lead to the improvement to the condition of one’s mind and life.

If you’ve been taught that you have no ability to improve your life and that all is predetermined, this is not true reality and a Practitioner will need to understand this observing the truth so that with that wisdom, they can become determined, dedicated, and diligent to learning, reflecting, and practicing wise decision making to improve the condition of the mind and their life.

If a Practitioner continued to believe that all that happens in this life is predetermined or otherwise not due to “causes and conditions” based on your own decisions, then there would be no interest to do what is wholesome and eliminate what is unwholesome. There is “no interest [to do] what should be done and [to avoid doing] what should not be done, nor do they make an effort in this respect”. The mind will become complacent dwelling in ignorance (unknowing of true reality) inhibiting a Practitioner from awakening to Enlightenment.

As a Practitioner learns, reflects, and practices these Teachings, the mind is awakening to The Natural Law of Kamma. Without the wisdom of The Natural Law of Kamma, a Practitioner would be unable to improve their decision making to attain Enlightenment.

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).

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 11-20)

<https://youtu.be/2FtITnwcxuc>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 382 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 11-20)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--382---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---Lowly-Arts---Volume-12---Chapter-11-20-e1pp5ov/a-a8ohhtq>

Chapter 21

Six Unsurpassed Things

Monks, there are these six unsurpassed things.

What six?

- (1) The unsurpassed sight,
- (2) the unsurpassed hearing,
- (3) the unsurpassed gain,
- (4) the unsurpassed training,
- (5) the unsurpassed service, and
- (6) the unsurpassed recollection (recalls/remembers).

(1) And what, Monks, is the unsurpassed sight?

Here, someone goes to see the elephant-gem, the horse-gem, the jewel-gem, or to see various sights; or else they go to see an Ascetic or Brāhmin of wrong views, of wrong practice. There is this seeing; this I do not deny. But this seeing is low, common, worldly, not honorable, and unbeneficial; it does not lead to freedom from strong feelings, elimination, peace, direct knowledge (experience), Enlightenment, and Nibbāna.

When, however, one of settled confidence, of settled determination, decided, full of confidence, goes to see The Tathāgata or a disciple of The Tathāgata; this unsurpassed sight is for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and grief, for the passing away of pain and sadness, for the achievement of the method (to attain Enlightenment), for the realization of Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

This is called the unsurpassed sight. Such is the unsurpassed sight.

(2) And how is there the unsurpassed hearing?

Here, someone goes to hear the sound of drums, the sound of lutes, the sound of singing, or to hear various sounds; or else they go to hear the teachings of an Ascetic or Brāhmin of wrong views, of wrong practice. There is this hearing; this I do not deny. But this hearing is low, common, worldly, not honorable, and unbeneficial; it does not lead to freedom from strong feelings, elimination, peace, direct knowledge (experience), Enlightenment, and Nibbāna.

When, however, one of settled confidence, of settled determination, decided, full of confidence, goes to hear The Tathāgata or a disciple of The Tathāgata; this unsurpassed hearing is for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and grief, for the passing away of pain and sadness, for the achievement of the method (to attain Enlightenment), for the realization of Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

This is called the unsurpassed hearing. Such is the unsurpassed sight and the unsurpassed hearing.

(3) And how is there the unsurpassed gain?

Here, someone gains a son, a wife, or wealth; or they gain various goods; or else they obtain belief in an Ascetic or Brāhmin of wrong views, of wrong practice. There is this I do not deny. But this gain is low, common, worldly, not honorable, and unbeneficial; it does not lead to freedom from strong feelings, elimination, peace, direct knowledge (experience), Enlightenment, and Nibbāna.

When, however, one of settled confidence, of settled determination, decided, full of confidence, obtains confidence in The Tathāgata or in a disciple of The Tathāgata; this unsurpassed gain is for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and grief, for the passing away of pain and sadness, for the achievement of the method (to attain Enlightenment), for the realization of Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

This is called the unsurpassed gain. Such is the unsurpassed sight, the unsurpassed hearing, and the unsurpassed gain.

(4) And how is there the unsurpassed training?

Here, someone trains in elephantry, in horsemanship, in chariotry, in archery, in swordsmanship; or they train in various fields; or else they train under an Ascetic or Brāhmin of wrong views, of wrong practice. There is this training; this I do not deny. But this training is low, common, worldly, not honorable, and unbeneficial; it does not lead to freedom from strong feelings, elimination, peace, direct knowledge (experience), Enlightenment, and Nibbāna.

When, however, one of settled confidence, of settled determination, decided, full of confidence, trains in the higher virtuous behavior (moral conduct), the higher mind (mental discipline), and the higher wisdom in The Teachings and discipline proclaimed by The Tathāgata; this unsurpassed training is for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and grief, for the passing

away of pain and sadness, for the achievement of the method (to attain Enlightenment), for the realization of Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

This is called the unsurpassed training. Such is the unsurpassed sight, the unsurpassed hearing, the unsurpassed gain, and the unsurpassed training.

(5) And how is there the unsurpassed service?

Here, someone serves a Khattiya, a Brāhmin, a Householder; or they serve various others; or else they serve an Ascetic or Brāhmin of wrong views, of wrong practice. There is this kind of service; this I do not deny. But this kind of service is low, common, worldly, not honorable, and unbeneficial; it does not lead to freedom from strong feelings, elimination, peace, direct knowledge (experience), Enlightenment, and Nibbāna.

When, however, one of settled confidence, of settled determination, decided, full of confidence, serves The Tathāgata or a disciple of The Tathāgata; this unsurpassed service is for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and grief, for the passing away of pain and sadness, for the achievement of the method (to attain Enlightenment), for the realization of Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

This is called the unsurpassed service. Thus there is the unsurpassed sight, the unsurpassed hearing, the unsurpassed gain, the unsurpassed training, and the unsurpassed service.

(6) And how is there the unsurpassed recollection (recalls/remembers)?

Here, someone recollects the gain of a son, a wife, or wealth; or else they recollect various kinds of gain; or else they recollect an Ascetic or Brāhmin of wrong views, of wrong practice. There is this kind of recollection; this I do not deny. But this kind of recollection is low, common, worldly, not honorable, and unbeneficial; it does not lead to freedom from strong feelings, elimination, peace, direct knowledge (experience), Enlightenment, and Nibbāna.

When, however, one of settled confidence, of settled determination, decided, full of confidence, recollects The Tathāgata or a disciple of The Tathāgata; this unsurpassed recollection is for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and grief, for the passing away of pain and sadness, for the achievement of the method (to attain Enlightenment), for the realization of Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

This is called the unsurpassed recollection (recalls/remembers).

These, Monks, are the six unsurpassed things.

Having gained the best of sights, and the unsurpassed hearing, having acquired the unsurpassed gain, pleased with the unsurpassed training, attentive in service, they develop recollection connected with seclusion, secure, leading to the deathless (Enlightenment). Joyful in mindfulness, wise, restrained by virtue (practicing moral conduct), in time they realize where it is that discontentedness is eliminated.

(Reference: AN 6.30)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares “six unsurpassed things”.

He explains other things that people are doing in the world thinking that they are having sight, hearing, gain, training, service, and recollection of various aspects of life. But, he recasts this into helping Students understand that to have unsurpassed sight, hearing, gain, training, service, and recollection, they would need to develop confidence in The Buddha and/or his disciples so that they can actively work towards purification of the mind on The Path to Enlightenment.

He explains that through having confidence in him and/or his disciples establishing unsurpassed sight, hearing, gain, training, service, and recollection, this is for “purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and grief, for the passing away of pain and sadness, for the achievement of the method (to attain Enlightenment), for the realization of Nibbāna (Enlightenment)”.

The thoughts that others have of what is sight, hearing, gain, training, service, or recollection, is to The Buddha “low, common, worldly, not honorable, and unbeneficial; it does not lead to freedom from strong feelings, elimination, peace, direct knowledge (experience), Enlightenment, and Nibbāna”.

Without developing confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community, why would anyone decide to proceed forward in applying time, effort, energy, and resources towards the attainment of Enlightenment?

It is when one gradually develops their practice observing the improvements to the condition of their mind that their confidence increases and doubt decreases. As one becomes more and more confident in The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community, this provides the support, encouragement, and motivation to continue forward in developing one’s life practice and improving the condition of the mind through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings.

Chapter 22

Demonstration of Confidence in One Endowed with Confidence

This is the time for it, Fortunate One! This is the time for it.

Fortunate One! The Perfectly Enlightened One should explain the demonstrations of confidence. Now I will find out whether or not this Monk exhibits the demonstrations of confidence.

Then listen, Subhūti, and attend closely. I will speak.

(1) Here, Subhūti, a Monk is virtuous (practicing moral conduct); he resides restrained by the training guidelines, possessed of good conduct and wise decision making, seeing danger in the slightest faults.

Having undertaken the training guidelines, he trains in them.

This is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(2) Again, a Monk has learned much, remembers what he has learned, and accumulates what he has learned. Those Teachings that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, with the right meaning and phrasing, which proclaim the perfectly complete and pure spiritual life such Teachings as these he has learned much of, retained in mind, recited verbally, mentally investigated, and penetrated well by view.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(3) Again, a Monk has wholesome friends, wholesome companions, wholesome comrades.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(4) Again, a Monk is easy to correct and possesses qualities that make him easy to correct; he is patient and receives instruction respectfully.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(5) Again, a Monk is skillful and diligent in attending to the diverse chores that are to be done for his fellow Monks; he possesses sound ability to make decisions about them in order to carry out and arrange them properly.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(6) Again, a Monk adores The Teachings and is pleasing in his statements, filled with significant joy in regard to The Teachings and discipline.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(7) Again, a Monk has aroused energy for abandoning unwholesome qualities and acquiring wholesome qualities; he is strong, firm in effort not casting off the duty of cultivating wholesome qualities.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(8) Again, a Monk gains at will, without trouble or difficulty, the four Jhānas that constitute the higher mind and are peaceful dwellings in this very life.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(9) Again, a Monk recollects (recalls/remembers) his countless past lives, that is, one birth, two births, three births, four births, five births, ten births, twenty births, thirty births, forty births, fifty births, a hundred births, a thousand births, a hundred thousand births, many eons of world-dissolution, many eons of world-evolution, many eons of world dissolution and world-evolution thus: There I was so named, of such a clan, with such an appearance, such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and pain, such my life span; passing away from there, I was reborn elsewhere, and there too I was so named, of such a clan, with such an appearance, such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and pain, such my life span; passing away from there, I was reborn here.

Thus he recollects (recalls/remembers) his countless past lives with their aspects and details.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(10) Again, with the divine eye (third eye), which is purified and surpasses the human, a Monk sees beings passing away and being reborn, unwholesome and wholesome, beautiful and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate, and he understands how beings fare in accordance with their Kamma thus: These beings who engaged in misconduct by body, speech, and mind, who abusively criticized The Noble Ones, held wrong view, and undertook (unwholesome) Kamma based on wrong view, with the breakup of the body, after death, have been reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell; but these beings who engaged in wholesome conduct by body, speech, and mind, who did not abusively criticize The Noble Ones, who held Right View, and undertook (wholesome) Kamma based on Right View, with the breakup of the body, after death, have been reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world: Thus with the divine eye (third eye), which is purified and surpasses the human, he sees beings passing away and being reborn, unwholesome and wholesome, beautiful and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate, and he understands how beings fare in accordance with their Kamma.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(11) Again, with the destruction of the taints a Monk has realized for himself with direct knowledge (experience) in this very life, the taintless liberation of mind, liberation by wisdom, and having entered upon it, he resides in it.

This, too, is a demonstration of confidence in one endowed with confidence.

(Reference: AN 11.14)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares a discourse on aspects of one's practice that would be developed demonstrating confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community.

1.) A Practitioner would be practicing virtuous conduct based on The Eight Fold Path with wise decision making and understanding that there is danger with the slightest faults of moral conduct as this will only lead to harming others, thus, harm will come to them.

2.) A Practitioner will have deeply learned, remembers, and fully develops what they have learned (i.e. accumulates). They would view these Teachings as good in the beginning, middle, and end based on learning them with the proper meaning and phrasing revealing "the perfectly complete and pure spiritual life". Having learned a lot, the Practitioner would retain The Teachings being able to explain them verbally, from memory, based on their deep investigation and penetrating them well through reflecting and observing them as truth having acquired deep wisdom.

3.) A Practitioner will develop wholesome friends and associates. Through developing wholesome relationships, a Practitioner can ensure there are not any unwholesome or negative influences in their life as they make their journey towards Enlightenment.

4.) A Practitioner is easy to correct regarding the areas of misunderstandings and areas where they are not practicing these Teachings closely ensuring they are patient and receive instruction from their Teacher respectfully. This will aid in the Student's ability to easily learn and develop their life practice.

5.) A Practitioner applies diligence and skill in completing tasks and assignments that are for the benefit of others. They will ensure all tasks are completed thoroughly with wholesome intentions and of good quality making wise decisions to schedule and complete the tasks in a reasonable timeframe.

6.) A Practitioner has a positive outlook regarding The Teachings and when discussing The Teachings, has only positive comments filled with significant joy.

7.) A Practitioner is deeply practicing Right Effort to eliminate unwholesome mental qualities and arise wholesome mental qualities not allowing the mind to become complacent.

8.) A Practitioner progresses towards the attainment of the four Jhānas being able to observe the improved qualities of mind associated with these attainments. The four Jhānas are preliminary phases the mind goes through prior to the attainment of the first Stage of Enlightenment.

9.) A Practitioner is able to remember their past lives and details from those past lives. Not every Practitioner will have the ability to observe their past lives, but some do.

10.) A Practitioner has opened the third eye being able to observe beings passing away and being reborn, unwholesome and wholesome qualities of mind, beauty and ugliness in the world, fortunate and unfortunate aspects of life, and he understands how beings experience their own Kamma in this life and after death.

11.) A Practitioner has eliminated The Ten Fetters and experiences liberation of mind, freedom from strong feelings, an Enlightened mind that is peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy residing in that mental state permanently. The mind will have deep wisdom of these Teachings and find it easy to explain them to others when asked questions about The Teachings.

These are qualities of one's life practice that would demonstrate they have confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community. A Practitioner may not have all of these qualities but each of these would further indicate one's confidence as their life practice evolves and develops.

**A Noble Disciple Learns
and Practices
The Perfectly
Enlightened One's
Teachings**

Chapter 23

The Perfectly Enlightened One Taught Monks to Eat at a Single Session

On one occasion The Perfectly Enlightened One taught the Monks the benefits of eating in a single session that one will be free from illness and affliction, and will enjoy lightness, strength, and a comfortable residing.

Bhaddāli told The Perfectly Enlightened One that he was not willing to do so. Then The Perfectly Enlightened One agreed to allow Bhaddāli to keep the food for the next meal. Again, Bhaddāli told The Perfectly Enlightened One he was not willing to do that either. Then the Venerable Bhaddāli did not present himself to The Perfectly Enlightened One for a whole of three-month period. Until the robe making period where Monks said to Bhaddāli that his action was inappropriate, Bhaddāli then went to see The Perfectly Enlightened One.

‘Venerable Sir, a wrongdoing overcame me, in that like an unwise person, confused and blundering, when a training precept was being made known by The Perfectly Enlightened One, when The Community of Monks was undertaking the training, I declared my refusal [to observe your Teaching]. Venerable Sir, may The Perfectly Enlightened One forgive my wrongdoing seen as such for the sake of restraint in the future.’

Surely, Bhaddāli, a wrongdoing overcame you, in that like an unwise person, confused and blundering, when a training precept was being made known by me, when The Community of Monks was undertaking the training, you declared your refusal to practice this Teaching.

What do you think, Bhaddāli? Suppose a Monk here were one liberated-in-both-ways, and I told him: Come, Monk, be a plank for me across the mud. Would he walk across himself, or would he dispose his body otherwise, or would he say ‘No’?

‘No, Venerable Sir.’

What do you think, Bhaddāli? Suppose a Monk here were one liberated-by-wisdom... a body-witness... one attained-to-view... one liberated-by-confidence... a Teachings-follower... a Confidence-follower, and I told him: Come, Monk, be a plank for me across the mud. Would he walk across himself, or would he dispose his body otherwise, or would he say ‘No’?

‘No, Venerable Sir.’

What do you think, Bhaddāli? Were you on that occasion one liberated-in-both-ways or one liberated-by-wisdom or a body-witness or one attained-to-view or one liberated-by-confidence or a Teachings-follower or a Confidence-follower?

‘No, Venerable Sir.’

Bhaddāli, on that occasion were you not empty, unwise, and mistaken?

‘Yes. Venerable Sir. Venerable Sir, a wrongdoing came to me, in that like an unwise person, confused and blundering, when a training precept was being made known by The Perfectly Enlightened One, when The Community of Monks were undertaking the training, I declared my refusal to practice this Teaching. Venerable Sir, may The Perfectly Enlightened One forgive my wrongdoing seen as such for the sake of restraint in the future.’

Surely, Bhaddāli, a wrongdoing overcame you, in that like an unwise person, confused and blundering, when a training precept was being made known by me, when The Community of Monks was undertaking the training, you declared your refusal to practice this Teaching.

But since you see your wrongdoing as such and make apologies in accordance with The Teachings, we understand you; for it is growth in the Noble One’s Discipline when one sees one’s wrongdoing as such and makes apologies in accordance with The Teachings by undertaking restraint for the future.

(Reference: MN 65)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how Students are not going to necessarily immediately do or follow what The Buddha is teaching. He helps his Student understand that he does not have an expectation that his Students would immediately implement his Teachings.

He encourages his Students learn, reflect, and practice, but the practice they develop is based on their own decision making. It is not through following rules or commandments that a Practitioner will attain Enlightenment. Instead, it is through deeply developing their life practice through learning, reflecting, and practicing to independently verify the truth to acquire wisdom. A Student is not expected to just follow their Teacher.

As explained in this Teaching, Students would not just follow a Teacher, laying down in the mud so that they can cross. Instead, if a Teacher makes an unreasonable request, a Student can share their honest opinions, thoughts, ideas, and explain why they feel The

Teaching is unbeneficial. But, it is important to do that using Right Speech while being respectful to your Teacher.

Then, if there is wrongdoing, it would be wise for a Student to apologize to their Teacher and likewise, with an apology, a Teacher should always understand the Student and move forward letting go of the past wrongdoing not allowing it to affect the relationship with the Student or the mind of the Teacher or Student.

Rules of Forbidden Activity or Guidance that Leads to Enlightenment

Oftentimes, Gotama Buddha's Teachings are thought of or discussed as "rules of forbidden activity". Some will even translate his Teachings as "training rules".

In my opinion, if a Practitioner approaches The Path to Enlightenment in this way, it is harmful to deeply understanding The Teachings of Gotama Buddha and can inhibit one from attaining the objective of Enlightenment.

Gotama Buddha shared Teachings that he knew would lead the mind to Enlightenment.

Enlightenment is a peaceful, calm, serene and content mind with joy that is permanent. The mind has eliminated all discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc.

All discontent feelings are eliminated from the mind 100% with the mind residing perfectly in the middle - peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy.

To attain the mental state of Enlightenment, a Practitioner needs to learn The Teachings with guidance and practice these Teachings to independently observe the "truth" for themselves acquiring wisdom.

It is through observing The Teachings in practice that one acquires wisdom. The mind then functions through this newly found wisdom making wholesome decisions based on the wisdom of The Teachings.

All progress on The Path to Enlightenment is attained through making wholesome individual choices, wholesome individual decisions as part of one's own "free will".

Following "rules of forbidden activity" will not lead a Practitioner to making wholesome choices based on the wisdom they acquired through learning and practicing The Teachings.

For Gotama Buddha's Teachings to be "rules", he would have had to create a doctrine of rules with an organization to collect, distribute, and enforce those rules.

That is not what Gotama Buddha did.

He offered Teachings that he knew lead to the mental state of Enlightenment, a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy that is permanent acquired through wise decision making by the individual Practitioner. The mind is liberated through wise decision making based on wisdom.

Through Students learning and practicing these Teachings, a Practitioner can observe through their own learning and practice that the condition of the mind improves.

Anger and frustration in the mind is slowly and gradually reduced and ultimately completely eliminated - along with all other discontent feelings. Individual Practitioners can observe for themselves that The Teachings and practices shared improved the condition of the mind through training of the mind.

Nothing Gotama Buddha taught is based on belief but instead, Teachings are shared with guidance that when learned and practiced can be observed as truth to acquire wisdom.

For one to learn and practice Gotama Buddha's Teachings is a personal choice based on free will decisions.

To attain Enlightenment is not to "follow rules of forbidden activity" but instead "learning and practicing Teachings with guidance from a Teacher".

Gotama Buddha did not establish a set of rules to be enforced but instead shared Teachings with guidance that through your own wholesome personal choices will lead the mind to Enlightenment - if you choose to learn and practice with the guidance of a Teacher.

There are no rules, forbidden activity, or certain things that Gotama Buddha necessarily allowed or disallowed.

His Teachings are guidance that you can choose to learn and practice or not.

If his Teachings are rules of forbidden activity, who is coming to enforce those rules?

Surely not Gotama Buddha or anyone else.

Learning and practicing The Teachings as guidance will lead a Practitioner towards making countless wholesome decisions not because of rules or enforcement of said rules, but because the Practitioner learns through experience, then chooses to make wise wholesome decisions leading to good wholesome results - the Enlightened mind.

Enlightenment is a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy that is permanent based on personal choices to learn and practice Gotama Buddha's Teachings with guidance from a Teacher.

Gotama Buddha's Teachings are guidance to learn and practice through personal choice. Not rules. The mind will awaken to Enlightenment as it gains wisdom in The Natural Laws of Existence (i.e. The Buddha's Teachings) and decides to develop a life practice based on wise decision making.

Chapter 24

The Noble Disciples Will Not Transgress the Training Guidelines Even for Life's Sake

Just as, Pahārāda, the great ocean is stable and does not overflow its boundaries, so too, when I have prescribed a training guideline for the disciples, they will not do wrong even for life's sake.

This is the second astounding and amazing quality that the Monks see in these Teachings and discipline because of which they are pleased in it.

(Here quoted only one of eight astounding and amazing qualities that the Monks see in these Teachings and discipline.)

(Reference: AN 8.19)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how Students see the outstanding and amazing quality of these Teachings and are so pleased with these Teachings that they will not make a decision to have wrongdoing even if their life depended on doing wrong.

In other words, a Practitioner who is deeply practicing these Teachings would not steal or lie, even if their life depended on theft or lying. They would know, stealing and lying does not lead to any wholesome result and even faced with death, they would not steal or lie.

Four Defilements of Ascetics and Brāhmins

Chapter 25

Four Defilements of Ascetics and Brāhmins

So too, Monks, there are four defilements of Ascetics and Brāhmins because of which some Ascetics and Brāhmins do not shine, blaze, and radiate.

What four?

(1) There are some Ascetics and Brāhmins who drink liquor and wine and do not refrain from drinking liquor and wine (ingest substances that cause heedlessness).

This is the first defilement of Ascetics and Brāhmins because of which some Ascetics and Brāhmins do not shine, blaze, and radiate.

(2) There are some Ascetics and Brāhmins who indulge in sexual intercourse and do not refrain from sexual intercourse.

This is the second defilement of Ascetics and Brāhmins because of which some Ascetics and Brāhmins do not shine, blaze, and radiate.

(3) There are some Ascetics and Brāhmins who accept gold and silver and do not refrain from receiving gold and silver.

This is the third defilement of Ascetics and Brāhmins because of which some Ascetics and Brāhmins do not shine, blaze, and radiate.

(4) There are some Ascetics and Brāhmins who earn their living by wrong livelihood and do not refrain from wrong livelihood.

This is the fourth defilement of Ascetics and Brāhmins because of which some Ascetics and Brāhmins do not shine, blaze, and radiate.

These are the four defilements of Ascetics and Brāhmins because of which some Ascetics and Brāhmins do not shine, blaze, and radiate.

(Reference: AN 4.50)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares four defilements or pollutions of mind that he observed in the population of Ascetics and Brāhmins.

During the lifetime of Gotama Buddha there were many other roaming Ascetics in communities claiming to have discovered The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment. There were also Brāhmin priests performing rites, rituals, ceremonies, and worship encouraging the “belief” in countless superstitious and unproven claims.

Brāhmins were part of the caste system that people were born into families who were responsible for providing rites, rituals, ceremonies, and worship services. The common person would need to pay a set fee to the Brāhmins for their service. The community was taught for many generations to believe they were unable to pray or worship on their own for any beneficial outcome but instead would need to pay a fee to this special class of people, the Brāhmins, who would provide the service of praying on their behalf.

Gotama Buddha observing this system of payment for prayers and promised beneficial outcomes, understood this would not lead to Enlightenment of the mind. There is no rites, rituals, ceremonies, and worship that will produce wisdom in the mind that would lead to liberation of the mind. He also observed corruption as with an entire population of people believing they were unable to pray or worship on their own but instead would need the services of a special class of people. This special class of people, the Brāhmins, could demand any sort of payment they wished and if the people were interested in prayer and worship on their behalf, they would then be motivated to provide the payment.

Keep in mind that during the lifetime of The Buddha, there were many different groups claiming they had The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment when in reality it was The Buddha’s Teachings that lead to Enlightenment and he knew that, but not everyone else did. So there were still people who continued to learn and practice the teachings of other communities.

There were competing communities of Ascetics with a Master Teacher all claiming it was their teachings that would produce Enlightenment. Various members of these communities would listen to talks on the teachings and applied various amounts of effort to implementing the teachings into their daily life.

Due to the environment of competing views and opinions, along with there being no way to confirm for others that Gotama Buddha was indeed a Buddha, various Teachers shared their teachings throughout the community.

Gotama Buddha refers to these as “wrong harmful teachings”.

Detailed explanation of these wrong harmful teachings is available in this same book series found in Chapter 60 of the book “Realms of Existence” (Volume 11).

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that he has observed four (4) defilements or pollutions of mind practiced by Ascetics and Brāhmins of other communities.

1.) Ascetics and Brāhmins of other communities “drink liquor and wine and do not refrain from drinking liquor and wine (ingest substances that cause heedlessness)”.

With a mind that is polluted with substances that cause heedlessness, it will never experience Enlightenment as long as those substances continue to be used. It would be impossible to cultivate Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration, along with all the other aspects of one's life practice that would need to be developed to attain Enlightenment.

There is no substance that causes heedlessness that would improve the condition of the mind, it would only cause further complications and difficulties as one's mind is diluted by their choice to ingest these substances.

The Path to Enlightenment is to purify the mind of all the fetters/taints/pollution of mind. If one is actively working to purify the mind and develop “awareness of mind” (i.e. Right Mindfulness), how could ingesting substances that cause heedlessness assist in this journey? It cannot and an Ascetic, Brāhmin, or even a Household Practitioner who aspires for the attainment of Enlightenment and is working in that direction, would need to eliminate substances that cause heedlessness from their life practice. If the mind is craving/desiring, or in other words, addicted to substances that cause heedlessness, even using them casually, the mind is not yet Enlightened.

It is best to view substances that cause heedlessness as “poison”. Through viewing substances that cause heedlessness in this way, one can actively work towards eliminating them from their life practice.

Detailed explanation of substances that cause heedlessness 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).

2.) Ascetics and Brāhmins of other communities “indulge in sexual intercourse and do not refrain from sexual intercourse”.

The Third Precept of The Eight Precepts is guiding a Practitioner to “abandon sexual activity and observe celibacy, living apart, abstaining from sexual intercourse, the common person's practice”.

This Precept will help a Practitioner to eliminate the fetter/taint of “sensual desire” from the mind. All of The Ten Fetters need to be eliminated from the mind for a Practitioner to attain Enlightenment. One of the fetters/taints/pollutions of the mind is “sensual desire”. One of the strongest sensual desires that many human beings experience is the sensual desire of sexual contact.

Through a Practitioner choosing to eliminate sexual contact by practicing this precept, they can actively work to train the mind to eliminate sensual desire bringing them closer to Enlightenment.

A Practitioner would need to first gradually eliminate the action of sexual contact then gradually eliminate the mind's craving/desire/attachment to sexual contact to fully liberate the mind from this fetter/taint/pollution.

There is nothing wrong or immoral with having sexual intercourse but, a mind that has the fetter of sensual desire will still experience discontentedness. When or if a Practitioner chooses to eliminate sexual contact from their life practice, is a personal choice for each Practitioner. A Practitioner could attain the first and second Stage of Enlightenment while maintaining a healthy sexual life enjoying the benefits of training the mind to this point.

Then, when and if they choose, a Practitioner can work on eliminating the remaining fetters/taints bringing the mind into the third and fourth Stage of Enlightenment which would include eliminating sexual contact to eliminate the fetter/taint/pollution of sensual desire.

3.) Ascetics and Brāhmins of other communities “accept gold and silver and do not refrain from receiving gold and silver”.

During Gotama Buddha’s lifetime, he guided Ordained Practitioners to not accept gold and silver (i.e. money) as an offering. It was only food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical care that was offered to sustain his life and the life of those who were his closest Students - the Ordained Practitioners. This helped Ordained Practitioners to eliminate craving/desire/attachment to wealth.

Offerings to Teachers who are sharing these Teachings does not need to be exclusively monetary offerings. While financial support is needed to provide the freedom to produce resources for the continued sharing of these Teachings, a Student can also offer food, water, clothing, shelter, medical care, books, and other supplies along with your time, effort, and energy to support the continued sharing of these Teachings.

Many of us are interested in helping improve the world but lack the wisdom of how to accomplish that goal. It is the wisdom found in these Teachings that will help all of humanity to create a kinder and more peaceful society. Through supporting Teachers who are sharing these Teachings, you can ensure that you and others will continue to learn and progress through developing a solid foundation in these Teachings. You are only receiving these Teachings now due to the generosity and support provided by countless individuals over the past 2,500 years. Any offerings you make to support these Teachings will then ensure these Teachings are available for future generations just like they are being made available to you.

If regular and continued donations to Teachers that assist them in sustaining their life and to provide the needed resources to share these Teachings were not provided, all of humanity would be lost and unable to develop their life practice to experience Enlightenment. The world would continue to become a darker place to exist. It is only when Practitioners choose to provide regular and consistent ongoing support that a Teacher is then able to sustain their life with the basic necessities of life and then direct their effort and energy towards sharing the wisdom of these Teachings with you.

Please support those who are sharing these Teachings into the world who you observe are doing so through virtuous moral conduct. Using discernment (wise decision making) a Practitioner can practice generosity to share their wealth with those “who refrain from intoxication and heedlessness, who are settled in patience and gentleness, who tame the mind, calm the mind, and train the mind for Nibbāna (Enlightenment)”.

Through supporting these individuals with your donations of time, effort, energy, and resources you will be helping all of humanity.

4.) Ascetics and Brāhmins of other communities “earn their living by wrong livelihood and do not refrain from wrong livelihood”.

The Buddha provided detailed Teachings on “wrong livelihood” and “Right Livelihood” for both Ordained and Household Practitioners. The livelihoods he guided people to practice were unique to the lifestyle of whether someone is an Ordained or Household Practitioner.

Ordained Practitioners have been guided by The Buddha to practice Right Livelihood based on their choice to accept donations from Household Practitioners and that they should be focused on learning, reflecting, practicing, and sharing these Teachings for the benefit of others.

Through developing their own life practice, they will then have deep wisdom to be able to guide the Household Practitioners who support them. There is no blessings or other rites, rituals, ceremonies, or worship that should be practiced by Ordained Practitioners. Rites, rituals, ceremonies, and worship only promotes “wrong view” and would detract from cultivating and developing a Community of Practitioners towards the attainment of Enlightenment. Therefore, the only thing that Ordained Practitioners have to offer Household Practitioners, out of appreciation and gratitude for their support, is sharing the wisdom of these Teachings. That is how The Buddha intended it to be, so he provided an extensive list of “wrong livelihoods” for Ordained Practitioners.

Today, there are Ordained Practitioners who do not understand these Teachings as deeply as when they were first shared by The Buddha. Therefore, today we see some Ordained Practitioners who are practicing “wrong livelihood”. But, as they choose to more deeply learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to understand The Words of The Buddha, they may choose to improve their life practice so that they are supporting the Household Practitioners in their journey to Enlightenment. The way to accomplish that goal is for Ordained Practitioners to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings through determination, dedication, and diligence as described during the lifetime of The Buddha.

To not practice based on The Words of The Buddha is, to go astray and continue the roaming and wandering through The Cycle of Rebirth while not being equipped to attain Enlightenment or help the Household Practitioners who are helping Ordained Practitioners to sustain their life assisting them to more deeply develop their life practice. This book and others in this book series will provide a solid foundation and support Ordained Practitioners and Household Practitioners to develop their life practice to attain Enlightenment as described during the lifetime of The Buddha using only The Words of The Buddha. Ordained Practitioners will need to focus on developing their own life practice with support of the Household Practitioners so that they can then share these Teachings with others benefiting all of humanity.

Due to the Ascetics and Brāhmins of other communities practicing in this way described as part of the four defilements or pollutions of mind that The Buddha observed in the population of Ascetics and Brāhmins, they “do not shine, blaze, and radiate”. The mind is not Enlightened shining forth with brightness and the brilliance of the Enlightened mind.

This is not The Buddha judging others, talking down to them, nor having arrogance or pride related to his Teachings. Instead, he is sharing with his Students what they will observe in other communities so that they will understand why he shares The Teachings that he does and the results of these Teachings.

We now know, 2,500 years later, that it was Gotama Buddha's Teachings that lead to Enlightenment - that's why they are still in existence today. The Teachers and Teachings of other communities did not last or prosper. Those Teachings did not propagate throughout the world because they do not work to attain Enlightenment.

But, The Buddha's Teachings do work. His Teachings lead exactly where he said they would - to Enlightenment. The Enlightened mind will experience peace, calm, serenity, and contentedness with joy that is permanent. The Practitioner can observe this for themselves as the condition of the mind gradually improves. Through that observation, people gradually grew to understand that, not only was Gotama Buddha a Buddha, but it was his Teachings that lead to Enlightenment. Therefore, people supported his Teachings to continue in the world through sharing them one person to another over the last 2,500 years until now. These Teachings are now reaching you based on many centuries of consistent, ongoing, and diligent effort to share these Teachings from generation to generation.

Once you learn the truth and observe the condition of the mind has drastically improved to no longer have any discontentedness whatsoever and life is so very peaceful, what would you do? Keep that wisdom for yourself or share it with others?

Every single aspect of The Buddha's Teachings has a purpose. There is no part of a Buddha's Teachings that is inserted by chance or mistake. A Buddha's Teachings are very well thought out and intentionally shared in a specific way.

Just because others do not understand the purpose and meaning behind a Buddha's Teachings, should not give cause to change a Buddha's Teachings. Modifying a Buddha's Teachings is the most dangerous thing anyone could ever do which would drastically affect all of humanity for countless generations. It is The Teachings of a Buddha that will guide countless individuals to Enlightenment during the lifetime of a Buddha and after their death, if they are unchanged. Once a Buddha has died, there is no way to consult with them about their Teachings to more deeply understand them, therefore, any changes would be highly unwise unless done so by a new Buddha.

It is only a true Buddha who can declare The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment. While a Practitioner can attain Enlightenment, they will not be equipped to declare the true Teachings that lead to Enlightenment. A Buddha can attain Enlightenment on their own and will have deep profound wisdom related to how to attain Enlightenment. While an average Practitioner can learn, reflect, and practice a Buddha's Teachings to attain Enlightenment, their mind is liberated by the wisdom of a Buddha. But, they do not and cannot have the ability to declare The Path to Enlightenment as a Buddha would.

A Buddha sees The Path to Enlightenment through The Natural Laws of Existence so clearly because their mind is uninfluenced by any outside source. A Buddha is Fully Perfectly Enlightened. They can see The Natural Laws of Existence so clearly and vividly.

While an average Practitioner can gain the wisdom to see these natural laws and awaken to Enlightenment, there is no one other than a true Buddha that can clearly distinguish The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment in the same way as a Buddha.

Therefore, if anyone attempted to change or modify The Teachings of a Buddha, they would be doing so at their own detriment and for the harm of countless individuals. While today we have weaponry that could kill millions of people with one pull of a trigger, changing a Buddha's Teachings is more detrimental to humanity than the largest most significant explosion that could ever be produced by technology.

A Buddha arising in the world is extremely rare. Therefore, once humanity has the clear and direct Teachings of a true Buddha, they should not be changed or modified in any way unless done so by a Buddha. To attempt to adjust, modify, or change a Buddha's Teachings in the slightest degree would cause significant, irreversible, and devastating suffering for all of humanity.

Unwholesome Habits Are Evil Livelihood

Chapter 26

Unwholesome Habits

What are unwholesome habits?

They are unwholesome bodily actions, unwholesome verbal actions, and evil (unwholesome) livelihood.

These are called unwholesome habits.

And what do these unwholesome habits originate from?

Their origin is stated: they should be said to originate from the mind.

What mind?

Though mind is multiple, varied, and of different aspects, there is mind affected by craving/greed, by anger/hatred, and by ignorance/delusion (unknowing of true reality).

Unwholesome habits originate from this.

And where do these unwholesome habits cease without remainder?

Their elimination is stated: here a Monk abandons bodily misconduct and develops wholesome bodily conduct; he abandons verbal misconduct and develops wholesome verbal conduct; he abandons mental misconduct and develops wholesome mental conduct; he abandons wrong livelihood and gains a living by Right Livelihood.

It is here that unwholesome habits cease without remainder.

And how practicing does he practice the way to the elimination of unwholesome habits?

Here a Monk awakens enthusiasm for the non-arising of unarisen evil unwholesome states and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives. He awakens enthusiasm for the abandoning of arisen evil unwholesome states... He awakens enthusiasm for the arising of unarisen wholesome states... He awakens enthusiasm for the continuation, non-disappearance, strengthening, increase, and fulfillment by development of

arisen wholesome states, and he makes effort, arouses energy, exerts his mind, and strives.

One so practicing practices the way to the elimination of unwholesome habits.

(Reference: MN 78.10)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) causes evil unwholesome habits to continue including in one's own livelihood.

The Buddha explains that through abandoning bodily, verbal, and mental misconduct along with "wrong livelihood", the unwholesome habits will be eliminated.

He explains the way to accomplish this goal to eliminate evil unwholesome habits is to develop wholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct with practicing Right Livelihood through applying Right Effort.

Through practicing "the way to the elimination of unwholesome habits", a Practitioner "awakens enthusiasm" to eliminate unwholesome qualities and arise wholesome qualities. This is taught as part of The Eight Fold Path described as Right Effort.

Through practicing The Eight Fold Path, a Practitioner will eliminate all evil unwholesome habits. It is all unwholesome habits, originating with craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality), that cause harm in the world, thus, harm will return to you. By causing harm in the world, it is the same as causing harm to yourself.

A wise Practitioner would choose not to cause harm to others because they know that harm will come back to them due to The Natural Law of Kamma. It is The Eight Fold Path that will guide a Practitioner to improve their life practice and the condition of the mind, such that, they will no longer choose to cause harm in the world and, thus, harm will not come back to you.

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).

Appendix

Chapter 27

Words Which Should Be Studied, Learned, and Investigated in The Foremost Assembly

And what is the assembly trained in investigation, not in conceited talk.

Here, in this kind of assembly, when those discourses are being recited that are mere poetry composed by poets, beautiful in words and phrases, created by outsiders, spoken by (their) disciples, the Monks are not interested to listen to them, do not lend an ear to them, or apply their minds to understand them; they do not think those teachings should be studied and learned.

But when those discourses spoken by The Tathāgata are being recited that are deep, deep in meaning, world-transcending, connected with emptiness, the Monks are interested to listen to them, lend an ear to them, and apply their minds to understand them; they think those Teachings should be studied and learned. And having learned those Teachings, they question each other about them and investigate them thoroughly, (asking): How is this? What is the meaning of this? (They) disclose to (others) what is obscure and clarify what is unclear, and dispel their confusion about numerous misunderstandings.

This is called the assembly trained in investigation, not in conceited talk.

And what is the assembly trained in conceited talk, not in investigation.

Here, in this kind of assembly, when those discourses are being spoken by The Tathāgata are being recited that are deep, deep in meaning, world-transcending, connected with emptiness, the Monks are not interested to listen to them, do not lend an ear to them, or apply their minds to understand them; they do not think those Teachings should be studied and learned.

But when those discourses are being recited that are mere poetry composed by poets, beautiful in words and phrases, created by outsiders, spoken by (their) disciples, they are interested to listen to them, lend an ear to them, and apply their minds to understand them; they think those teachings should be studied and learned. And having learned those teachings, they do not question each other about them or investigate them thoroughly, [asking]: How is this? What is the meaning of this? They do not disclose [to others] what is obscure and clarify what is unclear, or dispel their confusion about numerous misunderstandings.

This is called the assembly trained in conceited talk, not in investigation.

These, Monks, are the two kinds of assemblies. Of these two kinds of assemblies, the assembly trained in investigation, not in conceited talk, is foremost.

(Reference: AN 2.46)

During the lifetime of the man we now refer to as Gotama Buddha, there were several communities of roaming Ascetics, also known as “Spiritual Seekers”, whose primary Teacher claimed it was their teachings which led to Enlightenment.

As Siddhartha Gotama left the royal palace to embark on his journey towards seeking Enlightenment, he sought training and instruction from one of these Teachers. He spent time learning the teachings and had mastered the teachings shared by this first Teacher. The Teacher declared him to be able to fully represent his teachings as a masterful student now being declared a Teacher. Siddhartha Gotama observed that while he was declared a master of this community’s teachings in a short time, his mind was still discontent and lacked the discipline to experience the Enlightened mind. Due to his continued challenges of a discontent mind, he chose to leave this community and seek guidance with a new Teacher.

Soon after receiving instruction with his new Teacher, this Teacher also determined that Siddhartha Gotama had mastered his teachings and declared him to be able to represent his teachings as a Master Teacher. But, with this second designation of being a Master Teacher in a second community claiming to have the teachings that lead to Enlightenment, Siddhartha Gotama observed his mind was still discontent.

Realizing that he had spent the last two (2) years learning two different approaches towards the attainment of Enlightenment and becoming accomplished in both disciplines as a Master Teacher, he could observe that the condition of his mind was not yet steady, stable, unshakable, with peacefulness, calmness, serenity, and contentedness with joy.

He had essentially succeeded at mastering the teachings of two different approaches to attaining Enlightenment, yet the condition of his mind had not improved to the point of complete and total peacefulness. He also had not discovered the answers to the initial questions that ignited his motivation to leave the royal palace and pursue the answers to why human beings experienced sickness, aging, and death.

He was no closer to understanding the core and central problem he sought to investigate as he was when he first left the royal palace. While he had mastered two different disciplines of teachings, he had not solved the challenge of a discontent mind and he did not have the answers to why human beings experienced sickness, aging, and death.

So, he decided to leave from the communities of wandering Ascetics retreating to isolation in the forest embarking on a journey of independent investigation of how to solve the problem of the discontent mind and why human beings experienced sickness, aging, and death.

After a total of a six (6) year journey, four (4) years independently, where he gradually discovered The Teachings that do indeed lead to Enlightenment, he then returned to share his independently discovered Teachings with those who chose to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings he had discovered.

Now, a Fully Perfectly Enlightened Buddha, Gotama Buddha performed a miracle for five (5) Ascetics who were then convinced, he had attained Enlightenment.

He delivers his first discourse of The Four Noble Truths helping these first five (5) Students understand 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. His Teachings were detailed and eye opening for these first five (5) Students who understood, he was surely Enlightened.

But, a Buddha does not rely on miracles to convince large numbers of people that he is, in fact, a Buddha. Instead, a Buddha skillfully shares his Teachings with others in a humble way guiding those who choose to learn, reflect, and practice his Teachings towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

There is no outward physical indication of one who has attained Enlightenment and a Buddha does not advertise that they are a Buddha, but instead humbly goes about their objective of sharing their Teachings into the world, in such a way, that will guide countless people to Enlightenment during their lifetime, and leaves The Teachings in a condition that after their death, will guide countless more people to the attainment of Enlightenment.

During Gotama Buddha's lifetime in the region of the world he lived, modern day Nepal and Northeastern India, there were several communities of roaming Ascetics that continued to share what they felt were the teachings that lead to Enlightenment. There were different communities that felt they had discovered The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment. So, there were many competing views and opinions of what Enlightenment is, The Teachings to attain Enlightenment, and the methods of training that would produce Enlightenment.

There were competing communities of Ascetics with a Master Teacher all claiming it was their teachings that would produce Enlightenment. Various members of these communities would listen to talks on the teachings and applied various amounts of effort to implementing the teachings into their daily life.

Due to the environment of competing views and opinions, along with there being no way to confirm for others that Gotama Buddha was indeed a Buddha, various Teachers shared their teachings throughout the community.

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that there are two different types of "assemblies" or "communities" that exist.

- 1.) One trained in investigation of The Teachings, not in conceited talk, and
- 2.) One trained in conceited talk, not in investigation.

He associates those who are learning, reflecting, and practicing his Teachings as a community that is trained in investigation of The Teachings, not in conceited talk. And, he associates those who are interested in listening to the teachings of "mere poets" as a community that is trained in conceited talk, not in investigation.

A Buddha knows with 100% certainty that their Teachings do, in fact, lead to Enlightenment because they themselves are experiencing the results of the Enlightened mind. They (1) discover The Teachings through their own independent journey, (2) share their independently discovered Teachings for the remaining time of their life guiding countless individuals to Enlightenment and (3) leave The Teachings in such a condition that after their death countless more individuals will be able to attain Enlightenment.

Not everyone would be interested to necessarily learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings of The Buddha because it is hard work and requires an extensive amount of energy and effort to learn, reflect, and train one's mind to attain Enlightenment.

So, in an environment where individuals are unable to determine that a specific Teacher is or is not a Buddha and the only way to know whether a certain collection of Teachings lead to Enlightenment or not is to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings - there were many people who did not learn from The Buddha, but instead choose the approach of listening to Teachers who were speaking "mere poetry composed by poets, beautiful in words and phrases". These words are easier on the ears and the mind, thus, no hard work ensures the mind can remain complacent.

Gotama Buddha would be interested in encouraging people to learn, reflect, and practice his Teachings helping Students to understand the difference between his Teachings and those teachings of other Teachers doing so using "Right Speech" which includes not disparaging or degrading others.

The Buddha, using Right Speech, led his Students to understand the difference between his Teachings and those of others.

The Buddha, whom not everyone understood was a Buddha, was training his Students in investigation to uncover the true Teachings that lead to Enlightenment to acquire wisdom, thus, producing a liberated mind while speaking humbly - without conceit.

But, if one is speaking "mere poetry composed by poets, beautiful in words and phrases" without benefit of learning, reflecting, and practicing Teachings to acquire wisdom that improves the condition of one's mind and their life, these teachings would not lead to Enlightenment, which would be considered useless by a Buddha as individuals would gain no tangible benefits from the actual teachings being shared.

Chapter 28

Why Every Practitioner Should Study The Tathāgata's Words

Words Which Should Be Studied, Learned, and Investigated in the Foremost Assembly

Here, in this kind of assembly, when those discourses are being recited that are mere poetry composed by poets, beautiful in words and phrases, created by outsiders, spoken by (their) disciples, the Monks do not want to listen to them, do not lend an ear to them, or apply their minds to understand them; they do not think those teachings should be studied and learned.

But when those discourses spoken by The Tathāgata are being recited that are deep, deep in meaning, world-transcending, connected with emptiness, the Monks want to listen to them, lend an ear to them, and apply their minds to understand them; they think those Teachings should be studied and learned. And having learned those Teachings, they question each other about them and investigate them thoroughly, (asking): How is this? What is the meaning of this? (They) disclose to (others) what is obscure and clarify what is unclear, and dispel their confusion about numerous misunderstandings.

This is called the assembly trained in investigation, not in conceited talk.

(Reference: AN 2.42)

Words that Should Be Studied and Mastered

(Simile of the Drum Peg)

Monks, once in the past the Dasārahas had a kettle drum called the Summoner. When the Summoner became cracked, the Dasārahas inserted another peg.

Eventually the time came when the Summoner's original drumhead had disappeared and only a collection of pegs remained.

So too, Monks, the same thing will happen with the Monks in the future. When those discourses spoken by The Tathāgata that are deep, deep in meaning, world-transcending, dealing with emptiness, are being recited, they will not be eager to listen to them, nor lend an ear to them, nor apply their

minds to understand them; and they will not think those Teachings should be studied and mastered. But when those discourses that are mere poetry composed by poets, beautiful in words and phrases, created by outsiders, spoken by (their) disciples, are being recited, they will be eager to listen to them, will lend an ear to them, will apply their minds to understand them; and they will think those teachings should be studied and mastered.

In this way, Monks, those discourses spoken by The Tathāgata that are deep, deep in meaning, world-transcending, dealing with emptiness, will disappear....

Therefore, Monks, you should train yourselves thus: When those discourses spoken by The Tathāgata that are deep, deep in meaning, world-transcending, dealing with emptiness, are being recited, we will be eager to listen to them, will lend an ear to them, will apply our minds to understand them; and we will think those Teachings should be studied and mastered. Thus should you train yourselves.

(Reference: SN 20.7)

Words from Singleness of Mind

Aggivessana, ... The Tathāgata teaches The Teachings to others only to give them knowledge. When the talk is finished, Aggivessana, then I steady my mind internally, quieten it, bring it to singleness, and concentrate it on that same sign of concentration as before, in which I constantly reside.

(Reference: MN 36)

Words that Are Just So Not Otherwise

From the night he fully awakened, Monks, until the night he attains Final Nibbāna (Final Enlightenment), in this interval, whatever he speaks, talks of, and expounds, all that is just so, not otherwise...

(Reference: AN 4.23)

Words of Immediately Effective Teachings

Good, Monks. So you have been guided by me with these Teachings, which are visible here and now, immediately effective, inviting inspection, onward leading, to be experienced by the wise for themselves...

(Reference: MN 38.25)

Words of The Teachings and Discipline

Words to Be Resided with as One's Own Island as One's Own Refuge

...Ānanda, it may be that you will think: 'The Teacher's instruction has ceased, now we have no Teacher!' It should not be seen like this, Ānanda, for what I have taught and explained to you as Teachings and discipline will, at my passing, be your Teacher...

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 greatest of those dedicated to the training.

(Reference: DN 16)

Words to Be Undertook as Taught Not to Be Abolished

As long as the Monks do not give instruction on anything that has not been taught or abolish anything that has already been taught, but undertake and practice the training guidelines as they have been taught, only growth is to be predicted for them, not decline.

(Reference: DN 16)

In this collection of Teachings from Gotama Buddha, he shares why a Practitioner should learn the discourses as he taught them to represent The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment.

There are many places where Teachings are being shared and referenced to as being Buddhist Teachings but, due to impermanence, as you investigate you might come to discover that what is being shared is in conflict with The Words of The Buddha.

Learning and practicing The Teachings of The Buddha through his own words will produce the best results. The collection of Teachings assembled here help to support this through The Buddha's own words shared during his lifetime.

Sharing Teachings that are not connected to The Words of The Buddha would only prove to be misleading and create obstacles for a Practitioner in the attainment of Enlightenment.

Everything I share is confirmed in four (4) different ways so that I know it is the truth and you can discover that same truth.

1.) What I share is in The Pāli Canon: The Pāli Canon is the largest, most complete source of Gotama Buddha's Teachings. Sourcing what you learn and practice back to this original source text ensures that you are learning and practicing what The Buddha taught.

2.) I did not believe what was in The Pāli Canon, instead, I practiced it to determine the truth for myself. Through practicing The Teachings, one can observe the condition of the mind is improving and moves to being peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. If a Practitioner is observing this through what they are learning, then they know they are learning and practicing the truth because it is working to improve the condition of the mind.

3.) I share what I discovered with Students and it is working to improve the condition of their mind. Through all the years that I have been teaching, Students report that what they are learning with me is improving the condition of their mind as they are seeing situations that once caused anger or other unwelcome feelings, no longer produce those same feelings. They can observe the condition of their mind is improving.

4.) Thai people confirm that what they learned from well known Enlightened Masters of Buddhist Teachings are the same Teachings that I share. As Thai people have had Buddhist Teachings in their culture for 800-1200 years, they know how to determine if someone is or is not Enlightened. They have people in their community who they know are Enlightened, because they can observe it for themselves. What Thai people learn in the Thai language is the same thing that I share in English, according to Thai people who are deeply familiar with The Buddha's Teachings and The Path to Enlightenment.

Having dedicated time, effort, energy, and resources to confirm The Teachings of The Buddha in this way, a Practitioner can have confidence that what is being shared with you are The Teachings of The Buddha and works to produce an Enlightened mind.

“From the night he fully awakened, Monks, until the night he attains Final Nibbāna (Final Enlightenment), in this interval, whatever he speaks, talks of, and expounds, all that is just so, not otherwise...”

The Buddha's Enlightenment was accomplished gradually over the course of many lifetimes. In the life that he became a Fully Perfectly Enlightened Buddha, he taught for 45 years sharing The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment with all those who chose to learn and practice his Teachings. His active journey to Enlightenment in his last life took 6 years of gradual training and gradual practice resulting in gradual progress. His mind gradually realized Enlightenment. However, some people mistakenly believe that his Enlightenment occurred in an instant. This Teaching is essentially explaining that from the time he was known to have attained Enlightenment until the final death, The Buddha shared The Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment with tireless effort and energy. This Teaching is not sharing that he attained Enlightenment in just one night but instead, all that he spoke of and explained as Teachings is The Path to Enlightenment.

Chapter 29

Those Who Cause the Good Teachings to Disappear (First Discourse)

Monks, those Monks who explain non-Teachings as Teachings are acting for the harm of many people, the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

These Monks generate much unwholesome Kamma and cause these good wholesome Teachings to disappear.

Monks, those Monks who explain Teachings as non-Teachings ...

Monks, those Monks who explain non-discipline as discipline ...

Monks, those Monks who explain discipline as non-discipline ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has not been stated and spoken by The Perfectly Enlightened One as having been stated and spoken by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has been stated and spoken by The Perfectly Enlightened One as not having been stated and spoken by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has not been practiced by The Perfectly Enlightened One as having been practiced by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has been practiced by The Perfectly Enlightened One as not having been practiced by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has not been prescribed by The Perfectly Enlightened One as having been prescribed by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has been prescribed by The Perfectly Enlightened One as not having been prescribed by him are acting for the harm of many people, for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

These Monks generate much unwholesome Kamma and cause these good Teachings to disappear.

‘Venerable Sir, it is said: Division in The Community, division in The Community. How is there division in the Community?’

Here, Ānanda,

(1) Monks explain non-Teachings as Teachings
(2) and Teachings as non-Teachings.

(3) They explain non-discipline as discipline, and
(4) discipline as non-discipline.

(5) They explain what has not been stated and spoken by The Perfectly Enlightened One as having been stated and spoken by him, and
(6) what has been stated and spoken by The Perfectly Enlightened One as not having been stated and spoken by him.

(7) They explain what has not been practiced by The Perfectly Enlightened One as having been practiced by him, and
(8) what has been practiced by The Perfectly Enlightened One as not having been practiced by him.

(9) They explain what has not been prescribed by The Perfectly Enlightened One as having been prescribed by him, and
(10) what has been prescribed by The Perfectly Enlightened One as not having been prescribed by him.

On these ten grounds they withdraw and go apart.

They perform legal acts separately and recite the training guidance of these Teachings separately.

It is in this way, Ānanda, that there is division in The Community.

‘But, Venerable Sir, when one causes division in a harmonious Community, what does one generate?’

One generates evil lasting for an eon, Ānanda.

‘But, Venerable Sir, what is that evil lasting for an eon?’

One is tormented in hell for an eon, Ānanda.

One who causes division in The Community is bound for misery, bound for hell, to reside there for an eon.

Delighting in division, established in non-Teachings, he falls away from security from bondage (Enlightenment).

Having caused division in a harmonious Community, he is tormented in hell for an eon.

(Reference: AN 1.130-AN 139 and AN 10.37-AN 10.39)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how his Teachings would disappear based on decisions made by people to not share his Teachings in the way that he taught them.

The Buddha explains that an individual who modifies his Teachings is “acting for the harm of many people, the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings”. Heavenly beings and human beings are able to attain Enlightenment while the other realms of hell, animal, and afflicted spirits are unable to attain Enlightenment. Therefore, one who modifies his Teachings is acting for the harm of heavenly and human beings as they would be unable to attain Enlightenment without The Teachings of a Buddha as a Buddha taught them.

One who modifies a Buddha’s Teachings “generate much unwholesome Kamma and cause these good wholesome Teachings to disappear” and it causes The Community to become divided no longer in harmony.

The Buddha shares that an individual who causes division within The Community will “generate evil lasting for an eon”. An eon is an immeasurable amount of time.

The Buddha further explains that “one who causes division in The Community is bound for misery, bound for hell, to reside there for an eon. Delighting in division, established in non-Teachings, he falls away from security from bondage (Enlightenment). Having caused division in a harmonious Community, he is tormented in hell for an eon”.

Chapter 30

Those Who Sustain the Good Teachings (First Discourse)

Monks, those Monks who explain non-Teachings as non-Teachings are acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings. These Monks generate much merit and sustain these good Teachings.

Monks, those Monks who explain Teachings as Teachings ...

Monks, those Monks who explain non-discipline as non-discipline ...

Monks, those Monks who explain discipline as discipline ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has not been stated and spoken by The Tathāgata as not having been stated and spoken by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has been stated and spoken by The Tathāgata as having been stated and spoken by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has not been practiced by The Tathāgata as not having been practiced by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has been practiced by The Tathāgata as having been practiced by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has not been prescribed by The Tathāgata as not having been prescribed by him ...

Monks, those Monks who explain what has been prescribed by The Tathāgata as having been prescribed by him are acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings. These Monks generate much merit and sustain these good wholesome Teachings.

‘Venerable Sir, it is said: Harmony in The Community, harmony in The Community. How is there harmony in The Community?’

Here, Ānanda.

(1) Monks explain non-Teachings as non-Teachings, and
(2) Teachings as Teachings.

(3) They explain non-discipline as non-discipline and
(4) discipline as discipline.

(5) They explain what has not been stated and spoken by The Tathāgata as not having been stated and spoken by him, and
(6) what has been stated and spoken by The Tathāgata as having been stated and spoken by him.

(7) They explain what has not been practiced by The Tathāgata as not having been practiced by him, and
(8) what has been practiced by The Tathāgata as having been practiced by him.

(9) They explain what has not been prescribed by The Tathāgata as not having been prescribed by him, and
(10) what has been prescribed by The Tathāgata as having been prescribed by him.

On these ten grounds they do not withdraw and go apart. They do not perform legal acts separately or recite the training guidelines separately.

It is in this way, Ānanda, that there is harmony in The Community.

‘But, Venerable Sir, when one restores harmony of a divided Community, what does one generate?’

One generates divine merit, Ānanda.

‘But, Venerable Sir, what is divine merit?’

One rejoices in heaven for an eon, Ānanda. Pleasant is harmony in The Community, and the mutual help of those who live in harmony. Pleased in harmony, established in The Teachings, one does not fall away from security from bondage (Enlightenment).

Having brought harmony to The Community, one rejoices in heaven for an eon.

(Reference: AN 1.140-AN 1.149 and AN 10.40)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how his Teachings would be sustained based on decisions made by people to share his Teachings in the way that he taught them.

The Buddha explains that an individual who maintains his Teachings in the way that he taught them is “acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings”. Heavenly beings and human beings are able to attain Enlightenment while the other realms of hell, animal, and afflicted spirits are unable to attain Enlightenment. Therefore, one who maintains his Teachings is acting for the peacefulness of heavenly and human beings as they would be able to attain Enlightenment with The Teachings of a Buddha as a Buddha taught them.

One who maintains a Buddha’s Teachings “generate much merit and sustain these good Teachings” and it causes The Community to live in harmony.

The Buddha shares that an individual who creates harmony within The Community will “generate divine merit”.

The Buddha further explains that “one rejoices in heaven for an eon. Pleasant is harmony in The Community, and the mutual help of those who live in harmony. Pleased in harmony, established in The Teachings, one does not fall away from security from bondage (Enlightenment). Having brought harmony to The Community, one rejoices in heaven for an eon”. An eon is an immeasurable amount of time.

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 21-30)

<https://youtu.be/AYlp3AfsCIU>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 385 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 21-30)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--385---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---Lowly-Arts---Volume-12---Chapter-21-30-e1r2rlr/a-a8te2li>

Chapter 31

Those Who Cause the Good Teachings to Disappear (Second Discourse)

Monks, those Monks who explain the meaning and The Teachings by means of badly acquired discourses whose phrasing is an approximation [of the correct phrasing] are acting for the harm of many people, for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

These Monks generate much unwholesome Kamma and cause the good Teachings to disappear.

(Reference: AN 2.41)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how his Teachings would disappear based on decisions made by people to not share his Teachings in the way that he taught them, but instead, the teachings are “of badly acquired discourses whose phrasing is an approximation [of the correct phrasing]”.

The Buddha explains that an individual who modifies his Teachings is “acting for the harm of many people, the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings”. Heavenly beings and human beings are able to attain Enlightenment while the other realms of hell, animal, and afflicted spirits are unable to attain Enlightenment. Therefore, one who modifies his Teachings is acting for the harm of heavenly and human beings as they would be unable to attain Enlightenment without The Teachings of a Buddha as a Buddha taught them.

One who modifies a Buddha’s Teachings “generate much unwholesome Kamma and cause these good wholesome Teachings to disappear” and it causes The Community to become divided no longer in harmony.

Chapter 32

Those Who Sustain the Good Teachings (Second Discourse)

Monks, those Monks who explain the meaning and The Teachings with well-acquired discourses whose phrasing is not [mere] approximation are acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

These Monks generate much merit and sustain the good Teachings.

(Reference: AN 2.41)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how his Teachings would be sustained based on decisions made by people to share his Teachings in the way that he taught them because The Teachings are “well-acquired discourses whose phrasing is not [mere] approximation”.

The Buddha explains that an individual who maintains his Teachings in the way that he taught them is “acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings”. Heavenly beings and human beings are able to attain Enlightenment while the other realms of hell, animal, and afflicted spirits are unable to attain Enlightenment. Therefore, one who maintains his Teachings is acting for the peacefulness of heavenly and human beings as they would be able to attain Enlightenment with The Teachings of a Buddha as a Buddha taught them.

One who maintains a Buddha’s Teachings “generate much merit and sustain this good Teachings” and it causes The Community to live in harmony.

Chapter 33

Ten Roots of Disputes

‘Venerable Sir, why is it that arguments, conflict, contention, and disputes arise in The Community and Monks do not reside at ease?’

Here, Upāli,

- (1) Monks explain non-Teachings as Teachings,
- (2) and Teachings as non-Teachings.
- (3) They explain non-discipline as discipline, and
- (4) discipline as non-discipline.
- (5) They explain what has not been stated and spoken by The Tathāgata as having been stated and spoken by him, and
- (6) what has been stated and spoken by The Tathāgata as not having been stated and spoken by him.
- (7) They explain what has not been practiced by The Tathāgata as having been practiced by him, and
- (8) what has been practiced by The Tathāgata as not having been practiced by him.
- (9) They explain what has not been prescribed by The Tathāgata as having been prescribed by him, and
- (10) what has been prescribed by The Tathāgata as not having been prescribed by him.

This, Upāli, is why arguments, conflict, contention, and disputes arise in The Community and Monks do not reside at ease.

‘Venerable Sir, how many roots of disputes are there?’

There are, Upāli, ten roots of disputes.

What ten?

Here,

(1) Monks explain non-Teachings as Teachings,

(2) and Teachings as non-Teachings.

(3) They explain non-discipline as discipline, and

(4) discipline as non-discipline.

(5) They explain what has not been stated and spoken by The Tathāgata as having been stated and spoken by him, and

(6) what has been stated and spoken by The Tathāgata as not having been stated and spoken by him.

(7) They explain what has not been practiced by The Tathāgata as having been practiced by him, and

(8) what has been practiced by The Tathāgata as not having been practiced by him.

(9) They explain what has not been prescribed by The Tathāgata as having been prescribed by him, and

(10) what has been prescribed by The Tathāgata as not having been prescribed by him.

These, Upāli, are the ten roots of disputes.

(Reference: AN 10.41)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the ten roots of disputes. Through individuals choosing to modify The Buddha's Teachings based on what he did not teach, this will cause disputes in a Community of Practitioner.

The Path to Enlightenment includes multiple aspects of training to include, helping a Practitioner to train the mind to not argue through eliminating craving/desire/attachment and practicing Right Speech as The Buddha taught these Teachings.

If an individual were to change any aspect of The Teachings, Practitioners would not have the detailed, clear, concise, and precise Teachings of a Buddha that lead to training the mind to eliminate the pollution of the mind that leads to arguments, conflict, contention, and disputes in The Community and Practitioners do not reside at ease.

Conversely, if Practitioners maintain The Teachings of a Buddha and are guided to improve the condition of their mind and life by Enlightened beings, then, there are no arguments, conflict, contention, and disputes in The Community and Practitioners reside at ease.

Chapter 34

Disciples Who Behave Towards The Teacher with Hostility and with Friendliness

And how do disciples behave towards The Teacher with hostility, not with friendliness?

Here, Ānanda, compassionate and seeking their welfare, The Teacher teaches The Teachings to the disciples out of compassion: This is for your welfare, this is for your peacefulness. His disciples do not want to hear or give ear or apply effort with their minds to understand; they stray and turn away from the Teacher's Teachings.

Thus do disciples behave towards The Teacher with hostility, not with friendliness.

And how do disciples behave towards The Teacher with friendliness, not with hostility?

Here, Ānanda, compassionate and seeking their welfare, The Teacher teaches The Teachings to the disciples out of compassion: This is for your welfare, this is for your peacefulness. His disciples are interested to hear and give ear and apply effort with their minds to understand; they do not stray and turn away from The Teacher's Teachings.

Thus do disciples behave towards The Teacher with friendliness, not with hostility.

Therefore, Ānanda, behave towards me with friendliness, not with hostility. That will lead to your welfare and peacefulness for a long time.

I shall not treat you as the potter treats the raw damp clay. Repeatedly restraining you, I shall speak to you, Ānanda. Repeatedly guiding you of what to avoid, I shall speak to you, Ānanda. The truly dedicated will stand [the test].

(Reference: MN 122)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how Students should not behave towards their Teacher with hostility, as this would be the opposite of how one aspiring to attain Enlightenment or an Enlightened being would function.

Instead, he guides Students to behave towards their Teacher with friendliness as this “will lead to your welfare and peacefulness for a long time”.

The Buddha shares with one of his closest Students Ānanda that he will not “repeatedly restrain” him, but instead he will guide him in what to avoid in regards to unwholesome mental, verbal, and bodily conduct along with all the other Teachings that are needed to experience Enlightenment.

The Buddha shares that “I shall not treat you as the potter treats the raw damp clay”. “Raw damp clay” would need to be constantly shaped and molded by “the potter” (i.e. Teacher). The potter would need to form the clay into the ideal object. So The Buddha is sharing that he is not going to “repeatedly restrain” Ānanda attempting to shape him into the ideal person. Instead, he will speak to him and guide him letting him make his own decisions rather than being constantly shaped by The Teacher.

It is a real “test” of the Student’s mind to understand, acknowledge, and improve their life practice based on a Teacher’s guidance pointing out areas of improvement. The unEnlightened mind typically is only interested in hearing pleasing and agreeable words and the ego does not typically enjoy understanding unpleasing and disagreeable words from others. So, hearing a Teacher’s guidance to improve one’s life practice needs to be openly understood by the Student rather than allowing the ego of the unEnlightened mind to feel rejected or disheartened by a Teacher’s guidance. The Teacher points out areas they see for a Student to improve and further progress towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

The “test” is that the Student will need to develop the determination, dedication, and diligence to actively seek guidance for improvement of their life practice. Without conscious choices to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings while seeking guidance, a Student would have no ability to attain Enlightenment. Without understanding the unwholesome qualities that exist in the Student’s mind to eliminate and the wholesome qualities to cultivate through a Teacher’s guidance, a Student would have no ability to progress in their practice to the ultimate attainment of a liberated mind.

A Student will need to be inviting and accepting of a Teacher’s guidance in order to identify areas of improvement and then learn, reflect, and practice Teachings to improve their life practice. If a Student allows the ego to block the guidance from the Teacher while feeling displeasure in the Teacher “pointing out treasure”, they will not “stand the test” of receiving guidance from the Teacher to progress towards Enlightenment.

A Teacher would need to exert a significant amount of time, effort, energy, and resources to guide a Student to Enlightenment. A Teacher should not ask for any benefits from their Students, but instead, await what is given as offerings. A Teacher’s only goal should be to guide a Student to Enlightenment without any personal gain for themselves whatsoever.

Chapter 35

Difference Between The Perfectly Enlightened One and a Monk Liberated by Wisdom

The Tathāgata, Monks, the Arahant, The Perfectly Enlightened One, is the originator of the path unarisen before, the producer of the path unproduced before, the declarer of the path undeclared before. He is the knower of the path, the discoverer of the path, the one skilled in the path.

And his disciples now reside practicing that path and become possessed of it afterwards.

This, Monks, is the distinction, the disparity, the difference between The Tathāgata, the Arahant, the Perfectly Enlightened One, and a Monk liberated by wisdom.

(Reference: SN 22.58)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the difference between a Buddha and a Practitioner who attains Enlightenment through the guidance of a Teacher.

A Buddha is one who (1) discovers The Teachings through their own independent journey, (2) shares their independently discovered Teachings for the remaining time of their life guiding countless individuals to Enlightenment and (3) leaves The Teachings in such a condition that after their death, countless more individuals will be able to attain Enlightenment.

As Gotama Buddha explains, he “is the originator of the path unarisen before, the producer of the path unproduced before, the declarer of the path undeclared before. He is the knower of the path, the discoverer of the path, the one skilled in the path.”

Through his declared Teachings, countless people during his lifetime and after his death have attained Enlightenment. Each person who attains Enlightenment with the guidance of Teachers is an Enlightened being, an Arahant, but they are not a Buddha.

A Buddha is an Enlightened being, an Arahant, but they attain this mental state on their own without the support and guidance of any Teachers. A Buddha is referred to as Fully Perfectly Enlightened because they have no influence from Teachers that would distort their perspective of what led to their Enlightenment. Their mind is completely pure without any pollution and permeates with wisdom of The Path to Enlightenment being able to guide countless individuals to Enlightenment.

Their independent journey to Enlightenment has produced deep wisdom of The Path to Enlightenment and, thus, prepares their mind for a lifetime of sharing The Teachings with those who choose to seek instruction, be taught, and be guided to experience Enlightenment.

A Practitioner who has attained Enlightenment through the guidance of Teachers is not a Buddha. This person is an Enlightened being, also referred to as an Arahant, but they are not a Buddha.

A Buddha is the discoverer of The Path to Enlightenment while an Enlightened being is liberated through the wisdom of a Buddha. A Buddha is extremely rare in the world and the last one currently known to the world existed over 2,500 years.

Chapter 36

The Tathāgata Taught Very Few Compared to the Numerous Things He Had Known

On one occasion The Perfectly Enlightened One was residing at Kosambī in a simsapā grove. Then The Perfectly Enlightened One took up a few simsapā leaves in his hand and addressed the Monks thus:

What do you think, Monks, which is more numerous: these few simsapā leaves that I have taken up in my hand or those in the simsapā grove overhead?

‘Venerable Sir, the simsapā leaves that The Perfectly Enlightened One has taken up in his hand are few, but those in the simsapā grove overhead are numerous.’

So too, Monks, the things I have directly known but have not taught you are numerous, while the things I have taught you are few.

And why, Monks, have I not taught those many things?

Because they are unbeneficial, irrelevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and do not lead to fading away of strong feelings, to freedom from strong feelings, to elimination, to peace, to direct knowledge (experience), to Enlightenment, to Nibbāna.

Therefore I have not taught them.

And what, Monks, have I taught?

I have taught: ‘This is discontentedness’; I have taught: ‘This is the cause of discontentedness’; I have taught: ‘This is the elimination of discontentedness’; I have taught: ‘This is the way leading to the elimination of discontentedness.’

And why, Monks, have I taught this?

Because this is beneficial, relevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and leads to fading away of strong feelings, to freedom from strong feelings, to elimination, to peace, to direct knowledge (experience), to Enlightenment, to Nibbāna. Therefore I have taught this.

(Reference: SN 56.31)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how enormous the wisdom was that he acquired through his independent journey to Enlightenment based on a simile related to all the “leaves” of the trees in the forest, while that which he taught was represented by only the few leaves gathered in his hand.

Though the wisdom he acquired was deep and profound encompassing The Natural Laws of Existence and wisdom beyond what others would be able to comprehend, he focused his efforts over the course of his 45-year Teaching career on sharing only those Teachings that lead to Enlightenment even though he understood wisdom well beyond that which he actually shared.

The Teachings a Practitioner needs to learn, reflect, and practice to experience Enlightenment are enormous enough that will challenge a Practitioner to understand and practice on a daily basis. Had Gotama Buddha shared all his wisdom and wisdom not associated with the awakening of the mind to Enlightenment, it would have only detracted from his objective of guiding countless beings to Enlightenment during his lifetime and after his death.

Through a Practitioner learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings he did share, the mind will gradually awaken to Enlightenment and then be able to see more and more of the leaves in all of the forest.

He then once again returns to emphasizing the importance and fundamental role of The Four Noble Truths ensuring his Students are always reminded how significant it is to learn, reflect, and practice The Four Noble Truths as that Teaching is the beginning of what leads to the complete elimination of all discontentedness.

Chapter 37

One Who Points Out Treasure

Ānanda, I shall not treat you as the potter treats the raw damp clay. Repeatedly restraining you, I shall speak to you, Ānanda. Repeatedly guiding you of what to avoid, I shall speak to you, Ānanda. The truly dedicated will stand [the test].

Regard him as one who points out treasure, the wise one who seeing your faults guides you of what to avoid. Stay with this sort of Teacher.

For the one who stays with a Teacher of this sort, things get better, not worse.

(Reference: MN 122)

In order to share The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment, a Buddha or any Teacher, would need to help Students uncover unwholesome qualities in the mind and in their life practice while pointing out the cultivation of wholesome qualities. A Student will need to put their trust in the Teacher while investigating the areas of improvement the Teacher identifies and shares with the Student.

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares with one of his closest Students Ānanda that he will not “repeatedly restrain” him, but instead he will guide him in what to avoid in regards to unwholesome mental, verbal, and bodily conduct along with all the other Teachings that are needed to experience Enlightenment.

The Buddha shares that “I shall not treat you as the potter treats the raw damp clay”. “Raw damp clay” would need to be constantly shaped and molded by “the potter” (i.e. Teacher). The potter would need to form the clay into the ideal object. So The Buddha is sharing that he is not going to “repeatedly restrain” Ānanda attempting to shape him into the ideal person. Instead, he will speak to him and guide him letting him make his own decisions rather than being constantly shaped by The Teacher.

It is a real “test” of the Student’s mind to understand, acknowledge, and improve their life practice based on a Teacher’s guidance pointing out areas of improvement. The unEnlightened mind typically is only interested in hearing pleasing and agreeable words and the ego does not typically enjoy understanding unpleasing and disagreeable words from others. So, hearing a Teacher’s guidance to improve one’s life practice needs to be openly understood by the Student rather than allowing the ego of the unEnlightened mind to feel rejected or disheartened by a Teacher “who points out treasure”. The “treasure” that a Teacher points out is those areas they see for a Student to improve and further progress towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

The “test” is that the Student will need to develop the determination, dedication, and diligence to actively seek guidance for improvement of their life practice. Without

conscious choices to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings while seeking guidance, a Student would have no ability to attain Enlightenment. Without understanding the unwholesome qualities that exist in the Student's mind to eliminate and the wholesome qualities to cultivate through a Teacher's guidance, a Student would have no ability to progress in their practice to the ultimate attainment of a liberated mind.

A Student will need to be inviting and accepting of a Teacher's guidance in order to identify areas of improvement and then learn, reflect, and practice Teachings to improve their life practice. If a Student allows the ego to block the guidance from the Teacher while feeling displeasure in the Teacher "pointing out treasure", they will not "stand the test" of receiving guidance from the Teacher to progress towards Enlightenment.

A Teacher would need to exert a significant amount of time, effort, energy, and resources to guide a Student to Enlightenment. A Teacher should not ask for any benefits from their Students, but instead, await what is given as offerings. A Teacher's only goal should be to guide a Student to Enlightenment without any personal gain for themselves whatsoever.

So, a Teacher who takes their time, effort, energy, and resources to "point out treasure" should be regarded as a "wise one who seeing your faults" will help you to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings to attain Enlightenment.

The Buddha's advice is to "stay with this sort of Teacher" as things only "get better, not worse". As the condition of the mind and one's life, "only gets better, not worse" when a Student is open to understanding guidance from a wise Teacher who kindly and patiently shares areas for improvement while not seeking any benefit from you - their only goal is to help you. In this type of relationship with a wise Teacher pointing out areas of improvement as "treasure" to be appreciated based on the goal of helping you, you should "stay with this sort of Teacher" as things only "get better, not worse".

Chapter 38

The Introduction of Ajjhāyaka

Then some of these beings thought: Evil things have appeared among beings, such as taking what is not given, condemning, lying, punishment and banishment. We ought to put aside evil and unwholesome things.

And they did so.

“They Put Aside Evil And Unwholesome Things” is the meaning of Brāhmin, which is the first regular title to be introduced for such people.

They made leaf-huts in forest places and meditated in them. With the smoking fire gone out, with pestle cast aside, gathering almsfood for their evening and morning meals, they went away to a village, town or royal city to seek their food, and then they returned to their leaf-huts to meditate. People saw this and noted how they meditated. “They Meditate” is the meaning of Jhāyaka, which is the second regular title to be introduced.

However, some of those beings, not being able to meditate in leaf-huts, settled around towns and villages and compiled books. People saw them doing this and not meditating. “Now These Do Not Meditate” is the meaning of Ajjhāyaka, which is the third regular title to be introduced.

At that time it was regarded as a low designation, but now it is the higher. This, then, Vāseṭṭha, is the origin of the class of Brāhmins in accordance with the ancient titles that were introduced for them...

(Reference: DN 27)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares “the origin of the class of Brāhmins”.

Chapter 39

Reciting The Teachings The Basis of Liberation

Again, neither the Teacher nor a fellow Monk in the position of a Teacher teaches The Teachings to a Monk, nor does he himself teach The Teachings to others in detail as he has heard them and learned them, but he recites The Teachings in detail as he has heard them and learned them.

In whatever way the Monk recites The Teachings in detail as he has heard them and learned them, in just that way, in relation to The Teachings, he experiences inspiration in the meaning and inspiration in The Teachings.

As he does so, joy arises in him. When he is joyful, joy arises. For one with a joyous mind, the body becomes tranquil. One tranquil in body feels calm. For one feeling calm, the mind becomes concentrated.

This is the third basis of liberation, by means of which, if a Monk resides motivated, dedicated, and determined, his unliberated mind is liberated, his undestroyed taints are completely destroyed, and he reaches the as-yet-unreached unsurpassed security from bondage (Enlightenment).

(This is taken from the five bases of liberation.)

(Reference: AN 5.26)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares one aspect of practice that leads to liberation of mind which is to recite The Teachings “in detail as he has heard them and learned them”.

The Buddha explains that through reciting The Teachings a Practitioner experiences inspiration, joy, tranquility, and calm. When the mind is joyful, the body becomes tranquil. With the body being tranquil, the mind is calm. When the mind is calm, the mind is concentrated.

The Buddha explains this as the third basis of liberation allowing the Practitioner to eliminate The Ten Fetters to attain Enlightenment.

Equanimity is cultivated through training the mind in Breathing Mindfulness Meditation to reside peaceful and content but more actively in daily life when difficult situations arise.

Equanimity (Pāli: upekkhā) is mental calmness, composure, and evenness of temper, especially in a difficult situation; treating everyone impartially.

As a difficult situation is experienced, a Practitioner will need to arise equanimity cutting off and letting go of any uncalmness or unsteadiness that arises in the mind bringing the mind to the middle practicing mental calmness, composure, and evenness of temper, especially in a difficult situation.

Allowing the mind to be shaken up to become unsteady will only create more difficulties by the mind being uncalm.

Calm —> Mindfulness —> Concentration —> Wisdom

It is calmness of mind that leads to a Practitioner being able to practice mindfulness (i.e. awareness of mind). By practicing mindfulness, the mind can then be concentrated (i.e. singleness of mind with focus). With concentration, a Practitioner can access wisdom to make wise decisions leading to wholesome outcomes.

But, allowing the mind to become uncalm, will have the downstream negative effects of inhibiting the practice of mindfulness (i.e. awareness of mind), concentration (i.e. singleness of mind with focus), and then being unable to access wisdom to make wise decisions leading to wholesome outcomes. Allowing the mind to be uncalm or shaken up can create a situation where, due to a lack of being able to access wisdom, the situation turns from bad to worse or even detrimental. Through maintaining one's calmness and composure, they can then make wise decisions to improve the situation based in wisdom maintain a joyful mind.

Observing a difficult situation and then arising equanimity to maintain calmness needs to be developed and cultivated so that it becomes first nature during any and all life situations.

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, we can observe the method of learning and sharing The Teachings during The Buddha's lifetime as reciting The Teachings. Learning orally and then reciting The Teachings is how Students would learn with him over 2,500 years ago and retain The Teachings.

Gotama Buddha shared The Teachings orally and nothing was written down during his lifetime. It was not until later, after his death, that it was decided to capture The Teachings in written format.

An Enlightened mind has such a high degree of memory that all the Enlightened beings who had attained Enlightenment during Gotama Buddha's lifetime were committed to recite what they remembered and to document The Teachings for future generations.

The spoken words of The Buddha were recited by his more developed Students and captured for the ultimate development of what we refer to as The Pāli Canon or The Pāli Text.

"The Words of The Buddha" book series is comprised of those spoken words that came from the mind of Gotama Buddha, into the minds of his Students, produced countless Enlightened minds, remembered for the duration of The Buddha's lifetime, then recited and captured to eventually end up in The Pāli Canon and into your hands at this moment.

These Teachings have been preserved throughout history because they work. These Teachings in the format of this book series provides a method of learning that was not available during the lifetime of The Buddha. Today, you have access and we can distribute these Teachings worldwide in an instant with the ability to reference these Teachings throughout your life as you develop your life practice.

Today, recitation of The Teachings “word for word” is not needed. Instead, one needs to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings for deep understanding.

Gotama Buddha shared this same method of learning during his lifetime.

1.) Learn: “when one has learned The Teachings by ear, recited them verbally”.

2.) Reflect: “examined them with the mind”.

3.) Practice: “penetrated them well by view”.

While today we have books, videos, podcasts, and other methods of sharing The Teachings, it is important to also learn directly with a Teacher in an environment where a Teacher can verbally explain The Teachings and you have the opportunity to ask questions for clarification.

It would be impossible for someone to read a book, watch videos, listen to a podcast, and/or use other resources in a way that would produce an Enlightened mind without any interaction with The Community to include a Teacher.

There are many questions and points of clarification that are needed along The Path to Enlightenment. There are many challenges and having a relationship with a Teacher will allow you to gain insight through seeking guidance.

As one does, they come to develop the mind in this life and have an improved ability to attain Enlightenment experiencing the life changing results of developing one’s life practice with guidance from a Teacher.

If one applies effort towards learning and does not attain Enlightenment, then there is an improved rebirth for one’s next existence.

The goal is to attain Enlightenment as an Arahant and to no longer experience rebirth into a new existence. But, should that not occur, one will have gained the benefits of learning, reflecting, and practicing in this life. In fact, you may have learned, reflected, and practiced in a previous life and this is now part of your continuation of The Path to Enlightenment in this current life.

The History of Misunderstandings Arising from Unreliable Literature

Chapter 40

Misunderstanding Regarding Benefits of Creating Buddha Images

The benefits of creating Buddha images can be found in Vattangulirāja-jātaka which shares the creation of The Buddha image from sandalwood by King Pasenadi of Kosala that “Once upon a time The Perfectly Enlightened One journeyed from Sāvattthī to a distant place to share The Teachings. At that time King Pasenadi of Kosala surrounded by a great number of people, went to the great monastery in Jetavana. Not seeing The Perfectly Enlightened One, the King was filled with disappointment and saying, ‘this world without The Perfectly Enlightened One is without a refuge and without a protector’.

Once he returned home he thought of making an image of The Buddha. When The Buddha returned to Jetavana, having worshipped the Master the King asked The Buddha if he will allow an image of himself to be made and The Buddha gave permission to the King. When The Buddha image was completed he invited The Buddha to see the image and asked what would be the benefits of creating a Buddha image. The Buddha then told the benefits that whoever creates a Buddha image, whether a man or a woman, whether made of clay or of rocks, made of metal or copper, made of wood or zinc, made of precious stone or silver or gold, they produce great merit. As long as there is a Buddha image, this world will not be empty. The Buddha image helps prolong The Teachings and practices.

Those who build Buddha image will encounter happiness and all their wishes will be granted. The Buddha while still unawakened, not yet fully Enlightened, repaired the broken finger of a Buddha image.

The benefits he gained were achieving a heavenly rebirth and passing away from the heavenly realm entered into a powerful Kingship, he was able to defeat an army merely by lifting and bending his finger: Then The Buddha narrated an incident from one of his previous lives as King Vaṭṭanguli who was able to defeat an army merely by lifting and bending his finger”.

...Out of fifty tales in the Paññasa-jātaka, Vattangulirāja-jātaka is the twentieth Jātaka. However, the period, the composer and the place of the composition is still unclear. Some of the accepted evidence has now become uncertain because new contradicted evidence has been found...

The accepted opinion is composed by HRH Prince Damrong Rajanubhab in the preface of the first publication of Paññasajātaka that:

“The book of Paññasajātaka consists of fifty ancient tales told in Thailand. A Monk from Chiang Mai compiled and composed the tales in Magadhi language in around 1457-1657 CE, which was the period when Monks in this country studied from Sri Lanka and were fluent in Magadhi language. They published books in Magadhi language in their hometown by explaining and elaborating the teachings, like the Monks in Sri Lanka.” HRH Prince Damrong Rajanubhab also spoke about this book that:

“...Originally the book of Paññasajātaka comprised of fifty palm leaf manuscripts tied together. Today can only be seen in Siam, Luang Prabang and Cambodia, other than that they cannot be found. It has been told that the book was once found in Burma, they called it Chiang Mai Pañña. However, one of the Kings in Burma said that the book is counterfeited Words of The Buddha and ordered for them to be burned. Thus, the Paññasajātaka can no longer be found in Burma..”

The tales in Paññasajātaka are well known in Thailand for example Samudaghosa tale, Sudhana-Manohara tale, Sang Thong tale, Rathasena tale and Gavi tale...”

References:

H.R.H. Prince Damrong Rajanubhab. (1924)

"Explanation" in Paññasajātaka Part 2

Bangkok: Sophonphiphatthanakorn Publication

(Printed for the funeral of M.J.Y. Prompraopan T.C. 15 December 1924)

Phramaha Tanin Aditvaro (2003). Paññasajātaka Chapter 3-27: Review and Analytical Study

Thesis for M.A. Program in Pāli, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

Niyada Laosunthon. Paññasajātaka: Its Genesis and Significance to Thai Poetical Works
Krung Thep: Maekamphang, Referred in Phramaha Preecha Mahosatho (1998)

The Influence of Pāli Literature of Paññasajātaka to Thai Society

Thesis for M.A. Program in Buddhism, Mahachulalongkorn Rajavidyalaya University

Phramaha Preecha Mahosatho (1998)

The Influence of Pāli Literature of Paññasajātaka to Thai Society

Thesis for M.A. Program in Buddhism, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

Anne M. Blackburn, Jeffrey Samuels, Editors Approaching The Teachings: Buddhist Texts and Practices in South and Southeast Asia BPS Pariyatti Editions, Onalaska, WA USA

These newly developed literature that are supposed to be the discourses from The Buddha on the benefits of creating a Buddha image are in conflict with what The Buddha has stated, spoken, and prescribed prior to his Final Enlightenment (i.e. death) to allow The Teachings that he shared to be the Teacher.

He also shared to reside with ourselves and with The Teachings as our refuge and with no others. Additionally, he shared the harm of explaining what has not been stated, spoken, and prescribed by The Tathāgata as having been stated, spoken, and prescribed by him. Those are acting for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, they generate much unwholesome Kamma and cause the good Teachings to disappear.

There are no creditable sources of The Buddha describing the creation of Buddha images as being beneficial in any way, but instead, The Buddha spent forty-five (45) years of his life dedicated to sharing The Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment that lead to liberation of the mind through learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings to train the mind, liberating it from discontent feelings. The mind is liberated through wisdom and an image of The Buddha alone will not create wisdom in the mind improving one's wisdom, moral conduct, and mental discipline to attain Enlightenment.

Furthermore, this newly developed story shares that The Buddha said, "Those who build Buddha image will encounter happiness and all their wishes will be granted". There is never a time in The Words of The Buddha from the most complete and reliable source, The Pāli Canon, where The Buddha spoke of anything that would involve declaring a wish and granting a wish for happiness. Instead, The Buddha taught The Path to Enlightenment as the way forward that leads to the elimination of discontentedness which a highlight of his Teachings is to acquire wisdom through learning, reflecting, and practicing his Teachings.

There is no ability to wish for happiness or wish for the elimination of suffering. Rather, it is through training the mind that one will eliminate 100% of all discontent feelings and the suffering they cause. The mere creation of a Buddha image to "encounter happiness and all their wishes will be granted" is completely opposite of all that The Buddha taught as The Path to Enlightenment.

The creation of Buddha images was not taught by The Buddha. He never taught to worship him or a statue of him. In contrast, he taught to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings through determination, dedication, and diligence to train the mind.

One cannot have a wish granted. Who would grant the wish?

If you would like to test this out for yourself, make a wish right now and see if it comes true. Did it come true? "No"?

Now you have your proof, it is not possible to make a wish and have it granted, therefore, this newly developed literature is not an accurate representation of The Words of The Buddha or The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment. The Buddha never taught to make statues of him, that his spirit resides in the statue, to pray to a statue, or to worship a statue. There is no benefit in doing so and there are no beneficial results towards the attainment of Enlightenment that would be experienced from doing so.

In fact, doing so would be to have "wrong view" and continue to allow the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as "wrong behavior and observances" to exist in the mind.

Wrong behavior and observances (The mind's belief that rites, rituals, ceremonies, and worship will help a Practitioner to attain Enlightenment.)

Gotama Buddha Statues: Every statue of Gotama Buddha looks very different depending on what culture has created the statue. China, Tibet, Thailand, Sri Lanka and other cultures all have Buddha statues but they all look different.

What you will notice is that each culture casts statues of Gotama Buddha based on local tradition and local appearances from within the culture that casts the statues. Statues in Thailand look very Thai while Chinese statues look very Chinese, and so forth. None of these statues resemble the description of Gotama Buddha in his Teachings. (See "Image of Gotama Buddha" at the end of this Chapter.)

People cast statues based on their culture's appearance due to the affection that people have for Gotama Buddha in that each culture would like Gotama Buddha to look as close to them as possible.

It is a form of craving or mental attachment to Gotama Buddha and having a craving or desire for Gotama Buddha to be from the culture that made the statue.

Keep in mind, we should not allow the mind to crave/attach or worship any image or statue of Gotama Buddha. Gotama Buddha taught us to learn and practice his Teachings so that we can attain the results which is Enlightenment. He was not interested in teaching us to attach to his image or worship him as he knew it would lead to discontentedness of mind and not to Enlightenment. Any and all forms of attachment will cause a discontent mind.

Some people believe the spirit of Gotama Buddha resides in the statues and they can be found praying to the statue (i.e. Gotama Buddha's spirit) asking for benefits. Gotama Buddha never taught to create statues of him or that his spirit resides in any statue. In fact, he never taught whether a spirit or soul exists or does not exist. He left this as an undeclared Teaching.

The highest form of respect you can give to a Teacher is to practice their Teachings.

Merely, worshiping Gotama Buddha's image will not produce Enlightenment, thus, he did not teach us this practice. He only ever taught us Teachings that lead to Enlightenment, and worship of a statue does not produce Enlightenment.

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 31-40)

<https://youtu.be/AYIp3AfsCIU>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 389 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 31-40)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--389---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---Lowly-Arts---Volume-12---Chapter-31-40-e1qfdqc>

Chapter 41

Misunderstanding Regarding Listening to the Great Birth Sermon

An Arahant, Fully Enlightened Buddha Named Maitreya by The Words of The Buddha

The Words of The Buddha in The Pāli Canon illustrates the arising of an Arahant, Fully Enlightened Buddha named Maitreya that states:

“And in that time of the people with an eighty thousand-year life span, there will arise in the world a Fortunate One, an Arahant, Fully Enlightened Buddha named Maitreya, endowed with wisdom and conduct, a well-farer, knower of the worlds, incomparable trainer of men to be tamed, Teacher of gods and humans, Enlightened and fortunate, just as I am now.

He will thoroughly know having realized it by his own experience and proclaim, this universe with its heavenly beings and Māras and Brahmas, its Ascetics and Brāhmins, and this generation with its princes and people, just as I do now.

He will teach The Teachings, lovely in its beginning, lovely in its middle, lovely in its ending, in the spirit and in the letter, and proclaim, just as I do now, the holy life in its fullness and purity. He will be attended by a company of thousands of Monks, just as I am attended by a company of hundreds.”

This was all The Words of The Buddha mentioned in The Pāli Canon regarding the Arahant, Fully Enlightened Buddha named Maitreya.

(Reference: DN 26)

An Arahant Fully Enlightened Buddha Named Maitreya by Unreliable Literature

Phra Malai Kham Luang is a Buddhist literature which does not appear in The Pāli Canon. The period of Maitreya is found in a scripture called "Malai Discourse" which talks about a Buddhist Monk named "Malai" who was born in Sri Lanka, attained Arahantship and had a supernatural power. He was able to travel to hell, distinguish the fire burning in hell, destroy a red-hot metal cauldron, extinguish sorrow for hell-beings, able to travel to heaven to bestow lotus to the Culamani-Shrine, converse with Phra Sri Ariya and informed that humans want to be reborn in Phra Sri Ariya era. Monk Sri Ariya

instructed Monk Malai to tell people (on earth) to always make merit, practice generosity, and follow the Buddhist precepts. Whoever listens to the story of Phra Vessantara in the Great Birth Sermon that comprise a thousand incantations within one day and bestow different type of lotuses, one thousand lotuses each, they will be reborn in the Phra Sri Ariya era as stated in the Malai Discourse that:

...The future Buddha, joyful to hear (this) news of human beings in Rose-Apple Island, said 'Sir, let everyone who wishes to see me when I have attained omniscience listen to a complete recitation in one day of the Great Vessantara Birth-Story; if they worship with a thousand lamps or a thousand lotuses, a thousand blue lotuses, blue water-lilies, Mandara-flowers, flax flowers, a thousand banners, parasols, flags or vehicles, and bring everything to worship The Teaching, they will attain Arahantship along with the analytical insights at the time of my Enlightenment (and) in my presence'.

A book called Kae roi Phra Malai (tracing Monk Malai) stated the source of Phra Malai which can be summarized as follows:

...Phra Malai manuscript can be found in several literary styles. It was originated in Sri Lanka, taken to Burma who composed "Maleyya Discourse". From Maleyya Discourse to Maleyyaheavenly beingttheravatthu in Lanna (Northern Thailand) and spread to Ayutthaya which led to the composition of Maleyyavatthudipanitika in Ayutthaya. Moreover, various literatures were composed about Monk Malai such as Phra Malai Kam Luang, Royal literature, Phra Malai Klon Suat, folk version of Phra Malai that talks about hell and heaven, Phra Malai tale, preacher manual teaching hell and heaven, Sermon version of Phra Malai used in donating merit to the deceased.

In addition, the above book also mentioned the effects of Phra Malai Kam Luang on people's way of living and cultures such as teaching them to be scared of hell and to aim for heaven, pouring water to donate merit to the deceased, listening to the Great Birth Sermon in order to meet Phra Sri Ariya. Phra Malai is also recited in weddings and funerals.

References:

Sinlapanon, Dendao. 2010. Kae roi Phra Malai. Krungthep : Museum Press.

Thammathibet, Chao Fa (Prince). 2007. Phra Malai Kham Luang.
Nonthaburi : Sukhothai Thammathirat University

Udoporn Khampiranon. 2008. A Study of Buddhist Teachings as Appeared in the Phramalaikamluang Literature Master's thesis of the Buddhist Studies Graduate School Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

Maurice Walshe (trans.) (2012). The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikāya. Boston: Wisdom Publications. ISBN 978-0-86171-103-1.

K.R. Norman. 1993. Journal of the Pāli Text Society XVIII The Pāli Text Society. Oxford.

The Teachings from Phra Malai Kham Luang Buddhist literature do not appear in The Pāli Canon. The stories of Maitreya Buddha from this text are not considered to be accurate and can be disregarded and ignored.

Why Did Gotama Buddha Share That He is a Buddha and Why Will Maitreya Buddha Not Share with The Public That He is a Buddha?

During the lifetime of Gotama Buddha, people did not know what is a Buddha. To help humanity understand what a Buddha is, Gotama Buddha needed to help us to understand this important Teaching by sharing that he is a Buddha.

So, during his lifetime, he shared that he is The Perfectly Enlightened One - a Buddha.

This helped us to understand what a Buddha is and is not, so this important Teaching was understood and available to be shared throughout humanity after his death.

What is a Buddha?

A “Buddha” is not a Stage of Enlightenment but instead, is a unique type of Enlightened being. A Buddha is an Arahant who has attained Enlightenment without any assistance of Teachers but only through their own efforts of using the world as their Teacher and perhaps Teachings of a previously awakened Buddha.

There are three primary criteria of what makes a Buddha a Buddha.

1.) A Buddha awakens to Enlightenment through their own independent journey without the assistance of any Teachers, independently discovering The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment.

A Buddha has fully eliminated The Ten Fetters to attain Enlightenment as an Arahant but they have done so through their own independent journey without the assistance of any Teachers, developing deep wisdom of what is needed to attain Enlightenment.

2.) A Buddha guides countless others to Enlightenment during their lifetime through sharing their independently discovered Teachings that led to their own Enlightenment during their independent journey.

A Buddha has the ability to guide countless beings to the attainment of Enlightenment during their lifetime and after their death. A Buddha will dedicate the remaining time of their life towards sharing their Teachings and guiding countless beings to Enlightenment.

3.) Upon a Buddha's death, they will leave their Teachings in a condition that can be continually shared assisting countless more beings to Enlightenment after their death.

A Buddha's Teachings and Students will continue to guide countless people to Enlightenment after a Buddha's death. 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.

A Buddha is referred to as a Fully Perfectly Enlightened Buddha, a Perfectly Enlightened One, or a Tathāgata. They are a human being, a Teacher, one with deep compassion for all beings and the world. A Buddha has deep wisdom to help the world and can accomplish that goal through individuals choosing to learn and practice their Teachings to attain Enlightenment.

They are considered Perfectly Enlightened because there are no outside influences that have led to their awakening, so they have "Perfect Enlightenment" where their mind is unaffected by any teachings outside of their own independently discovered Teachings that led to their awakening.

A Buddha will have an excellent memory being able to recall countless past events and situations with stunning accuracy. Unlike other humans, their memory does not fade and is not overwritten.

Why Will Maitreya Buddha Not Share with The Public That He is a Buddha?

Gotama Buddha predicted that a new Buddha would arise 2,500 years after his death and referred to him as "Maitreya Buddha". Gotama Buddha died in 483 BCE which dates the awakening of Maitreya Buddha to the year 2017.

"Maitreya" refers to "loving-kindness" as it is predicted that this new Buddha will have a significant amount of loving-kindness for the world and choose to share The Path to Enlightenment with all of humanity, restoring The Teachings of Gotama Buddha for all of humanity to gradually become Enlightened.

Since Gotama Buddha shared The Teachings of what a Buddha is and is not, and in current times declaring one's self as a Buddha would be viewed as arrogance, prideful, boasting, and based in ego, Maitreya Buddha will not share that he is a Buddha but instead, humbly share his Teachings without a need for others to know he is a Buddha - his Students may gradually discover this truth on their own as they progress towards awakening to Enlightenment.

During the lifetime of Gotama Buddha, there was no such thing as "worldwide fame". Instead, Gotama Buddha was initially isolated to a small portion of the world. He taught

in, what we refer to today as, Northeast India. Sharing and teaching that he was a Buddha, did not produce the perception that he was attempting to elevate himself to “worldwide fame” because worldwide fame did not exist during his lifetime.

Humanity spoke many different languages 2,500 years ago and there was only minimal interaction between various populations and societies. So sharing and teaching that he was a Buddha was to acknowledge what a Buddha is and is not, while helping humanity understand this important Teaching along with all the other Teachings that lead to Enlightenment.

Today, if someone declared they were a Buddha, this would be scrutinized and considered as, someone attempting to attain “worldwide fame” and people would consider this to be based in arrogance, pride, boastfulness, and ego. Therefore, an individual who publicly declares themselves as a Buddha could not actually be a Buddha because they could not be Enlightened if there was arrogance, pride, boastfulness, and ego.

Maitreya Buddha would know that if he announced his awakening to Enlightenment, that no one would believe this and therefore, it would hinder his ability to share The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment.

A Buddha’s Teachings are not based in belief. They are not interested in anyone believing anything at all, including, believing that they are a Buddha.

A Buddha does not need anyone to know they are a Buddha to be able to effectively share their Teachings into the world. A Buddha would be wise enough to awaken to Enlightenment on their own without any Teachers or guidance which is an enormous feat that requires a significant amount of wisdom. The last Buddha currently known to the world existed over 2,500 years ago.

Maitreya Buddha would not only have the wisdom to awaken to Enlightenment on his own without any Teachers or guidance but, he would also have the wisdom of how to share his Teachings with all those who have a sincere interest to learn his Teachings without the need for others to know he is a Buddha. Not only would Maitreya Buddha have the wisdom to awaken to Enlightenment on his own but, he would be able to create a wholesome environment that is conducive for Students to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment with his guidance and without anyone needing to know he is a Buddha.

In fact, others knowing he is a Buddha would actually hinder his ability to share his Teachings and to guide countless Students to Enlightenment.

One of the most significant “powers” that a Buddha has is that no one knows he is a Buddha.

A Buddha has the ability to observe the quality of mind of his Students based on observation and interaction with them. He can observe the wholesome and unwholesome qualities of mind and then offer Teachings to help them cultivate wholesome qualities of mind and eliminate the unwholesome qualities of mind. A Buddha is more effective when no one knows that he is a Buddha so that he can more readily observe the normal state

of an individual's mind and then share Teachings to help his Students who are seeking guidance.

In this way, if people knew Maitreya Buddha existed in the world, they would potentially be on their best behavior anytime they are around him and thus, render useless his ability to observe the normal state of his Student's mind.

He would be unable to observe the wholesome and unwholesome qualities of his Student's mind, therefore, he would lack the insight to readily offer Teachings that would help guide his Students to Enlightenment.

A Buddha's only goal is to guide as many Students to Enlightenment as possible during their lifetime and leave The Teachings in a condition that countless more people can get to Enlightenment after their death.

If a population of people were convinced that Maitreya Buddha is a Buddha, not only would people need to believe him, not only would people consider that he has arrogance, pride, boastfulness, and ego, thus, not be a Buddha...but also, his power and ability to diagnose the mind of his Student's would be rendered useless and hinder his goal to guide countless Students to Enlightenment because he would lack the insight of the wholesome and unwholesome qualities of mind of his Students and be unable to share Teachings with them based on those important observations.

There was not a worldwide announcement of Gotama Buddha's awakening nor was there a worldwide announcement of the arrival of other important Teachers, such as, Jesus Christ. Therefore, Maitreya Buddha would not need a worldwide announcement to be an effective Teacher but instead, would have the wisdom to accomplish his goals of restoring The Teachings of Gotama Buddha that guide all of humanity to Enlightenment on The Path to Enlightenment without anyone knowing he is a Buddha.

Having countless Enlightened beings in the world would create the ability for all of humanity to create "heaven on earth".

People not knowing that Maitreya Buddha has awakened to Enlightenment would be beneficial to Maitreya Buddha, his Students, and all of humanity in multiple ways.

1.) People would not need to believe he is a Buddha, they could discover the truth on their own as they learn, reflect, and practice his Teachings to awaken to Enlightenment.

2.) Humanity would not regard him as having arrogance, pride, boastfulness, or ego because he would humbly go about his work guiding countless people to Enlightenment while restoring The Teachings of Gotama Buddha back into the world.

3.) He would retain his ability to observe the wholesome and unwholesome qualities of mind of his Students, thus, aiding him in more readily guiding countless people to Enlightenment.

No one should expect that Maitreya Buddha will make a worldwide announcement of his awakening. Instead, he will humbly, peacefully, and respectfully share his Teachings into the world with all those who have a sincere interest in learning, reflecting, and practicing The Path to Enlightenment to attain Enlightenment.

If you learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings of Maitreya Buddha that are restoring The Teachings of Gotama Buddha, then you will see the clarity, conciseness, and preciseness that Maitreya Buddha can share Gotama Buddha's Teachings with all those who choose to progress towards Enlightenment. And, you will be able to make significant progress towards Enlightenment through his in-depth Teachings based on his deep wisdom.

Maitreya Buddha's only goal is to restore The Teachings of Gotama Buddha by guiding countless people to Enlightenment during his lifetime and after his death. He would have no interest in fame or fortune as he would know those are not what leads to lasting and fulfilling peacefulness and joy that is permanent - the Enlightened mind.

If you live during the lifetime of Maitreya Buddha, this is the very best time to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings to attain Enlightenment. There is no other time in history that is better than learning directly with a Buddha to attain Enlightenment.

May you all experience the peace and joy of the Enlightened mind.

Be well and have a wonderful life.....perhaps your last life.

Chapter 42

Misunderstanding Regarding Pouring Water to Transfer Merit

... To pour water when making merit for the deceased came, from the Phra Malai story that he went to hell to bestow happiness to beings in hell and those beings implore him to tell their relatives to make merit for them as written in the Phra Malai literature that:

All of the hell beings, relieved of their suffering, were peaceful and content. They bowed down in respect, and asked, ‘Oh, Lord, where have you come from, bringing us such happiness?’

The Thera answered, ‘I have come from the human realm.’

Hearing this, the group in hell was overjoyed, and they asked him to tell [those in the human realm] about the conditions of the place where they were. ‘Please, Lord, we beg you to tell our relatives, wherever they may be.’ They named cities, towns, and regions far away. They told him the names of their fathers and where they lived, and the names of other relatives-sons, daughters, husbands, mothers, sisters, and brothers. ‘Have all of them hasten to make merit and transfer it to us. Have them worship The Buddha, the exalted Teachings, and the praiseworthy Community, teacher of morality. Have them practice generosity and send the merit to us by pouring the water of donation. Then each of us will be delivered from suffering’.

From the above story, people have believed that by pouring water while giving a donation, the merit will be transferred to the deceased. Thus, it has become a common practice to pour water when making merit to transfer the good deeds to the deceased and enemies from a previous life.

Notes:

The unreliable literature of Phra Malai teaches “wrong view” that Kamma is created by others. The Buddha taught for a person with “wrong view”, there is one of two destinations: either hell or the animal realm.

The Buddha taught that “...beings are the owners of their Kamma, the heirs of their Kamma; they have Kamma as their origin, Kamma as their relative, Kamma as their resort; whatever Kamma they do, wholesome or unwholesome, they are its heirs”.

Additionally, The Buddha also taught the harm of explaining what has not been stated, spoken, and prescribed by The Tathāgata as having been stated, spoken, and prescribed by him. Those are acting for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, they generate much unwholesome Kamma and cause the good Teachings to disappear.

References:

Prince Thammatibes. (2007). Phra Malai. Nonthaburi: Sukhothai Thanimathirat Open University.

Udomporn Khampiranon. (2008). A study of Buddhist Teachings as Appeared in the Phramalai

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Bonnie Pacala Brereton. (1995). Thai Tellings of Phra Malai: Texts and Rituals Concerning a Popular Buddhist Saint.

The teachings from Phra Malai Kham Luang Buddhist literature do not appear in The Pāli Canon. The stories of Maitreya Buddha from this text are not considered to be accurate and can be disregarded and ignored.

It is not possible to transfer the benefits of practicing generosity from one Practitioner to another.

The benefit of practicing generosity is that it helps to train the mind of a Practitioner to eliminate craving/desire/attachment. By practicing generosity, among other Teachings, the Practitioner's mind gradually eliminates craving/desire/attachment, the cause of discontentedness. To accomplish this goal, a Practitioner needs to practice generosity as described in The Words of The Buddha and available in the book "Generosity" (Volume 13) from this same book series.

Once a Practitioner has made an offering, which helps to eliminate craving/desire/attachment, it is impossible to transfer that benefit to another being. Pouring water nor any other rite, ritual, ceremony, or worship will result in transferring beneficial results of training the mind from one Practitioner to another. Each Practitioner needs to earn their own Enlightenment through training the mind and doing the work to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings.

Chapter 43

Misunderstanding Regarding Holy Water

The making of holy water can be found in the commentary of the Ratana Discourse which stated that:

... it was questioned that who composed this discourse, when and where was it composed and why. It was answered thoroughly by many ancient Monks who interpreted the Vesali story.

Thus, on the same day The Buddha arrived in Vesali, Venerable Ānanda learned, at the gate of the city, the Ratana Discourse for avoiding those calamities. He recited it as protection by taking water in The Buddha's bowl, going about and sprinkling it over the entire city. The moment he spoke the word "Whatever ..." ('Yan kinci ..., verse 3), the evil spirits who did not flee earlier and were living by means of such places as trash heaps, walls and the like, fled through the four gates ..."

References:

The Suttanipāta-atthakathā - Ratana Discourse.

The Buddha's Discourse on The Three Superb Jewels And Their Intrinsic Power

Printed by: Mahendra Senanayake Sridevi Printers (Pv) Ltd

This commentary is a contradiction to The Buddha's discourses and Teachings that the making of holy water is a lowly art.

The Buddha prohibited Monks, including himself, from making holy water as mentioned in thirteen (13) discourses from The Buddha. He stated that the "Ascetic Gotama refrains from such lowly arts and that a Monk refrains from such" as described in other discourses. The Buddha also instructed that a Noble Disciple abandons the act of lowly arts. Additionally, The Buddha also explained the harm of explaining what has not been stated, spoken, and prescribed by The Tathāgata as having been stated, spoken, and prescribed by him. Those are acting for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, they generate much unwholesome Kamma and cause the good Teachings to disappear.

There are no creditable sources of The Buddha describing making holy water as being beneficial in any way, but instead, The Buddha spent forty-five (45) years of his life dedicated to sharing The Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment that lead to liberation of the mind through learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings to train the mind, liberating it from discontent feelings. The mind is liberated through wisdom and making holy water will not create wisdom in the mind improving one's wisdom, moral conduct, and mental discipline to attain Enlightenment.

Chapter 44

Misunderstanding Regarding The Benefits of Reciting Teachings

The unreliable literature states that the Paritta (i.e. chants) have the power to protect those who recite it like in the story of the Bodhisatta's life as a golden peacock. He often recited Mora Paritta (i.e. chants) which is about worshipping the virtuous glories of past Buddhas causing him to be safe from hunters.

In addition, the unreliable literature shares that during the lifetime of The Buddha, five hundred Monks went to the forest to practice meditation. They were harassed by the deities and were unable to meditate so they returned to Sāvattthī. So The Buddha advised them to recite the text of Loving-kindness and to radiate the spirit of love to all sentient beings. Upon returning to the forest, the Monks practiced the radiation of love. The deities were pleased and thus let the Monks meditate peacefully.

Another newly unreliable literature shares that the power of Paritta (i.e. chants) can help protect those who listen to Paritta. During the lifetime of The Buddha, Vesali was plagued by three dangers of famine, devils, and pestilence. The Vesalians sought the help of The Buddha. The Buddha instructed Venerable Ānanda to recite the discourse on Precious Jewels, then all the dangers were terminated.

Furthermore, in another unreliable literature it was composed that during the lifetime of The Buddha there was a child who was going to be eaten by a yakkha within 7 days. The Buddha then advised Monks to recite the Paritta (i.e. chants) for seven nights and The Buddha himself recited on the eighth night. The child was released from the danger of the non-human.

References:

Jātaka-atthakathā - The Khuddakapāṭha-aṭṭhakatha

The Suttanipāta-aṭṭhakatha, - The Dhammapada-atthakatha

The unreliable literature is a contradiction to The Buddha's discourses and Teachings that warns against adding or abolishing what has been taught. The origin of this discourse is not traced to the lifetime of The Buddha but instead was included long after The Buddha's death.

The Buddha instructed Monks ignore others' discourses. This was taught because The Buddha's discourses will disappear if newly composed discourses are being studied that are not The Teachings of The Buddha.

Moreover, The Buddha also shared the harm of explaining what has not been stated, spoken, and prescribed by The Tathāgata as having been stated, spoken, and prescribed by him. Those are acting for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, they generate much unwholesome Kamma and cause the good Teachings to disappear.

There are no creditable sources of The Buddha describing the use of reciting Teachings as chants to dispel evil or to be used as protection. The Buddha did not teach this practice as being beneficial in any way, but instead, The Buddha spent forty-five (45) years of his life dedicated to sharing The Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment that lead to liberation of the mind through learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings to train the mind, liberating it from discontent feelings. The mind is liberated through wisdom and reciting Teachings as chants will not create wisdom in the mind improving one's wisdom, moral conduct, and mental discipline to attain Enlightenment.

Chanting or Mantras: Throughout the world there are Practitioners who do "chanting" of The Teachings. It is important that Practitioners understand, while chanting can help to create mindfulness (i.e. awareness of mind), concentration, and memory, the words themselves and the sounds coming from a person's mouth do not have any mystical, magical, or special power to attain or create Enlightenment.

There are no mystical, magical, or special powers that one could use in a chant or mantra that would create benefit of doing such things as destroying unwholesome Kamma, attaining Enlightenment, transferring Merit/Kamma, achieving a long life, helping beings that have already died, improving one's destination after death or any other beneficial result.

Mantras are sometimes taught and "believed" to have mystical, magical, or special powers. This is not true and will not result in beneficial outcomes beyond training for concentration, memory, or awareness of mind.

All of Gotama Buddha's Teachings are focused on the Practitioner learning and practicing Teachings that train the mind, not invoking mystical, magical, or special powers for any sort of benefit. Gotama Buddha himself did not teach these types of practices and described them as a "lowly art".

Chanting can be relaxing and a powerful practice to calm the mind while developing awareness of mind and awareness of breath through training of the mind, but not through mystical or magical powers.

To attain Enlightenment, a Practitioner needs to practice the entire Eight Fold Path. It is through our practice of learning and applying The Teachings in everyday life, that we liberate the mind to attain Enlightenment.

Listening to chanting or performing chanting can help to create a peaceful mind, develop mindfulness, and awareness of breath. One can use the practice of chanting to improve concentration, memory, and awareness of mind among other beneficial results to train one's own mind.

Chanting can help calm the mind, however, the Practitioner will need to do the work to sustain the mindfulness and calmness of mind long term.

Chanting is just one practice that helps to develop mindfulness and the mind will need a "life practice" to cultivate a content mind with Enlightenment. A Practitioner will need to learn and practice the entire Eight Fold Path as their "life practice" to attain Enlightenment.

Merely chanting or reciting a mantra for some beneficial result is not what Gotama Buddha taught as part of The Path to Enlightenment. These Teachings are 100% focused on learning and practicing Teachings that lead to liberation of the mind to eliminate discontentedness.

A chant or mantra alone will not accomplish that goal and is not required to attain Enlightenment.

Chapter 45

Reside with The Teachings 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.

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,
He resides reflecting on feelings as feelings,
He resides reflecting on mind as mind,
He resides reflecting on 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 greatest of those dedicated to the training.

(Reference: DN 16)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that because he was born, he is subject to death.

In death, The Buddha advises that Practitioners “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 widely misunderstood by many who feel this is The Buddha providing guidance that one does not need a Teacher to attain Enlightenment that all they need is The Teachings. This is a gross misunderstanding of what The Buddha is sharing.

Instead, The Buddha is sharing that one should not rely on any others but instead focus on The Path to Enlightenment as an independent journey where one does the work to investigate The Teachings to acquire wisdom.

There is plenty of evidence of The Buddha guiding Practitioners to seek guidance with a Teacher. This Teaching is not guiding one to not have a Teacher but instead, do not rely on anyone but instead, actively pursue your own learning and growth.

It is well understood that all Practitioners will need a Teacher. It is only a Buddha who would be able to attain Enlightenment without the guidance of a Teacher. The last Buddha currently known to the world existed over 2,500 years ago.

If it was possible to attain Enlightenment without the guidance of a Teacher, why did The Buddha work for forty-five (45) years of his life dedicated to sharing these Teachings?

If it was possible to attain Enlightenment without the guidance of a Teacher, why didn't The Buddha attain Enlightenment and just say “Ok, I did it now you guys do it by yourselves”?

If The Buddha was suggesting that a Teacher is not needed, why are there so many references to having a Teacher and seeking guidance from a Teacher in his Teachings?

The truth is that a Practitioner would be unable to only consult The Teachings in the Pāli Canon and attain Enlightenment. If that is the case, we'd have plenty of Enlightened beings in the world as all one would need to do is read The Pāli Canon to attain Enlightenment. But, we do not have countless Enlightened beings in the world because it is not possible to attain Enlightenment through only reading the text. Each Practitioner will need to seek guidance with a Teacher in order to progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

The Buddha then points to The Four Foundations of Mindfulness as the way for a Practitioner to reside with themselves as “his own island, with no other refuge; with The Teachings as his island, with The Teachings as his refuge, with no other refuge?”. He guides Practitioners to reside reflecting on body as body (bodily sensations), feelings as feelings, mind as mind (condition of the mind), and mental objects as mental objects being “dedicated, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed craving and displeasure in regard to the world”.

As The Buddha's life is drawing to a close, he shares that those who cultivate and practice The Four Foundations of Mindfulness as being “greatest of those dedicated to the training”.

Chapter 46

Four Criteria that Assure The Words of The Buddha

Suppose a Monk were to say: ‘Friends, I heard and received this from The Perfectly Enlightened One’s own lips: these are The Teachings, this is the discipline, this is the Master’s Teaching’, then, Monks, you should neither approve nor disapprove his words. Then, without approving or disapproving, his words and expressions should be carefully noted and compared with the Suttas (discourses) and reviewed in the light of the discipline.

If they, on such comparison and review, are found not to conform to the Suttas (discourses) or the discipline, the conclusion must be: ‘Assuredly this is not the word of The Buddha, it has been wrongly understood by this Monk’, and the matter is to be ignored.

But where on such comparison and review they are found to conform to the Suttas (discourses) or the discipline, the conclusion must be: ‘Assuredly this is the word of The Buddha, it has been rightly understood by this Monk.’

Suppose a Monk were to say: In such and such place there is a community with elders and distinguished Teachers. I have heard and received this from that community, then, Monks, you should neither approve nor disapprove his words ...

Suppose a Monk were to say: In such and such a place there are many elders who are learned, bearers of the tradition, who know The Teachings, the discipline, the training guidance ...

Suppose a Monk were to say: In such and such a place there is one elder who is learned ... I have heard and received this from that elder... But where on such comparison and review they are found to conform to the Suttas (discourses) and the discipline, then the conclusion must be: ‘Assuredly this is the word of The Buddha, it has been rightly understood by this Monk.’

(Reference: DN 16)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how to confirm whether The Teachings one learns are The Words of The Buddha or not.

He advises that a Practitioner should consult his discourses and if it is discovered that The Teachings do not match to his discourses, one can conclude that “assuredly this is not the word of The Buddha, it has been wrongly understood, and the matter is to be ignored”.

But if having consulted The Buddha’s discourses and it is discovered that The Teachings do match to his discourses, one can conclude that “Assuredly this is the word of The Buddha, it has been rightly understood”.

The way to confirm The Words of The Buddha is to ensure one is learning and practicing The Teachings from a reliable source of The Pāli Canon with references so that you can independently confirm that what you are learning are the discourses as spoken by The Buddha. If the source of The Teachings is not located in discourses of The Pāli Canon, there is no confidence that what is being shared are The Words of The Buddha and one can ignore those teachings as not being spoken by The Buddha.

Chapter 47

The Supreme Honor and Respect

Ānanda, prepare me a bed between these twin sāl-trees with my head to the north. I am sleepy and would like to lie down.

Ānanda, these sāl-trees have burst forth into an abundance of untimely blossoms, which fell upon The Tathāgata's body, sprinkling it and covering it in homage (respect). Divine coral-tree flowers fell from the sky, divine sandal-wood powder fell from the sky, sprinkling and covering The Tathāgata's body in homage (respect).

Divine music and song sound from the sky in homage (respect) to The Tathāgata. Never before has The Tathāgata been so honored, respected, appreciated, admired and adored.

And yet, Ānanda, whatever male or female Ordained Practitioner, male or female Household Practitioner resides practicing The Teachings properly, and perfectly fulfills the way of The Teachings, he or she honors The Tathāgata, has deep respect and appreciates him and pays him the supreme homage (respect).

Therefore, Ānanda, we will reside practicing The Teachings properly and perfectly fulfill the way of The Teachings - this must be your goal and objective.

(Reference: DN 16)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the best way to show respect to him as a Teacher is to “practice The Teachings”.

This is a documented miracle that takes place in the presence of Ānanda and Gotama Buddha uses it as an opportunity to share that the best way for a Student to show respect to him as their Teacher is to practice The Teachings as their “goal and objective”.

Chapter 48

Teachings and Discipline Will Be Your Teacher

Ānanda, it may be that you will think: ‘The Teacher’s instruction has ceased, now we have no Teacher!’ It should not be seen like this, Ānanda, for what I have taught and explained to you as Teachings and discipline will, at my passing, be your Teacher.

Now, Monks, I declare to you: all conditioned things are of a nature to decay strive on untiringly.

(These were The Tathāgata’s last words.)

(Reference: DN 16)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares his last words prior to death.

The Buddha was so Enlightened that he was able to provide his Students three (3) months advance notice of his death and he knew the exact moment of his death providing these last words as a final Teaching. People do not normally know of their pending death three (3) months in advance and they do not know the exact moment of their death but The Perfectly Enlightened Buddha did know, due to his deep awareness of mind and wisdom having attained Enlightenment.

After teaching for forty-five (45) years, he had shared The Teachings needed for Practitioners to attain Enlightenment. As all conditioned things are impermanent, it was time for the death of The Buddha. The Universal Truth of Impermanence applies to all conditioned things even a Buddha.

In his last spoken sentence, The Buddha shares the very first Teaching on The Path to Enlightenment that a Practitioner will need to deeply understand to attain Enlightenment.

“I declare to you: all conditioned things are of a nature to decay strive on untiringly” is explaining The Universal Truth of Impermanence while also encouraging one to be determined, dedicated, and diligent in their pursuit towards the attainment of Enlightenment. To attain Enlightenment a Practitioner will need to deeply understand The Universal Truth of Impermanence. The Buddha being a true Buddha teaches until his last breath.

He encourages his Students to not mourn his death that his guidance has not ceased. Instead, that he had shared all that was needed for the attainment of Enlightenment over his forty-five (45) years of teaching and these Teachings should be considered “your Teacher”.

He encourages his Students to “strive on untiringly” applying consistent energy and effort towards the ultimate goal of Enlightenment.

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 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 nfis 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-handled 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).

How to Make Apologies for Those Who Have Wrong View?

Chapter 49

Ordained Practitioners

(The Perfectly Enlightened One and the male Ordained Community were honored, respected, admired, venerated, and appreciated, and they obtained robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicinal supplies. But the wanderers of other communities were not. There was a wanderer named Susima who was advised by his company to lead the holy life under the Ascetic Gotama to master The Teachings and share The Teachings with Household Practitioners in hope that they too will be honored, respected, and admired.

Upon receiving ordination, the wanderer Susima asked the Venerable Ones if they wield various kinds of spiritual power but was told that it is not necessary to obtain spiritual power to attain Nibbāna (Enlightenment). The wanderer Susima then went to The Perfectly Enlightened One and reported to him the conversation he had had with the Monks. Then The Perfectly Enlightened One shared The Teachings and the wanderer Susima attained Nibbāna (Enlightenment))

Then the Venerable Susima prostrated himself with his head at The Perfectly Enlightened One's feet and said:

'Venerable Sir, I have committed a wrongdoing in that I was so unwise, so confused, so unskillful that I went forth as a thief of The Teachings in such a well-expounded Teachings and Discipline as this.

Venerable Sir, may The Perfectly Enlightened One pardon me for my wrongdoing seen as a wrongdoing for the sake of future restraint.'

Surely, Susima, you have done a wrongdoing in that you were so unwise, so confused, so unskillful that you went forth as a thief of The Teachings in such a well-expounded Teachings and Discipline as this.

Suppose, Susima, they were to arrest a bandit, a criminal, and bring him before the King, saying: 'Sir, this man is a bandit, a criminal. Impose on him whatever punishment you wish. The King would say to them:

'Come, men, bind this man's arms tightly behind his back with a strong rope, shave his head, and lead him around from street to street and from square to square, beating a drum. Then take him out through the southern gate and to the south of the city cut off his head.'

What do you think, Susima, would that man experience pain and displeasure on that account?

‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’

Although that man would experience pain and displeasure on that account, going forth as a thief of The Teachings in such a well-expounded Teachings and Discipline as this has results that are far more painful, far more bitter, and further, it leads to the nether world.

But since you see your wrongdoing as a wrongdoing and make apologies for it in accordance with The Teachings, we understand you. For it is growth in the Noble One’s Discipline when one sees one’s wrongdoing as a wrongdoing, makes apologies for it in accordance with The Teachings, and undertakes future restraint.

(Reference: SN 12.70)

A Monks’ Conduct When Entering Houses

(There are several ways of conduct for Monks when entering houses as appears in many discourses. In summary, they are how to eat, how to give thanks, and how to talk on The Teachings, as examples shown in the following discourses.)

Then, it being morning, The Perfectly Enlightened Kassapa, accomplished and Fully Enlightened, dressed, and taking his bowl and outer robe, he went with The Community of Monks to the residence of King Kikī of Kāsi and sat down on the seat made ready for him. Then, with his own hands, King Kikī of Kāsi served and satisfied The Community of Monks headed by The Buddha Kassapa with various kinds of good food. When The Buddha Kassapa, accomplished and Fully Enlightened, had eaten and had put his bowl aside, King Kikī of Kāsi took a low seat, sat down at one side and said: Venerable Sir, let The Perfectly Enlightened One accept from me a residence for the Rains in Retreat; there will be such service to The Community.

Enough, King, my residence for the Rains has already been provided for.

Then The Perfectly Enlightened One, rising up early and taking his bowl and robe, came up to the residence of the Brāhmin of Verañjā. Having come up together with the company of Monks, he sat down on the appointed seat. Then the Brāhmin of Verañjā, having served with his own hand abundant food, both hard and soft, to the company of Monks with The Perfectly Enlightened One as their head, and having satisfied them, when The Perfectly Enlightened One had eaten and had finished his meal, he clothed

him with the threefold robes, and he clothed each Monk with a set of garments.

Then The Perfectly Enlightened One, having instructed, roused, gladdened and delighted the Brāhmin of Verañjā with talk on The Teachings, rose from his seat and departed.

And The Perfectly Enlightened One, having risen early, went with robe and bowl and attended by his Monks to Kūṭadanta's place of sacrifice and sat down on the prepared seat. And Kūṭadanta served The Buddha and his Monks with the finest foods with his own hands until they were satisfied. And when The Perfectly Enlightened One had eaten and taken his hand away from the bowl, Kūṭadanta took a low stool and sat down to one side.

Then The Perfectly Enlightened One, having instructed Kūṭadanta with a talk on The Teachings, inspired him, aroused him with enthusiasm and delighted him, rose from his seat and departed.

When he has eaten, he sits in silence for a while, but he does not let the time for the thanks go by. When he has eaten and gives thanks, he does not do so criticizing the meal or expecting another meal; he instructs, urges, rouses, and gladdens that audience with talk purely on The Teachings. When he has done so, he rises from his seat and departs.

He walks neither too fast nor too slow, and he does not go as one who wants to get away.

(Reference: MN 81)

What Should Monks Do When in the Midst of The Community

In the midst of The Community, he does not engage in rambling and pointless talk. Either he himself speaks on The Teachings, or he requests someone else to do so, or he adopts noble silence.

This is the seventh cause and condition that leads to obtaining the wisdom fundamental to the spiritual life when it has not been obtained and to its increase, maturation, and fulfillment by development after it has been obtained.

(This was taken from the eight causes and conditions that lead to obtaining the wisdom fundamental to the spiritual life when it has not been obtained.)

Good, Monks. It is fitting for you clansmen who have gone forth out of confidence from the home life into homelessness to sit together to discuss

The Teachings. When you gather together, Monks, you should do either of two things: hold discussion on The Teachings or maintain noble silence.

(Reference: AN 8.2)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares guidance for Ordained Practitioner of how to conduct themselves when invited into the home of a Household Practitioner.

This was not the only guidance The Buddha shared related to this topic but are some of the key Teachings to help Ordained Practitioners understand how to conduct themselves when invited into homes of Household Practitioners.

This would have been important Teachings for Ordained Practitioners as The Buddha would be fulfilling the role, much like a parent, for those Students who left home to learn with him.

It was The Buddha's responsibly to provide Ordained Practitioners with The Teachings that lead to Enlightenment and Teachings to help them conduct themselves in everyday situations.

Being invited into the home of Household Practitioners would have been an everyday occurrence for Ordained Practitioners during the lifetime of The Buddha. Household Practitioners would provide food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical supplies as donations for the Ordained Practitioners. As an exchange, the Ordained Practitioners would provide Teachings that benefit the Household Practitioners to improve the condition of their mind and their life.

In this way, Ordained Practitioners did not need to have a standard career, but instead, through living on the generosity of The Community they support, they would be able to dedicate significant amounts of time, effort, energy, and resources to deeply learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings with The Buddha. Then, with gratitude, appreciation, and respect, the Ordained Practitioners would share the wisdom they acquired with Household Practitioners to benefit them in their development of their life practice.

Chapter 50

Things Monks Should Give High Consideration

Those Acting for the Peacefulness or Suffering of Many People (First Discourse)

Monks, possessing three qualities, a well-known Monk is acting for the harm of many people, for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

What three?

He encourages them in unwholesome bodily action, unwholesome verbal action, and unwholesome [mental] qualities.

Possessing these three qualities, a well-known Monk is acting for the harm of many people, for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

Monks, possessing three qualities, a well-known Monk is acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

What three?

He encourages them in wholesome bodily action, wholesome verbal action, and wholesome [mental] qualities.

Possessing these three qualities, a well-known Monk is acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

(Reference: AN 3.11)

Those Acting for the Peacefulness or Suffering of Many People (Second Discourse)

Monks, possessing five qualities, an elder Monk is acting for the harm of many people, for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and humans.

What five?

(1) An elder is of long standing and has long gone forth.

(2) He is well-known and famous and has a community of many people, including Household Practitioners and Ordained Practitioners.

(3) He gains robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines and provisions for the sick.

(4) He has learned much, remembers what he has learned, and accumulates what he has learned. Those Teachings that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, with the right meaning and phrasing, which proclaim the perfectly complete and pure spiritual life - such Teachings as these he has learned much of, retained in mind, recited verbally, mentally investigated, and penetrated well by view.

(5) He holds wrong view and has a distorted perspective. He draws many people away from the wholesome Teachings and establishes them in unwholesome teachings. Thinking, The elder Monk is of long standing and has long gone forth, they follow his example. Thinking, The elder Monk is well-known and famous and has a community of many people, including Household Practitioners and Ordained Practitioners, they follow his example. Thinking, The elder Monk gains robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines and provisions for the sick, they follow his example. Thinking, The elder Monk has learned much, remembers what he has learned, and accumulates what he has learned; they follow his example.

Possessing these five qualities, an elder Monk is acting for the harm of many people, for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and humans.

Monks, possessing five [other] qualities, an elder Monk is acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

What five?

(1) An elder is of long standing and has long gone forth.

(2) He is well known and famous and has a Community of many people, including Household Practitioners and Ordained Practitioners.

(3) He gains robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines and provisions for the sick.

(4) He has learned much, remembers what he has learned, and accumulates what he has learned. Those Teachings that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, with the right meaning and phrasing, which proclaim the perfectly complete and pure spiritual life - such Teachings as these he has learned much of, retained in mind, recited verbally, mentally investigated, and penetrated well by view.

(5) He holds Right View and has a correct perspective.

He draws many people away from unwholesome teachings and establishes them in the wholesome Teachings. Thinking, The elder Monk is of long standing and has long gone forth, they follow his example. Thinking, The elder Monk is well known and famous and has a Community of many people, including Household Practitioners and Ordained Practitioners, they follow his example. Thinking, The elder Monk gains robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines and provisions for the sick, they follow his example. Thinking, The elder Monk has learned much, remembers what he has learned, and accumulates what he has learned, they follow his example.

Possessing these five qualities, an elder Monk is acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and humans.

(Reference: AN 5.88)

Demonstration of Monks of The Perfectly Enlightened One

Monks, those Monks who are deceivers, stubborn, talkers, imposters, arrogant, and unconcentrated are not Monks of mine.

They have strayed from The Teachings and Discipline, and they do not achieve growth, progress, and maturity in these Teachings and Discipline.

But those Monks who are honest, sincere, steadfast, cooperative, and well concentrated are Monks of mine.

They have not strayed from these Teachings and Discipline, and they achieve growth, progress, and maturity in these Teachings and Discipline.

(Reference: AN 4.26)

What Makes a Monk

Monks, suppose a donkey was following right behind a herd of cattle, [thinking]: I'm a cow too, I am a cow too. But his appearance would not be like that of the cows, his whinny would not be like that of the cows, and his footprint would not be like that of the cows. Yet he follows right behind a herd of cattle, [thinking]: I am a cow too, I'm a cow too.

So too, a Monk might be following right behind The Community of Monks, [thinking]: I am a Monk too, I am a Monk too. But his enthusiasm to undertake the training in the higher virtuous behavior (moral conduct) is not like that of the other Monks; his enthusiasm to undertake the training in the higher mind (mental discipline) is not like that of the other Monks; his enthusiasm to undertake the training in the higher wisdom is not like that of the other Monks. Yet he follows right behind The Community of Monks, [thinking]: I am a Monk too, I'm a Monk too.

Therefore, Monks, you should train yourselves thus: We will have a determined interest to undertake the training in the higher virtuous behavior (moral conduct); we will have a determined interest to undertake the training in the higher mind (mental discipline); we will have a determined interest to undertake the training in the higher wisdom. It is in this way that you should train yourselves.

(Reference: AN 3.82)

One Who Sees The Teachings Sees The Tathāgata

Monks, even if a Monk, taking hold of my outer robe, were to follow right behind me, placing his feet in my footsteps, yet if he were to be craving for sensual pleasures, strong in his passions, evil in mind, corrupt in his decision making, his mindfulness muddled, unalert, uncentered, his mind scattered, and his sense bases uncontrolled, then he would be far from me, and I from him.

Why is that?

Because he does not see The Teachings. Not seeing The Teachings, he does not see me.

But even if a Monk were to live one hundred leagues away, yet if he were to have no craving for sensual objects, were not strong in his passions, not evil in mind, uncorrupt in his decision making, his mindfulness established, alert, centered, his mind at singleness, and his sense bases well-restrained, then he would be near to me, and I to him.

Why is that?

Because he sees The Teachings. Seeing The Teachings, he sees me.

(Reference: ITI 92)

Demonstration of the Four Noble Traditions

Monks, there are these four noble traditions, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient, untainted and never before tainted, which are not being tainted and will not be tainted, which are not rejected by wise Ascetics and Brāhmins.

What four?

(1) Here, a Monk is content with any kind of robe, and he speaks in praise of contentment with any kind of robe, and he does not engage in a wrong search, in what is improper, for the sake of a robe. If he does not get a robe he is not agitated, and if he gets one he uses it without being tied to it, obsessed with it, and blindly absorbed in it, seeing the danger in it and understanding the escape from it. Yet he does not praise himself or disparage others because of this. Any Monk who is skillful in this, diligent, clearly comprehending and ever mindful, is said to be standing in an ancient, primal noble tradition.

(2) Again, a Monk is content with any kind of almsfood, and he speaks in praise of contentment with any kind of almsfood, and he does not engage in a wrong search, in what is improper, for the sake of almsfood. If he does not get almsfood he is not agitated, and if he gets some he uses it without being tied to it, obsessed with it, and blindly absorbed in it, seeing the danger in it and understanding the escape from it. Yet he does not praise himself or disparage others because of this. Any Monk who is skillful in this, diligent, clearly comprehending and ever mindful, is said to be standing in an ancient, primal noble tradition.

(3) Again, a Monk is content with any kind of lodging, and he speaks in praise of contentment with any kind of lodging, and he does not engage in a wrong search, in what is improper, for the sake of lodging. If he does not get lodging he is not agitated, and if he gets it he uses it without being tied to it, obsessed with it, and blindly absorbed in it, seeing the danger in it and understanding the escape from it. Yet he does not praise himself or disparage others because of this. Any Monk who is skillful in this, diligent, clearly comprehending and ever mindful, is said to be standing in an ancient, primal noble tradition.

(4) Again, a Monk finds enjoyment in development of the mind, is joyful with development of the mind, finds enjoyment in abandoning, is joyful with abandoning. Yet he does not praise himself or disparage others because of this. Any Monk who is skillful in this, diligent, clearly comprehending and ever mindful, is said to be standing in an ancient, primal noble tradition.

These, Monks, are the four noble traditions, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient, untainted and never before tainted, which are not being tainted and will not be tainted, which are not rejected by wise Ascetics and Brāhmins.

Monks, when a Monk possesses these four noble traditions, if he dwells in the east he vanquishes discontentedness, discontentedness does not vanquish him; if he dwells in the west he vanquishes discontentedness, discontentedness does not vanquish him; if he dwells in the north he vanquishes discontentedness, discontentedness does not vanquish him; if he dwells in the south he vanquishes discontentedness, discontentedness does not vanquish him.

For what reason?

Because he is a steadfast one who vanquishes discontentedness and excitement.

(Reference: AN 4.28)

Those Acting for the Peacefulness or Suffering of Many People (First Discourse)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a Practitioner can act for the harm of others or for the welfare of others based on three criteria.

If a Practitioner encourages unwholesome bodily conduct, verbal conduct, and mental qualities, they would be “acting for the harm of many people, for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings” because through practice of unwholesome bodily conduct, verbal conduct, and mental qualities, they would cause harm in the world and harm would come to them. They would be unable to experience the Enlightened mind.

Conversely, if a Practitioner encourages wholesome bodily conduct, verbal conduct, and mental qualities, they would be “acting for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings” because through practice of wholesome bodily conduct, verbal conduct, and mental qualities, they would be practicing harmlessness in the world and no harm would come to them. They would be able to experience the Enlightened mind.

It is the senior members of a Community, both Ordained and Household Practitioners, who set the example for everyone of how to progress forward on The Path to Enlightenment. Through the elders of a Community practicing these wholesome Teachings and the wholesome qualities of these Teachings, others will find it more straight forward to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings. The example and role model provided by senior members of a Community, those who have been learning and practicing the longest, will provide a clear example for newer members of a Community to become well established on The Path to Enlightenment. Together as a Community, individuals will be able to support and encourage each others progress towards Enlightenment through setting an example of how to learn, reflect, and practice these wholesome Teachings.

Those Acting for the Peacefulness or Suffering of Many People (Second Discourse)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares five qualities a senior Monk could possess that would cause harm of others or improve the welfare of others.

The fifth criteria is what would determine if the actions taken are unwholesome or wholesome. The Buddha is encouraging Ordained Practitioners to establish “Right View” and have a “correct perspective” regarding The Teachings as other members of The Community would use this example to model their life practice. Not only is it wise for Ordained Practitioners to have “Right View” and have a “correct perspective” regarding The Teachings, but also for Household Practitioners.

Demonstration of Monks of The Perfectly Enlightened One

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how Ordained Practitioners “who are deceivers, stubborn, talkers, imposters, arrogant, and unconcentrated” are not Students that are learning from him. Instead, he shares that Ordained Practitioners “who are honest, sincere, steadfast, cooperative, and well concentrated” are Students that are learning with him.

The Buddha is encouraging development on The Path to Enlightenment and for his Students to not fall towards unwholesomeness or complacency. Instead, he is guiding them to grow, progress, and mature through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings.

What Makes a Monk

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how just because an individual is wearing a robe and looks like an Ordained Practitioner, that does not mean they are a wholesome and virtuous (practicing moral conduct) Ordained Practitioner.

Again, he is encouraging Students to eliminate any complacency through arising “determined interest to undertake the training in the higher virtuous behavior (moral conduct); we will have a determined interest to undertake the training in the higher mind (mental discipline); we will have a determined interest to undertake the training in the higher wisdom”. When you see The Buddha referring to “higher virtuous behavior, higher mind, and higher wisdom”, he is pointing to The Eight Fold Path as it is categorized using wisdom, moral conduct, and mental discipline.

8.) Right Concentration	Mental Discipline
7.) Right Mindfulness	
6.) Right Effort	
5.) Right Livelihood	Moral Conduct
4.) Right Action	
3.) Right Speech	
2.) Right Intention	Wisdom
1.) Right View	

An individual is determined to be an Ordained Practitioner not by whether they are wearing a robe and have shaved their head, but instead, through their actions to learn, reflect, practice, and share these Teachings with others to benefit the world.

Namely, an Ordained Practitioner will need to deeply learn and practice The Eight Fold Path, in order to gain the wisdom needed to develop their own life practice and then share these Teachings with others.

One Who Sees The Teachings Sees The Tathāgata

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how he considers a Practitioner who has deeply learned and is practicing these Teachings to be close to him no matter how far the physical distance. Even if a Practitioner was physically extremely far away from The Buddha, he considered them to be close to him if they were practicing his Teachings.

He explains “because he sees the Teachings. Seeing the Teachings, he sees me” because in order to be able to “see The Buddha”, one would need to deeply understand and practice his Teachings. Doing so, a Practitioner would be able to observe The Teachings in the world around them at all times. The Buddha taught The Natural Laws of Existence, therefore, his Teachings exist in the world around us. We can observe The Three Universal Truths, The Four Noble Truths, and others, through learning, reflecting, and practicing them. By observing The Teachings Gotama Buddha taught in the world, a Practitioner can know with 100% certainty that The Buddha did exist, he did live, he did teach, and he was Enlightened. This can help to develop confidence and eliminate doubt (i.e. the second fetter of The Ten Fetters), therefore, it will aid a Practitioner in their journey to Enlightenment.

But, if one does not learn, reflect, and practice, they will be unable to observe The Natural Laws of Existence (i.e. The Buddha’s Teachings) in the world around them. Therefore, their mind would be muddled, unalert, uncentered, scattered, and the sense bases would be uncontrolled. The mind would be experiencing discontentedness and unable to observe The Buddha’s Teachings in the world.

Demonstration of the Four Noble Traditions

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares four noble traditions “which are not rejected by wise Ascetics and Brāhmins”.

- Content with any robe.
- Content with any kind of almsfood.
- Content with any kind of lodging.
- Finds enjoyment in development of the mind.

The Buddha explains that an Ordained Practitioner who “does not praise himself or disparage others because of this. Any Monk who is skillful in this, diligent, clearly comprehending and ever mindful” is practicing this noble tradition that is “not rejected by wise Ascetics and Brāhmins”.

He shares that these noble traditions are not tainted (i.e. polluted).

The Buddha further explains that through “possessing these four noble traditions”, an Ordained Practitioner can eliminate discontentedness. Through remaining diligent and “steadfast one vanquishes discontentedness”.

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 41-50)

<https://youtu.be/vMsZdqtK5-k>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 392 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 41-50)

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--392---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---Lowly-Arts---Volume-12---Chapter-41-50-e1r4dtv>

Chapter 51

Household Practitioners

When One Sees One's Wrongdoing as a Wrongdoing Make Apologies for It in Accordance with The Teachings

(An example of King Ajātasattu who killed his own father)

*'...as I was, in that I for the sake of the throne deprived my father
'Wrongdoing overcame me, Fortunate One, foolish, having done wrong and
wicked as I was, in that I for the sake of the throne deprived my father, that
good man and just King, of his life. May The Perfectly Enlightened One
accept my confession of my evil (unwholesome) deed that I may restrain
myself in the future!'*

Indeed, Sir, wrongdoing overcame you when you deprived your father, that good man and just King, of his life. But since you have acknowledged the wrongdoing and confessed it as is right, we will accept it. For he who acknowledges his wrongdoing as such and confesses it for betterment in the future, will grow in The Noble Discipline.

(Reference: DN 2)

How to Behave Towards Monks

Monks, whenever virtuous (practicing moral conduct) monastics come to a home, the people there generate much merit on five grounds.

What five?

(1) When people see virtuous (practicing moral conduct) monastics come to their home and they arouse hearts of confidence [toward them], on that occasion that family is practicing the way conducive to heaven.

(2) When people rise, pay homage (respect), and offer a seat to virtuous (practicing moral conduct) monastics who come to their home, on that occasion that family is practicing the way conducive to birth in high families.

(3) When people remove the stain of selfishness toward virtuous (practicing moral conduct) monastics who come to their home, on that occasion that family is practicing the way conducive to great influence.

(4) When, according to their means, people share what they have with virtuous (practicing moral conduct) monastics who come to their home, on that occasion that family is practicing the way conducive to great wealth.

(5) When people question virtuous (practicing moral conduct) monastics who come to their home, make inquiries about The Teachings, and listen to The Teachings, on that occasion that family is practicing the way conducive to great wisdom.

Monks, whenever virtuous (practicing moral conduct) monastics come to a home, the people there generate much merit on these five grounds.

(Reference: AN 5.199)

An Outcast of a Household Practitioner

Monks, possessing five qualities, a Household Practitioner is an outcast of a Household Practitioner, a stain of a Household Practitioner; the last among Household Practitioners.

What five?

(1) He is devoid of confidence;

(2) he is immoral (unwholesome);

(3) he is superstitious and believes in auspicious signs, not understanding Kamma;

(4) he seeks outside here for a person worthy of offerings; and

(5) he first does [meritorious] deeds there.

Possessing these five qualities, a Household Practitioner is an outcast of a Household Practitioner, a stain of a Household Practitioner, the last among Household Practitioners.

(Reference: AN 5.175)

A Brilliant of a Household Practitioner

Monks, possessing five qualities, a Household Practitioner is a brilliant Household Practitioner, a gem of a Household Practitioner, a fine flower of a Household Practitioner.

What five?

- (1) He is endowed with confidence;
- (2) he is virtuous (practicing moral conduct);
- (3) he is not superstitious and does not believe in auspicious signs, understanding Kamma;
- (4) he does not seek outside here for a person worthy of offerings; and
- (5) he first does [meritorious] deeds here.

Possessing these five qualities, a Household Practitioner is a brilliant Household Practitioner, a gem of a Household Practitioner, a fine flower of a Household Practitioner.

(Reference: AN 5.175)

Benefits of the Act of Giving

But here, Student, some man or woman gives food, drink, clothing, carriages, garlands, scents, ointments, beds, dwelling, and lamps to Ascetics or Brāhmins.

Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a happy destination, even in the heavenly world.

But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is wealthy.

This is the way, Student, that leads to wealth, namely, one gives food, drink, clothing, carriages, garlands, scents, ointments, beds, dwelling, and lamps to Ascetics or Brāhmins.

(Reference: MN 135)

When Unwholesome Monks Are Strong Wholesome Monks Are Weak

Monks, when robbers are strong, Kings are weak. At that time the King is not at ease when re-entering [his capital], or when going out, or when touring the outlying provinces. At that time Brāhmins and Householders, too, are not at ease when re-entering [their towns and villages], or when going out, or when attending to work outside.

So too, when unwholesome Monks are strong, wholesome Monks are weak. At that time the wholesome Monks sit silently in the midst of The Community, or they resort to the outlying provinces. This is for the harm of many people, for the unhappiness of many people, for the ruin, harm, and suffering of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

Monks, when Kings are strong, robbers are weak. At that time the King is at ease when re-entering [his capital], and when going out, and when touring the outlying provinces. At that time Brāhmins and Householders, too, are at ease when re-entering [their towns and villages], and when going out, and when attending to work outside.

So too, when wholesome Monks are strong, unwholesome Monks are weak. At that time the unwholesome Monks sit silently in the midst of The Community, or they depart for other regions. This is for the welfare of many people, for the peacefulness of many people, for the good, welfare, and peacefulness of many people, of heavenly beings and human beings.

(Reference: AN 2.39)

Ways to Eliminate Unwholesome People

(The Perfectly Enlightened One told the Brāhmin Kūṭadanta about the story of the King Mahāvijita calling his chaplain to instruct him on how to make a great sacrifice.)

The chaplain replied: Your Majesty's country is overrun by thieves. It is severely damaged; villages and towns are being destroyed; the countryside is infested with criminals. If Your Majesty were to tax this region, that would be the wrong thing to do. Suppose Your Majesty were to think: 'I will get rid of this disease of robbers by executions and imprisonment, or by confiscation, threats, and punishment by sending them away from the country,' the disease would not be properly ended. Those who survived would later harm Your Majesty's country.

However, with this plan you can completely eliminate the disease.

To those in the Kingdom who are engaged in cultivating crops and raising cattle, let Your Majesty distribute grain and food for livestock; to those in trade, give capital; to those in government service assign proper living wages.

Then those people, being intent on their own occupations, will not harm the Kingdom. Your Majesty's revenues will be great; the land will be tranquil and not overrun by thieves; and the people, with joy in their hearts, playing with their children, will reside in open houses.

(Reference: DN 5)

The Monks of Kosambī

At that time a certain Monk accused another Monk that he had fallen into a wrongdoing and did not see that wrongdoing as a wrongdoing.

He and a group of Monks who took part with this Monk carried out a (formal) act of suspension against that specific Monk for not seeing the wrongdoing.

Then there were also a group of Monks who took the side of the suspended Monk and sided with him. The Community of Monks was divided. They could not carry out the observance together.

Now at that time Monks, causing fights, causing arguments, falling into disputes in the dining hall in the middle of the house, behaved unsuitably towards one another in actions, in speech; they came to blows...

Having expressed disapproval of them, having given reasoned talk, The Perfectly Enlightened One addressed the Monks, saying: ...

Enough, Monks; no arguments, no fights, no contention, no disputing.

When he had spoken thus, a certain Monk who spoke what was not The Teachings spoke thus to The Perfectly Enlightened One: "Venerable Sir, let The Perfectly Enlightened One, the Master of The Teachings wait; Venerable Sir, let The Perfectly Enlightened One, unconcerned, live intent on residing in ease here and now; we will be (held) accountable for this argument, fight, contention, disputing."

And a second time The Perfectly Enlightened One spoke thus to these Monks:

Enough, Monks; no arguments, no fights, no contention, no disputing.

And a second time the Monk who spoke what was not The Teachings spoke thus to The Perfectly Enlightened One: “Venerable Sir, let The Perfectly Enlightened One, the Master of The Teachings wait; Venerable Sir, let The Perfectly Enlightened One, unconcerned, live intent on residing in ease here and now; we will be (held) accountable for this argument, fight, contention, disputing.”

Then The Perfectly Enlightened One addressed the Monks setting Prince Dīghāvu’s story as an example. Brahmadatta, the King of Kāsi, had done him much mischief. He had killed the Prince’s parents. As Prince Dīghāvu had opportunity to show his anger by killing Brahmadatta, the King of Kāsi, he thought of his father’s last words.

Do not you, dear Dīghāvu, look far or close for, dear Dīghāvu, angry moods are not calmed by anger: angry moods, dear Dīghāvu, are calmed by non-anger.

*[‘do not look far’ means: do not bear anger long.]
[‘do not look close’ means: do not hastily break with a friend.]*

Thus the life of Brahmadatta, the King of Kāsi, was granted by Prince Dīghāvu.

Then Brahmadatta, the King of Kāsi gave back the Prince’s troops and vehicles and territory and storehouses and barns of grain, and he gave him his daughter.

Now, Monks, if such is the patience and gentleness of Kings who wield the scepter, who wield the sword, herein, Monks, let your light shine forth so that you who have gone forth in these Teachings and discipline which are thus well taught may be equally patient and gentle.

But none of these Monks listened to The Perfectly Enlightened One.

Then The Perfectly Enlightened One, having dressed in the morning, taking his bowl and robe, entered Kosambī for almsfood; having walked for almsfood in Kosambī, bringing back his almsbowl after his meal, having packed away his lodging, taking his bowl and robe and standing in the midst of The Community, he spoke these verses:

When all together they shout out, none feels unwise,
though The Community is divided, one might think otherwise.

With wandering wisdom, the wise one understands all the field of talk;
with mouths wide open to full extent, what leads them on they know not.

They who (in thought) argue this: That man has abused me, has hurt, has
defeated me, has me devastated: these angers not calmed.

They who do not argue this: That man has abused me, has hurt, has
defeated me, has me devastated: in them anger is calmed.

No, not by anger are angry moods calmed here (and) at any time,
but by non-anger are they calmed: this is an (ageless) endless natural law.

People do not understand that here we are confused (in life, in time),
but they who herein do understand, thereby their fights are calmed.

Criminals who injure and kill, steal cattle, horses and wealth, who plunder the
countryside; for there is unity.

Why should there not be for you?

If one finds a friend with whom to go forward fascinated in the well-residing
(of these Teachings), appropriately, surmounting dangers one and all, with
joy go forward with him mindfully.

Finding none appropriate with whom to go forward, none in the well-residing
fascinated (in these Teachings), as King quits the conquered country, go
forward lonely as a bull-elephant in an elephant jungle.

Better to go forward one alone, there is no companionship with the unwise.
Go forward lonely, unconcerned, doing no evil as a bull-elephant in an
elephant-jungle.

*Then The Perfectly Enlightened One, having spoken these verses as he was
standing in the midst of The Community, approached Bālakalonakāra village,
and the Eastern Bamboo Grove. Along the way he had met a few of his
senior disciples. Walking on tour in due course he arrived at Pārileyya. The
Perfectly Enlightened One stayed there at Pārileyya in the Guarded Woodland
Thicket at the root of the lovely sāl-tree. There was a large bull-elephant
named Pārileyya approached The Perfectly Enlightened One. Having
approached, he set out by means of his trunk drinking water for The Perfectly
Enlightened One and water for washing, and he kept the grass down.*

Then The Perfectly Enlightened One set out on tour for Sāvatthi.

... Then the Household Practitioners of Kosambī thought: “These masters, the Monks of Kosambī, have done us much mischief: The Perfectly Enlightened One is departing, harassed by these; come, we should neither greet the masters, the Monks of Kosambī, nor should we stand up before them, nor should we greet them with joined palms or perform the proper duties; we should not appreciate, respect, admire or honor them, and neither should we give them almsfood when they come (to us); thus they, when they are neither appreciated, respected, admired nor honored by us, will depart unappreciated, or they will leave The Community, or they will restore friendly relations for themselves to The Perfectly Enlightened One.

Then the Monks of Kosambī, as they were not being appreciated, respected, admired or honored by the Household Practitioners of Kosambī,, spoke thus: ‘Come now, you Venerable Sirs, let us, having gone to Sāvatthī, settle this moral question in The Perfectly Enlightened One’s presence.’ Then the Monks of Kosambī,, having packed away their lodgings, taking their bowls and robes, approached Sāvatthi.

Then in due course the Monks of Kosambī, arrived at Sāvatthi. They agreed to stop the dispute. The Monk who had been suspended agreed that there was a wrongdoing and he had fallen. Those Monks who were taking the side of the suspended (one) restored that Monk.

Since Monks, that Monk has fallen and was suspended but see and is restored well then, Monks, achieve harmony in The Community for settling that case. And thus, Monks, should it be achieved: One and all should gather together, ... If the achieving of harmony in The Community for settling this case is pleasing to the Venerable Ones, they should be silent; he to whom it is not pleasing should speak. Harmony in The Community for settling that case is achieved by The Community. Arguments in The Community are put down, fighting in The Community is put down. It is pleasing to the Venerable Ones; therefore they are silent... Observance may be carried out at once, the training guidelines recited.

(Reference: The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Pitaka), Vol. 4: Mahavagga by I.B. Horner)

When One Sees One's Wrongdoing as a Wrongdoing Make Apologies for It in Accordance with The Teachings

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a Practitioner needs to be honest and objective with their own life practice to be able to observe when you are not practicing The Eight Fold Path towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

Being able to objectively observe where one is not practicing these Teachings is highly important to your progress on The Path to Enlightenment. This Path is an independent journey where Teachers are available for guidance but, it is the responsibility of each individual Practitioner to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings so that they will be able to have confidence in knowing when they are and are not practicing these Teachings.

In this way, each Practitioner is developing their wisdom, moral conduct, and mental discipline, so that, they can observe areas for improvement and seek guidance for improvement. The Path to Enlightenment is not about others forcefully telling you where you are or are not practicing these Teachings. This Path is not about others judging you and pointing out to you where your practice needs improvement. Instead, The Path to Enlightenment is for you to learn, reflect, and practice while seeking guidance with a Teacher. In doing so, you can develop your wisdom to deeply understand The Teachings, in such a way, that you will be able to easily observe areas of wrongdoing and then apply effort to improve your practice.

Progress on The Path to Enlightenment will be gradual and you will have mistakes along the way. This is part of the learning process. It is when the mind is struggling the most and mistakes are made that one has the opportunity to learn and grow in developing their life practice through gaining increased levels of wisdom. No Practitioner can practice these Teachings perfectly from the beginning or within a short period of time. It takes time, effort, and energy to apply diligence to learning, reflecting, and practicing that one can gradually build up their life practice. As you make mistakes and experience decisions the mind has made where there is wrongdoing, take time to observe the areas for improvement, gain wisdom, and aim to improve for the future. Through using the time of wrongdoing to gain wisdom, a Practitioner can ensure they understand how to improve and are less likely to have those same challenges in the future.

With that said, there are certain challenges that will linger and require long term effort to improve. Understand that sometimes, multiple mistakes are needed before the wisdom of your wrongdoing is understood and you are able to make improvements. If you put pressure on yourself or others to improve instantly, this will only lead to discontentedness.

This Path is an independent journey where you will make plenty of mistakes and, in doing so, there will be plenty of wisdom for you to understand to help you improve. Having a Teacher to seek guidance from during these times and others, is highly important. The mind will have a tendency to "beat itself up" thinking negatively as if you are so horrible for any specific mistake or wrongdoing. But, anyone who has attained Enlightenment did not start out perfect, including a Buddha.

The way that we grow and evolve is through making mistakes and learning from those mistakes. A Teacher should be polite, kind, friendly, respectful, and patient to help guide you towards improvements. Again, anyone who is Enlightened has, most likely, already experienced all that you are experiencing and will have guidance to help you move past

the challenges you face towards improved results. You just need to decide to reach out for guidance and support, not being shy or embarrassed by your mistakes. Instead, admitting them to yourself and your Teacher so that you are then in a position to learn and grow. Even when, especially when, there are repeated mistakes or wrongdoing of the same type. You should only ever receive polite, kind, friendly, respectful, and patient guidance from an Enlightened Teacher. If this is not your experience, it is best to find a new Teacher who can be understanding to listen and provide guidance to help you without any judgment or criticism but only, helpful guidance through supportive, encouraging, and motivating guidance in these Teachings.

As you can see in this Teaching, one of The Buddha's Students admits to him that he murdered his father. The Buddha listens, understands, and provides guidance. He does not judge the Student, push him away, or otherwise disparage the Student for his past conduct. Instead, The Buddha chooses to focus on ensuring the Student has the needed wisdom to ensure they do not repeat the same mistakes in the future. This is how a Teacher should conduct themselves with their Students and how Students should conduct themselves with their Teacher. A Student can share openly through trust seeking guidance. Then, a Teacher should listen, understand, and provide guidance to help their Students gain the needed wisdom to make improvements.

Do not allow the ego to dwell in the mind thinking that you need to appear perfect to your Teacher. Since the mind is currently unEnlightened, your Teacher already knows you are not perfect. You are not a Fully Perfectly Enlightened Buddha, so do not attempt to appear like one. Instead, share all the shortcomings, mistakes, and wrongdoings with your Teacher. This will help to reduce and eliminate the ego while also providing you the opportunity to seek guidance for improvement. If you attempted to hide the shortcomings, mistakes, and wrongdoing, how would this be helping you to improve?

The goal is for you to attain Enlightenment so that the mind can be completely peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. You will never get to that goal if you choose to attempt to hide any shortcomings, mistakes, or wrongdoing. Instead, share all that is challenging you in your life practice with your Teacher. Take the time to ensure they understand all the many aspects of the mind that have led to your decisions. Then, seek guidance for improvements so that you can improve.

The goal is not to be perfect today but instead, through consistent and ongoing efforts, learn, reflect, and practice to make gradual improvements that accumulate into a well developed life practice. Your Enlightenment will not be determined based on the mistakes you make today. Instead, it will be determined based on, once you make a mistake, what will you do next? Despite the mistakes you make, do you hide them or give up? Or, do you use them as a learning opportunity to gain wisdom and improve?

Using the shortcomings, mistakes, and wrongdoing to learn by seeking guidance, is the way to improve and walk closer to Enlightenment.

How to Behave Towards Monks

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a Household Practitioner can greet and care for virtuous Ordained Practitioners.

It is common for Household Practitioners to invite Ordained Practitioners and Teachers to their home to care for them and to learn The Teachings. In doing so, the Household Practitioners are generating merit.

Merit is an important Teaching to understand as it relates to The Path to Enlightenment. Merit is thought of as a unique type of Kamma. Merit is wholesome Kamma generated through generous offerings and gifts to The Community of virtuous Ordained Practitioners and anyone who has attained one of The Four Stages of Enlightenment. This community of people is referred to as the “Ariyan Sangha”. Sangha is the Pāli word for “community”. The “Ariyan Sangha” is translated as “The Noble Community”.

Merit is generated by making offerings of food, water, clothing, shelter, medical care, time, effort, energy, financial support, and resources, to support the sharing of Gotama Buddha’s Teachings. It is The Noble Community who are responsible for guiding others to attain Enlightenment. Ordained Practitioners and anyone who has attained one of The Four Stages of Enlightenment are considered deep Students and Practitioners of these Teachings who support all others in guidance towards attaining Enlightenment.

If you make offerings to these people, you are supporting the continuation of The Teachings that will help end discontentedness and the suffering it causes to all of humanity. To make offerings to The Noble Community, virtuous Ordained Practitioners and any person who has attained one of The Four Stages of Enlightenment, you are recognizing the importance of The Teachings and supporting their continued growth. This is considered a unique type of wholesome Kamma called “Merit”.

Sharing The Teachings of Gotama Buddha requires an enormous amount of time, effort, energy, and resources. Wherever you learn these Teachings, these people need to use time and money to support their ongoing efforts to share The Teachings with you. The vast majority of people who share these Teachings with loving-kindness and compassion would never ask for a payment for sharing The Teachings but instead, offer them to you on a donation basis. The Teachings are essentially shared at no cost, for free, but those who are sharing The Teachings are spending their time, effort, energy, and resources to do the work to share with you.

Those who share The Teachings in this way are doing so with generosity, loving-kindness, and compassion for all beings. It is important that you do not just “take” this generosity, loving-kindness, and compassion, but that you also “return it back” to those who are using their time, effort, energy, and resources to help you. You should also help them. As people are sharing with you, you can share with them. And, you can also initiate sharing on your own without any expectation of obtaining something in return. The practice of generosity and sharing is a powerful way to help cultivate a mind free of greed or craving.

Without sharing and practicing generosity to create Merit, a person would be unable to attain Enlightenment as the mind would still be holding on and would not have eliminated craving. It is through making offerings to the Teachers of these Teachings that one is

acknowledging, with appreciation and gratitude, that The Teachings have helped them in their life, and they are making offerings to help the Teacher help others.

It is only through the generosity of people before you that The Teachings have been preserved and shared worldwide to finally reach you. The people before you have already made donations of time, effort, energy, and resources to help these Teachings reach you.

Now, instead of just “taking The Teachings” to benefit your life, you can also help those yet to come behind you by “practicing generosity and giving” to benefit those in the future.

Your offering that produces Merit helps those who share these Teachings with you. And you are helping those people after you who will learn and progress with these Teachings in the generations yet to come.

The Buddha provides five ways to ensure one is practicing in a way that shows gratitude, appreciation, and respect to those who are sharing these Teachings with you to help you cultivate healthy relationships so that, you can continue to learn and gain wisdom to improve your life practice on The Path to Enlightenment.

1.) Have confidence in your Teacher. If you have done a thorough job at selecting a Teacher to guide you and you observe improvements to the condition of the mind and your life through The Teachings you are learning with them, then over time, your confidence in your Teacher should only grow. You should not “judge” a Teacher but instead, make wise decisions (i.e. discernment) about who you choose to learn with throughout your journey to Enlightenment.

You should not judge a Teacher but instead, practice discernment.

Judgment: attempting to determine what is right or wrong for another person while placing oneself above others with arrogance or pride (i.e. the ego). Comparing that one is superior or inferior to another person. Attempting to declare who is wholesome or unwholesome, good or bad. Judgment is based in “conceit”. Judgment is harmful to the mind and needs to be eliminated to attain Enlightenment.

Discernment: is wise decision making based in wisdom. Discernment is helpful to the mind and needs to be cultivated to attain Enlightenment.

2.) When your Teacher arrives, stand up to greet them and offer them a seat.

3.) Make offerings of food, water, clothing, shelter, medical care, and other resources to help them sustain their life so that they can continue to help you and others in the world. This will help you to eliminate selfishness and allow your Teacher to continue to share these Teachings into the world.

4.) Share what you have with your Teachers so that it can help you to practice generosity and eliminate craving/desire/attachment.

5.) Inviting Teachers into your home is an opportunity for you to ask questions about The Teachings to improve your life practice and the functioning of your home. There will be challenges you and other family members are facing that can be improved through seeking guidance from Teachers to understand these Teachings, in such a way, that helps you gain wisdom to improve the decisions you are making within your life practice. When asking questions, listen to the answer and continue to inquire ensuring that you understand. Then, practice those Teachings so that you can observe the truth for yourself that The Teachings of The Buddha will help you to improve the condition of the mind and your life. This will bring more harmony and peace to your home.

It is important to notice that when The Buddha discusses inviting Ordained Practitioners and Teachers to your home to learn and make offerings, he uses the term “virtuous”.

Virtuous is to be practicing the wholesome moral conduct of these Teachings.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, and even today, there are countless Ordained Practitioners and Teachers who share these Teachings. The Buddha never shared that one should seek guidance blindly and then blindly do what Ordained Practitioners or Teachers share. Instead, he encouraged us to seek guidance from “virtuous” Ordained Practitioners and Teachers. In this way, you can ensure that you are seeking guidance from an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher who is deeply practicing these Teachings.

If an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher is not deeply practicing these Teachings observable through their moral conduct, why would you be interested to learn from them? To be a wise and helpful Teacher, one needs to first be a deep Practitioner of these Teachings. It is through observing an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher’s moral conduct that you will see qualities you aspire to understand and practice for your own life. When you observe an Ordained Practitioner or Teacher who is deeply practicing wholesome moral conduct, that means they must have the wisdom to practice in that way, therefore, they are most likely someone who can provide you the wisdom to improve your practice in the same way.

Be wise about who you choose to interact with as a Teacher. If you are going to invest significant time, effort, energy, and resources to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings, you would like to ensure that the individual(s) you are choosing to learn with is/are deep Practitioners of these Teachings, thus, having deep wisdom. If not, it would be an unwise decision to learn from a Teacher who is unwholesome and not practicing these Teachings in the way that Gotama Buddha taught them. Unwise and unwholesome decisions lead to unwholesome results.

Therefore, take time to select a Teacher who is deeply practicing these Teachings so that you know the time, effort, energy, and resources that you use to progress in your learning and practice is with an individual who is a deep Practitioner and has the wisdom needed to guide you on The Path to Enlightenment. This will produce the best results.

An Outcast of a Household Practitioner

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares five qualities that are harmful for a Household Practitioner as it relates to learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings and develop a vibrant Community of Practitioners who are progressing towards Enlightenment.

- 1.) A Practitioner who is lacking confidence in The Teacher.
- 2.) A Practitioner who is immoral and practicing unwholesome moral conduct.
- 3.) A Practitioner who is superstitious and believes in various auspicious signs, not understanding The Natural Law of Kamma.
- 4.) A Practitioner who is seeking to make offerings outside of The Community of Practitioners established by The Buddha. This would mean that one does not have confidence in The Teachings of The Buddha, thus, they most likely have not deeply learned, reflected, and practiced these Teachings.
- 5.) A Practitioner who makes offerings and performs meritorious deeds outside of The Community of The Buddha. This would mean that one does not have confidence in The Teachings of The Buddha, thus, they most likely have not deeply learned, reflected, and practiced these Teachings.

A Brilliant of a Household Practitioner

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares five qualities that are helpful for a Household Practitioner as it relates to learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings and develop a vibrant Community of Practitioners who are progressing towards Enlightenment.

- 1.) A Practitioner who has confidence in The Teacher.
- 2.) A Practitioner who is virtuous and practicing wholesome moral conduct.
- 3.) A Practitioner who does not have superstition and belief in various auspicious signs, and does understand The Natural Law of Kamma.
- 4.) A Practitioner who does not seek to make offerings outside of The Community of Practitioners established by The Buddha. This would mean that one has confidence in The Teachings of The Buddha, thus, they most likely have deeply learned, reflected, and practiced these Teachings.
- 5.) A Practitioner who first looks to make offerings and perform meritorious deeds within The Community of The Buddha. This would mean that one has confidence in The Teachings of The Buddha, thus, they most likely have deeply learned, reflected, and practiced these Teachings.

Benefits of the Act of Giving

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how through practicing generosity in this life, at death, one is reborn in an improved destination, “even in the heavenly world”.

This Teaching is not shared due to beneficial results that are provided by The Buddha or some other being. Instead, through practicing generosity a Practitioner is reducing and eliminating craving/desire/attachment in the mind and the results of this are an improved destination upon rebirth.

It is important to always keep in mind that the goal of these Teachings is to attain Enlightenment so that one does not experience rebirth into a new life in another realm. The Buddha is sharing this Teaching on generosity as a way to help you understand what will or will not happen based on developing one’s life practice. He is not attempting to lure or convince a Practitioner to practice these Teachings, in such a way, to accomplish an improved rebirth in a new life. Instead, he is sharing all of these Teachings so that you will not experience any discontentedness in the rest of this life through attaining Enlightenment and so that you will not experience any further rebirths. To accomplish that goal, one needs to eliminate craving/desire/attachment, among other things, and to accomplish the goal of eliminating craving/desire/attachment, one needs to practice generosity.

Generosity is a key aspect of improving the condition of the mind and progressing towards Enlightenment. The stain of selfishness plagues many minds in the world and causes significant issues on the planet. It is through the practice of generosity that one eliminates selfishness and the cravings/desires/attachments that cause discontentedness and rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth.

Additionally, when it comes to making offerings and providing gifts to Ordained Practitioners and Teachers, The Buddha prioritized making offerings to them as last. The Buddha provided guidance that a Practitioner should only give within their means, finding “the middle way”. You can learn more about how The Buddha described making offerings to Ordained Practitioners and Teachers after you have already taken care of all your other needs in the following books.

Detailed explanation of “Four Worthy Deeds to Be Undertaken with Wealth” is available in this same book series found in Chapter 5 of the book “Foundation in The Teachings” (Volume 3).

Detailed explanation of practicing generosity is available in this same book series found in the book “Generosity” (Volume 13).

When Unwholesome Monks Are Strong Wholesome Monks Are Weak

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how when Ordained Practitioners and Teachers are unwholesome, wholesome Ordained Practitioners and Teachers are weak.

He provides an example using a story of how when Kings (i.e. leaders) are weak, the population of people experience fear, harm, and robbers creating havoc in the villages and towns. But, when a King (i.e. leader) is strong, then robbers are weak with the people living at ease and in peacefulness.

The Buddha provides guidance of how one can be “strong”. It is not through forceful means but instead, through practicing these good wholesome Teachings.

Through the leaders of villages, towns, provinces/states, countries, etc. practicing wholesome moral conduct and all of these Teachings, they will set the example for others and we will observe improved conduct in the world. The Ordained Practitioners and Teachers need to lead the way helping others to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings.

Through Ordained Practitioners and Teachers deeply practicing these Teachings, they set an example for all others. Then, when individuals choose to seek guidance, they will not only learn through The Teachings themselves but also, through the actions of Ordained Practitioners and Teachers.

“One who sees me, sees the Teachings”.

(Gotama Buddha)

Ordained Practitioners and Teachers need to always be deeply practicing every aspect of these Teachings ensuring they are setting a wholesome example for all others. A Teacher will guide many more people through their actions than through their words. Community leaders will have the same experience. They will guide populations of people much more closely and responsibly through their actions than through their words.

It is when we improve our actions that we provide the best example for others. Words can help explain The Teachings and give clarity. But, our actions speak not only to the mind but also to the heart of those who choose to learn with us. Speaking to the mind can produce results. But it is only when a leader can speak to the mind and the heart through words and actions that they can be most effective at guiding others to an improved life.

Ways to Eliminate Unwholesome People

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a leader can eliminate unwholesome people from a population. This Teaching can be applied for a leader of a population or even a leader of one's own home.

The Buddha explains that it is not through punishing wrongdoing that one will experience an improved result in people around them but instead, through rewarding wholesome behavior.

This Teaching can be applied to leaders of populations or even parents who are looking to improve the peacefulness and well-being of their home.

As people around you are engaged in harmful conduct, rather than looking to punish others for their shortcomings, mistakes, or wrongdoing, instead, look for ways to incentivize the wholesome behavior. Through supporting, encouraging, and motivating wholesome moral conduct, you will experience much better results than through punishing the unwholesome conduct.

The Monks of Kosambī

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a certain Ordained Practitioner had decided to do wrongdoing observable by others in The Community. This Ordained Practitioner was not interested in observing this wrongdoing for themselves, even when The Buddha attempted to discuss this wrongdoing with them.

Rather than argue or create hostility where The Buddha might have attempted to forcefully convince this Student of their wrongdoing, The Buddha just chose to leave and move on to the next town.

Then, the Household Practitioners observing the unwholesome conduct by the Ordained Practitioners, chose to also ignore the individuals involved and did not even make offerings to them to sustain their life through food, water, shelter, etc. The Ordained Practitioners were not virtuous (i.e. practicing moral conduct), therefore, they did not make offerings to them.

Through ignoring the individuals involved, with The Buddha moving on and the Household Practitioners not supporting or encouraging the unwholesome conduct, the Ordained Practitioners eventually observe the wrongdoing and decided to apologize for their mistakes.

This Teaching helps us to understand that we do not need to forcefully point out every shortcoming, mistake, or wrongdoing of those around us to be successful in life. Instead, we can choose to move past it and beyond it. If we attempted to constantly tell others of their shortcomings, mistakes, and wrongdoing, that puts us in a position of continuously needing to tell others what is "wrong" and what is "right" through confrontation. That would come from a place of arrogance (i.e. conceit and ego).

Instead, we can peacefully and humbly choose to help those who are seeking guidance while ignoring those who choose to do unwholesome actions and incentivize wholesome actions. We cannot change others. We are unable to make decisions for others and change their behavior. All we can do is improve the way we either react or respond to a given situation based on our own decision making.

Through our own wise decision making, which sometimes might include ignoring the situation and move beyond it, we can learn to live in harmony with one another without the need to judge others and constantly tell others that they are “wrong” and we are “right”.

Conceit and the judging of others needs to be eliminated from the mind to experience Enlightenment. If we are judging others, we are placing ourselves above them feeling as if we are superior. Therefore, this is going to motivate and encourage unskillful conduct that only serves to create tension and hostility in relationships. Instead, eliminate the conceit and judging of others as if you are superior to them. Learn how to be humble and function with loving-kindness and compassion towards all beings. In this way, you will find that interactions with others will originate from warmth and peacefulness leading to skillful conduct that produces wholesome results.

To experience wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma) in one’s life, they would need to practice generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom - The Three Wholesome Roots. The wisdom found in The Eight Fold Path is how to practice in a way that does not cause harm to others and therefore, you will not experience harm coming back to you.

The Path to Enlightenment is not about having a decision tree of exactly what to do in any given situation. Instead, it is about learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings, in such a way, that one’s own pollution of mind is eliminated and all intentions, speech, and actions can originate from wise wholesome decisions based on The Eight Fold Path.

There is no permanent answer that will solve every challenge you face in life. But through developing your life practice to include eliminating the pollution of mind by purification of the mind on The Path to Enlightenment, in each given situation, you can make wise decisions that lead to wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

Loving-kindness (Pāli: mettā) is active goodwill towards all beings without judgment. A genuine interest in seeing all beings be well.

Compassion (Pāli: karuṇā) is concern for the misfortunes of others.

Epilogue

Chapter 52

Mutual Support Between Monks, Brāhmins and Householders

Monks, Brāhmins and Householders are very helpful to you. They provide you with the requisites of robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines in time of sickness. And you, Monks, are very helpful to Brāhmins and Householders, as you teach them The Teachings that are good in the beginning, the middle, and the end, with the correct meaning and wording, and you proclaim the spiritual life in its fulfillment and complete purity. Thus, Monks, this spiritual life is lived with mutual support for the purpose of crossing the flood and making a complete end of discontentedness.

(Reference: ITI 107)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares exactly how he setup the “mutual support” between the Ordained Practitioners and Household Practitioners.

Through the Ordained Practitioners needing food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical care from Household Practitioners, they did not need to work in a typical career. Instead, they can focus 100% of their time dedicated to learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to improve the condition of the mind and their life. Ordained Practitioners, and those Teachers who choose to live their life based on donations from Household Practitioners, will have the ability to gain deep wisdom in these Teachings through not needing to pursue a typical career.

But, in choosing this lifestyle, Ordained Practitioners and Teachers who are supported by the offerings of dedicated Household Practitioners, there is the responsibility to apply time, effort, energy, and resources towards the determined, dedicated, and diligent learning, reflecting, and practicing of these Teachings to acquire wisdom. Then, those who are supported by the dedicated Household Practitioners are able to offer back to them, the wisdom of these Teachings. Household Practitioners can then learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings while flourishing within their Community. In this way, there is an exchange of support in both directions and there is “mutual support”.

Through wise decision making of the Teachers and Students, wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma) are experienced as more and more individuals are able to gradually progress towards Enlightenment.

With the Household Practitioners spending an extensive amount of time, effort, energy, and resources to acquire offerings for Teachers, it is the responsibility of the Teachers to ensure they are not allowing those offerings to go to waste. Instead, applying consistent and ongoing efforts to deeply learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to develop one’s wisdom will provide the needed ability to share something back with the Household Practitioners.

Teachers need to ensure they are polite, kind, friendly, and respectful to Household Practitioners with gratitude and appreciation for the sacrifices they make in order to provide offerings. Additionally, Household Practitioners should ensure they are polite, kind, friendly, and respectful to Teachers with gratitude and appreciation for the giving up of any aspirations for a career in business or other fields but instead, choose to dedicate their time, effort, energy, and resources towards the development of their own life practice on The Path to Enlightenment to share that wisdom with others.

In this way, all individuals, Teachers and Students, are meeting in the middle with politeness, kindness, friendliness, and respect for each other while practicing gratitude, appreciation, patience, and generosity. In this way, these Teachings can flourish through continuous learning, reflecting, and practicing within a Community supporting, encouraging, and motivating each other towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

Why Do Ordained Practitioners Beg for Food?

It is a common misunderstanding that people think Ordained Practitioners (i.e. Teachers) are begging for food. Ordained Practitioners are not begging for food nor anything else. They are walking through The Community providing the opportunity for Household

Practitioners (i.e. Students) to practice generosity to acquire merit which will assist them in developing the mind to attain Enlightenment.

As part of what The Buddha shared as Teachings, he developed a system of “mutual support”.

The mutual support between Ordained Practitioners (i.e. Teachers) and their Students (i.e. Household Practitioners) is designed to ensure that there is opportunity for both Teachers and Students to practice The Teachings according to what leads to Enlightenment - namely “generosity”.

Teachers are giving up their career and worldly life. They have eliminated, or are working to eliminate, their craving/desire/attachment to worldly life of having an extensive amount of possessions, a career, etc. Through applying effort to develop their life practice to understand and practice The Teachings, they are being a deep and dedicated Student.

To be the very best Teacher, one would need to first be a very deep and dedicated Student and Practitioner.

So by living on donations of food, water, clothing, shelter, medical care, and financial support, Teachers are able to get deeper and deeper into their own practice of these Teachings to acquire wisdom of The Teachings. In this way, a Teacher is able to become a very deep, dedicated, determined, and diligent Student that leads to the elimination of craving/desire/attachment to worldly life, ultimately benefiting the Teacher and their Students. The Teacher is then better prepared to share the wisdom they cultivated on The Path to Enlightenment to help their Students to then get closer to and attain Enlightenment for themselves. It was the Student’s offerings that supported the Teacher aiding them in their journey to Enlightenment through generous donations, and it is the wisdom they cultivated that is then shared with the Students that helps them to progress in their journey to Enlightenment. This is the “mutual support” that The Buddha envisioned and created during his lifetime.

To be a good Teacher, one first needs to be a really great Student.

Through the work of being a very deep Student, a Teacher is then best prepared to be able to share these Teachings with Students to help them learn, reflect, and practice towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

A Teacher should have a well developed practice of generosity, in that, they are giving and sharing The Teachings of The Buddha without asking for anything in return. They should have no expectations of their Students and focus on sharing The Teachings with all those who have a sincere interest in learning and growing on The Path to Enlightenment.

Generosity is a significant aspect of practice that one needs to develop in order to attain Enlightenment. An individual would be unable to attain Enlightenment without a well developed practice of “generosity”.

Generosity is a readiness and taking the action of frequently giving something more than is strictly necessary, such as time, effort, energy, financial support, or resources without any expectation of anything in return. A practice of giving and helping others as part of an ongoing and comprehensive life practice. This action

can help you develop and cultivate a more caring and compassionate mind as one chooses to consistently give and share through their life to eliminate selfishness. Generosity eliminates craving/desire/attachment in the mind, thus, helping to eliminate discontent feelings from the mind.

Generosity without judgment or expectation of anything in return is a practice that can transform the mind in ways you never thought possible.

Students are focused on living a household life where they do have certain possessions, a career, and other aspects of worldly life. As a Student progresses forward in life, due to pollutions of mind, they will face various struggles, difficulties, and challenges. Due to the lack of wisdom of The Natural Laws of Existence, a Student will experience various challenges in life that they find difficult to overcome and it is The Teachings of The Buddha that will guide them to an improve condition of mind and life.

Because a Teacher has given up their worldly life to focus on sharing Teachings with Students, Students will then provide support to their Teacher to assist them in sustaining their life and to be able to offer these Teachings to them and others throughout the world.

In this way, there is “mutual support”.

The Teachers are sharing The Teachings of The Buddha to help their Students improve their life and Students are providing life sustaining resources that support the Teacher to sustain life and acquire the needed resources to offer these Teachings to them and others.

Without this mutual support, the entire Path to Enlightenment would collapse as we see today in many parts of the world. We would find that it would be utterly difficult for anyone to get to Enlightenment without this system of mutual support.

There would not be the ability for Teachers to deeply develop their understanding and practice of these Teachings while practicing generosity by sharing The Teachings and Students would not have the ability to develop their mind by learning and practicing these Teachings while practicing generosity to support the continued sharing of these Teachings. Essentially, people would be “stuck” and unable to progress to Enlightenment because the entire system of “mutual support” would break down and there would not be the practice of generosity for Teachers and Students to get closer to Enlightenment.

If Teachers charged money for their services, they would not be practicing generosity. If Students are paying a fee for classes, courses, and retreats, they would not be practicing generosity. Therefore, without this regular and ongoing practice of generosity where Teachers are regularly sharing Teachings and Students are regularly sharing their time, effort, energy, and resources to help the Teachers continue to share The Teachings, the system of mutual support would not exist, individuals would not be practicing generosity, people would not be getting to Enlightenment, and The Path to Enlightenment would completely and entirely collapse.

This would leave the world without the needed Teachings of The Buddha to improve society and, thus, help all of humanity evolve to a higher consciousness where we are loving, kind, and gentle to each other while being able to acquire a peaceful and joyful mind and life.

Therefore, it is important that we do not think of it as Ordained Practitioners, including Teachers, are “begging for food”, because to “beg” would be to have craving/desire/attachment while pleading with Students to give them something. This is not what The Buddha taught as Practitioners are guided to “await what is given” rather than to have expectations that something will be given or to beg for something to be given.

Instead, The Path to Enlightenment is based on “mutual support” and through this mutual support, there will be Teachers in a Community who are interested and willing to teach based in loving-kindness, compassion, and generosity while there will be Students who have a sincere interest to learn and are willing to practice generosity to support the continued sharing of these Teachings.

In this way, Teachers have the ability to develop and Students will have Teachers available to help them develop.

If we appreciate, value, and respect Teachers who offer these Teachings at no cost, then Students will need to do their part to provide the needed support for a Teacher to exist in the world through providing the basic necessities to sustain life and resources to support the continued sharing of these Teachings.

If a Teacher is practicing in the way that is needed to share these Teachings into the world, they would use a portion of the offerings (i.e. donations) to sustain their life with food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical care and also allocate a certain amount of the resources provided by their Students towards improving their ability to share these Teachings. In modern times, this might include any of the following:

- Website
- Video Conferencing Membership
- Computers, Lights, Microphone, and equipment to share The Teachings.
- Meditation Cushions and Chairs
- Classroom Supplies (carpets, water, cups, bathroom supplies, white board, markers, etc.)
- Signage Advertising Classes
- Transportation to and from classes, courses, retreats, and appointments with Students.

While a Teacher may offer their classes and other programs for FREE, it is not free for a Teacher to offer their Teachings. A Teacher will need support on a continuous and ongoing basis to be able to continuously share The Teachings of The Buddha.

By supporting a Teacher to share The Teachings of The Buddha, you are supporting your ability to learn The Teachings and the ability of others to learn The Teachings while training the mind to eliminate craving/desire/attachment, the cause of discontentedness.

But, a Teacher (i.e. Ordained Practitioner) is not begging nor should they ever have an expectation of their Students to make offerings.

By a Teacher sharing their Teachings without any cost for the Student, this makes The Teachings of The Buddha available to the widest audience possible and removes any potential financial obstacle that may or may not exist for a Student. These Teachings are to help an individual rise above and move beyond the daily struggles and difficulties in

their life. Many of those struggles and difficulties will hinder an individual from financial success.

If a Teacher offered their Teachings at a price for classes, courses, or retreats, an individual who is struggling with finances due to their lack of wisdom of these Teachings, would be unable to access the very solution to the struggles they face. The very Teachings they need to overcome the financial roadblocks would be inaccessible to them because there is a certain fee that is required to learn the wisdom they need to achieve improved financial success and other life successes in personal and professional relationships. Essentially, they would be “stuck” in the financial difficulties without the ability to ever learn and practice The Teachings they need to overcome their struggles in life.

Therefore, a Teacher needs to function without any selfish desires or attachment to financial success. A Teacher needs to be willing and able to offer their Teachings at “no cost”. If they assign a cost to their Teachings, there would be countless beings who would be left behind due to their inability to pay for the classes, courses, and retreats that they need in order to acquire the needed wisdom to overcome their struggles and difficulties in life.

If you decide to support Teachers, Ordained Practitioners, and/or Temples, you are providing the needed resources to make these Teachings available to you and many others in the world. And, you are developing your practice of “generosity” to develop and enhance the mind towards the attainment of Enlightenment by eliminating craving/desire/attachment, the cause of discontent feelings, thus, helping to eliminate discontent feelings from the mind.

Do keep in mind, that a Teacher, Ordained Practitioner, and/or Temple should not expect, ask, nor beg for support. Instead, they would just give and share allowing their Students to also give and share.

In this way, the system of mutual support, wisely created by The Buddha during his lifetime, continues with Teachers and Students progressing towards Enlightenment through the practice of “generosity” to acquire “merit”. Through a regular, consistent, and ongoing practice of “generosity” by both Teachers and Students, The Path to Enlightenment is fully intact and accessible to “all beings”.

To learn more about producing wholesome Kamma through practicing generosity, see the books titled “The Natural Law of Kamma” (Volume 6) and “Generosity” (Volume 13) of this same book series.

Chapter 53

The Unobtainable

Monks, there are these five situations that are unobtainable by an Ascetic or a Brahmin, by a heavenly being, Māra, or Brahmā (God), or by anyone in the world.

What five?

(1) May what is subject to old age not grow old!: this is a situation that is unobtainable by an Ascetic or a Brahmin, by a heavenly being, Māra, or Brahmā (God), or by anyone in the world.

(2) May what is subject to illness not fall ill!: this is a situation that is unobtainable by an Ascetic or a Brahmin, by a heavenly being, Māra, or Brahmā (God), or by anyone in the world.

(3) May what is subject to death not die!': this is a situation that is unobtainable by an Ascetic or a Brahmin, by a heavenly being, Māra, or Brahmā (God), or by anyone in the world.

(4) May what is subject to destruction not be destroyed!: this is a situation that is unobtainable by an Ascetic or a Brahmin, by a heavenly being, Māra, or Brahmā (God), or by anyone in the world.

(5) May what is subject to loss not be lost!: this is a situation that is unobtainable by an Ascetic or a Brahmin, by a heavenly being, Māra, or Brahmā (God), or by anyone in the world.

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(1) Monks, for the uninstructed worldling, what is subject to old age grows old. When this happens, he does not reflect thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to old age grows old. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to old age grows old.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to old age grows old, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to old age grows old, he sorrows, grows weak, grieves, weeps beating his breast, and becomes confused.

This is called an uninstructed worldling pierced by the poisonous dart of sorrow who only torments himself.

(2) Again, for the uninstructed worldling, what is subject to illness falls ill. When this happens, he does not reflect thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to illness falls ill. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to illness falls ill.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to illness falls ill, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to illness falls ill, he sorrows, grows weak, grieves, weeps beating his breast, and becomes confused.

This is called an uninstructed worldling pierced by the poisonous dart of sorrow who only torments himself.

(3) Again, for the uninstructed worldling, what is subject to death dies. When this happens, he does not reflect thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to death dies. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to death dies.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to death dies, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to death dies, he sorrows, grows weak, grieves, weeps beating his breast, and becomes confused.

This is called an uninstructed worldling pierced by the poisonous dart of sorrow who only torments himself.

(4) Again, for the uninstructed worldling, what is subject to destruction is destroyed. When this happens, he does not reflect thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to destruction is destroyed. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to destruction is destroyed.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to destruction is destroyed, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to destruction is destroyed, he sorrows, grows weak, grieves, weeps beating his breast, and becomes confused.

This is called an uninstructed worldling pierced by the poisonous dart of sorrow who only torments himself.

(5) Again, for the uninstructed worldling, what is subject to loss is lost. When this happens, he does not reflect thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to loss is lost. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to loss is lost.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to loss is lost, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to loss is lost, he sorrows, grows weak, grieves, weeps beating his breast, and becomes confused.

This is called an uninstructed worldling pierced by the poisonous dart of sorrow who only torments himself.

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(1) Monks, for the instructed Noble Disciple, what is subject to old age grows old. When this happens, he reflects thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to old age grows old. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to old age grows old.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to old age grows old, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to old age grows old, he does not sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating his breast, and become confused.

This is called an instructed Noble Disciple who has drawn out the poisonous dart of sorrow pierced by which the uninstructed worldling only torments

himself. Sorrowless, without darts, the Noble Disciple realizes Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(2) Again, for the instructed Noble Disciple, what is subject to illness falls ill. When this happens, he reflects thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to illness falls ill. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to illness falls ill.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to illness falls ill, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to illness falls ill, he does not sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating his breast, and become confused.

This is called an instructed Noble Disciple who has drawn out the poisonous dart of sorrow pierced by which the uninstructed worldling only torments himself. Sorrowless, without darts, the Noble Disciple realizes Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(3) Again, for the instructed Noble Disciple, what is subject to death dies. When this happens, he reflects thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to death dies. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to death dies.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to death dies, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to death dies, he does not sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating his breast, and become confused.

This is called an instructed Noble Disciple who has drawn out the poisonous dart of sorrow pierced by which the uninstructed worldling only torments himself. Sorrowless, without darts, the Noble Disciple realizes Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(4) Again, for the instructed Noble Disciple, what is subject to destruction is destroyed. When this happens, he reflects thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to destruction is destroyed. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to destruction is destroyed.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to destruction is destroyed, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to destruction is destroyed, he does not sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating his breast, and become confused.

This is called an instructed Noble Disciple who has drawn out the poisonous dart of sorrow pierced by which the uninstructed worldling only torments himself. Sorrowless, without darts, the Noble Disciple realizes Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

(5) Again, for the instructed Noble Disciple, what is subject to loss is lost. When this happens, he reflects thus: I am not the only one for whom what is subject to loss is lost. For all beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, what is subject to loss is lost.

If I were to sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating my breast, and become confused when what is subject to loss is lost, I would lose my appetite and my features would become ugly. I would not be able to do my work, my enemies would be elated, and my friends would become saddened.

Thus, when what is subject to loss is lost, he does not sorrow, grow weak, grieve, weep beating his breast, and become confused.

This is called an instructed Noble Disciple who has drawn out the poisonous dart of sorrow pierced by which the uninstructed worldling only torments himself. Sorrowless, without darts, the Noble Disciple realizes Nibbāna (Enlightenment).

These, Monks, are the five situations that are unobtainable by an Ascetic or a Brahmin, by a heavenly being, Māra, or Brahmā (God), or by anyone in the world.

It is not by sorrowing and grieving
that even the least good here can be gained.
Knowing that one is sorrowful and sad,
one's enemies are elated.

When the wise person does not shake in adversities,
knowing how to determine what is good,
his enemies are saddened, having seen
that his former facial expression does not change.

Wherever one might gain one's good,
in whatever way — by chanting, recitations,
fine sayings, generosity, or tradition — there
one should exert oneself in just that way.

But if one should understand: This good
cannot be obtained by me or anyone else,
one should accept the situation without sorrowing,
thinking: The Kamma is strong; what can I do now?

(Reference: AN 5.48)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares The Universal Truth of Impermanence as it relates to old age, illness, death, destruction, and loss.

He explains how an uninstructed worldling, does not understand as it truly is, how they are not the only one who is subject to The Universal Truth of Impermanence.

An uninstructed worldling is a person who is not learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to train the mind on The Path to Enlightenment.

An instructed Noble Disciple is a Practitioner of The Buddha's Teachings who is deeply learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings.

When one sorrows over old age, the uninstructed worldling thinks that it is only happening to them. When one experiences illness, death, destruction, or loss, the uninstructed worldling thinks that it is only happening to them increasing the mind's sorrow, grief, and displeasure.

When there is no more confusion of mind and one can understand true reality, they understand that The Universal Truth of Impermanence applies to all conditioned objects.

Instead, we are all experiencing the same Universal Truth of Impermanence but, the uninstructed worldling does not understand with wisdom, that true reality is, everyone is experiencing these same things. Rather than allow the mind to crave/desire permanence, the mind of a wise Practitioner can observe that The Universal Truth of Impermanence is affecting all conditioned objects. Therefore, they will then train the mind to not crave or cling to them expecting permanence. In doing so, one can liberate the mind from strong feelings to experience Enlightenment, no longer bound by and shaken up by discontentedness.

Chapter 54

Four Things Wished for, Desired, Agreeable, and Rarely Gained in the World

Householder, there are these four things that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and rarely gained in the world.

What four?

One thinks: May **wealth** come to me righteously!

This is the first thing in the world that is wished for, desired, agreeable, and rarely gained in the world.

Having gained wealth righteously, one thinks: May **fame** come to me and to my relatives and preceptors!

This is the second thing in the world that is wished for, desired, agreeable, rarely gained in the world.

Having gained wealth righteously and having gained fame for oneself and for one's relatives and preceptors, one thinks: May I **live long** and enjoy a long life span!

This is the third thing in the world that is wished for, desired, agreeable, rarely gained in the world.

Having gained wealth righteously, having gained fame for oneself and for one's relatives and preceptors, living long and enjoying a long life span, one thinks: With the breakup of the body, after death, **may I be reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world!**

This is the fourth thing in the world that is wished for, desired, agreeable, rarely gained in the world.

These are the four things that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and rarely gained in the world.

There are, Householder, four (other) things that lead to obtaining those four things.

What four?

Accomplishment in confidence,
Accomplishment in virtuous behavior,
Accomplishment in generosity, and
Accomplishment in wisdom.

And what, Householder, is accomplishment in confidence?

Here, a Noble Disciple is endowed with confidence: he places confidence in the Enlightenment of The Tathāgata thus: The Perfectly Enlightened One is an Arahant, Perfectly Enlightened, accomplished in true wisdom and conduct, fortunate knower of the world, unsurpassed trainer of persons to be tamed, Teacher of heavenly beings and humans, the Enlightened One, The Perfectly Enlightened One.

This is called accomplishment in confidence.

And what is accomplishment in virtuous behavior?

Here, a Noble Disciple abstains from the destruction of life, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from sexual misconduct, abstains from false speech, abstains from liquor, wine, and intoxicants (substances that cause heedlessness), the basis for heedlessness.

This is called accomplishment in virtuous behavior.

And what is accomplishment in generosity?

Here, a Noble Disciple resides at home with a mind free from the stain of selfishness, freely generous, openhanded, joyful in relinquishment, devoted to charity, joyful in giving and sharing.

This is called accomplishment in generosity.

And what is accomplishment in wisdom?

If one dwells with a mind overcome by longing and unrighteous sensual desires, one does what should be avoided and neglects one's duty, so that one's fame and peacefulness are spoiled.

If one dwells with a mind overcome by ill will, one does what should be avoided and neglects one's duty, so that one's fame and peacefulness are spoiled.

If one dwells with a mind overcome by complacency, one does what should be avoided and neglects one's duty, so that one's fame and peacefulness are spoiled.

If one dwells with a mind overcome by restlessness and worry, one does what should be avoided and neglects one's duty, so that one's fame and peacefulness are spoiled.

If one dwells with a mind overcome by doubt, one does what should be avoided and neglects one's duty, so that one's fame and peacefulness are spoiled.

When, Householder, a Noble Disciple has understood thus: Longing and unrighteous sensual desires are a defilement of the mind, he abandons them.

When he has understood thus: Ill will is a defilement of the mind, he abandons it.

When he has understood thus: Complacency is a defilement of the mind, he abandons it.

When he has understood thus: Restlessness and worry are a defilement of the mind, he abandons them.

When he has understood thus: Doubt is a defilement of the mind, he abandons it.

When, Householder, a Noble Disciple has understood thus: Longing and unrighteous sensual desires are a defilement of the mind and has abandoned them;

when he has understood thus: Ill will is a defilement of the mind and has abandoned it;

when he has understood thus: Complacency is a defilement of the mind and has abandoned it;

when he has understood thus: Restlessness and worry are a defilement of the mind and has abandoned them;

when he has understood thus: Doubt is a defilement of the mind, and has abandoned it, he is then called a Noble Disciple of great wisdom, of wide wisdom, one who sees the range, one accomplished in wisdom.

This is called accomplishment in wisdom.

These are the four things that lead to obtaining the four things that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and rarely gained in the world.

(Reference: AN 4.61)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares four things that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and rarely gained in the world as well as the four other things that lead to acquiring those four things.

The four things that one might wish for that is desirable, agreeable, and rarely gained are wealth, fame, long life, and a good destination upon rebirth in the heavenly realm. These are the four things that one might wish for that are desirable, agreeable, and rarely gained in the world. Therefore, The Buddha is explaining that not only is it rare to acquire wealth, fame, and a long life but also it is very rare to be reborn into the heavenly world.

Next, The Buddha explains the four things that lead to acquire these four things that are highly desirable.

The four things that lead to acquiring wealth, fame, long life, and a heavenly rebirth are accomplishment in confidence, accomplishment in virtuous behavior, accomplishment in generosity, and accomplishment in wisdom.

The Buddha then goes on to explain these four other things so that one can learn, reflect, and practice them to acquire the four things wished for but rarely acquired.

Through developing your own life practice to have “accomplishment in confidence, virtuous behavior, generosity, and wisdom”, then, you will be better able to make wise decisions within your own life and be able to make wise decisions to develop your life practice leading to the acquiring of wealth, fame, long life, and a heavenly rebirth. Without a Practitioner understanding these Teachings and then practicing them closely, they would be lost and struggle to make wise decisions in their life.

Keep in mind that the ultimate goal of this path is to attain Enlightenment, not wealth, fame, a long life, or a heavenly rebirth. An Enlightened being will not have desire for these things but instead, learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings in a way that eliminates any craving/desire/attachment for these things. Nonetheless, The Buddha’s Teachings on

accomplishment in confidence, accomplishment in virtuous behavior, accomplishment in generosity, and accomplishment in wisdom will also lead on to Enlightenment - along with all of his other Teachings.

(1) First, “accomplishment in confidence”, is described in this Teaching as having confidence in The Buddha as the Fully Perfectly Enlightened One. In multiple other places within his Teachings, he describes having confirmed confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community. Doing so, a Practitioner will then be able to eliminate the fetter/taint/pollution of “doubt” helping them to move the mind into the first Stage of Enlightenment.

Confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community and elimination of the fetter of doubt is developed through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to observe the results as the condition of the mind improves. There is no blind faith nor belief in these Teachings.

Instead, a wise Practitioner will seek guidance with a Teacher to investigate The Teachings and then implement them in daily life to experience the results of the condition of the mind gradually improving. The gradual improvement in the condition of the mind is observable by the Practitioner as they once experienced discontent feelings such as anger which then moves to slight annoyance and then eventually no discontent feelings are experienced whatsoever based on the same situation occurring in one’s life. Observing this gradual decrease in strong feelings to the complete elimination of discontentedness in certain situations, a Practitioner’s confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, and The Community increases, and all doubts are eliminated.

The fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as “doubt” in The Ten Fetters is then completely eliminated and will no longer arise helping to further liberate the mind.

(2) Second, “accomplishment in virtuous behavior (moral conduct)” is described through The Five Precepts. Household Practitioners will typically learn and practice The Five Precepts as basic moral conduct along with developing The Eight Fold Path in its entirety.

The Eight Fold Path is a central and core Teaching on The Path to Enlightenment as shared by Gotama Buddha. The Five Precepts are integrated into The Eight Fold Path providing expanded content to describe Right Speech and Right Action.

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

(3) Third, “accomplishment in generosity” is an important Teaching on The Path to Enlightenment and a remedy to the unEnlightened mind to eliminate craving/desire/attachment.

The problem that is causing the discontent mind is craving/desire/attachment. This is the cause of all discontent feelings. To eliminate this, The Buddha shares exact remedies to transform the unwholesome qualities of craving/desire/attachment using Breathing Mindfulness Meditation and developing a practice of generosity.

A mind that is unable to give and share time, effort, energy, and resources with others would be unable to attain Enlightenment as the mind is selfish. A Practitioner would instead need to train the mind to “reside at home with a mind free of the stain of selfishness, freely generous, open-handed, joyful in letting go, one devoted to charity, joyful in giving and sharing” so that it can let go of any accumulated selfishness recognizing the interconnectivity of all beings.

A Practitioner can accomplish this through daily sharing in some of the most simple or profound ways based on your own personal choices. Sharing of food, water, clothing, shelter, or medical care with others can help improve the ability of others to sustain their life while giving them the opportunity to learn and practice these Teachings. A Practitioner can share their time, effort, and energy to help others in the community supporting the development of wholesome relationships with those around you. One might even consider sharing a smile or a wave, with those who you come into contact with, as a way of “letting go” and practicing loving-kindness and compassion.

Loving-kindness (Pāli: mettā) is active goodwill towards all beings without judgment. A genuine interest in seeing all beings be well.

Compassion (Pāli: karuṇā) is concern for the misfortunes of others.

(4) Fourth, “accomplishment in wisdom” is the ultimate antidote or remedy to the unEnlightened mind. Through learning, reflecting and practicing these Teachings, a Practitioner gains more clarity and insight into the wisdom of these life changing Teachings.

A Practitioner will need to focus on establishing a well developed practice to include the core and central Teachings shared by The Buddha on The Path to Enlightenment.

Those Teachings are:

- A.) The Three Universal Truths
- B.) The Four Noble Truths
- C.) The Eight Fold Path
- D.) The Five Precepts
- E.) The Brahma-viharas
- F.) The Ten Fetters
- G.) The Seven Factors of Enlightenment
- H.) Extensive Meditation Training

(A - H) mentioned in the above are the core and central Teachings that a Practitioner would need to focus on to develop “penetrative wisdom” while seeking guidance from a Teacher. Then, once well established in these Teachings, a Practitioner can gradually move into deepening and expanding their life practice into the full spectrum of Teachings shared by The Buddha. These core and central Teachings will guide a Practitioner in establishing a foundation in these Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment to have “accomplishment in wisdom”.

The Buddha explains that a Practitioner who is “accomplished in wisdom” will understand and eliminate The Five Hindrances of sensual desire, ill will, complacency, restlessness and worry, and doubt. These are The Five Hindrances to Enlightenment and a wise

Practitioner will need to understand these and eliminate them from the mind in order to attain Enlightenment.

If a Practitioner does not eliminate these and stay diligent to eliminate these any time they might arise, one will be hindered from further progress on The Path to 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>

Lastly, while Gotama Buddha shares that “These are the four things that lead to obtaining the four things that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and rarely gained in the world”, it should be made clear that the goal of all Practitioners should be to learn and practice these Teachings in such a way that there are no future lives by attaining Enlightenment. While Gotama Buddha shared what would result in the welfare and peacefulness of a Practitioner in future lives, his ultimate goal was to support Practitioners in the attainment of Enlightenment.

While a Buddha is going to explain what would lead to a better and improved rebirth in future lives, their goal is to assist as many beings as possible to attain Enlightenment eliminating The Cycle of Rebirth so that there are no longer any future rebirths. With that goal in mind, a Buddha also understands that not every Practitioner will attain Enlightenment even in learning and practicing these Teachings directly with an actual Buddha. So, it is important to share Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment that lead to Enlightenment while also explaining what leads to an improved rebirth should a Practitioner not attain Enlightenment.

While a Practitioner may decide to learn and practice these Teachings in this life, should they not attain Enlightenment and need to be reborn, they will have the confidence that their work and effort will lead to an improved existence in this present life and also in future lives. All the work and effort applied in this life will be directly beneficial in this life and in future lives should one not attain Enlightenment in this present life.

The Five Hindrances are Eliminated with The Seven Factors of Enlightenment

Monks, these five hindrances are makers of blindness, causing lack of vision, causing lack of knowledge, detrimental to wisdom, leading to discontentedness, leading away from Enlightenment.

What five?

The hindrance of sensual desire is a maker of blindness ...

The hindrance of ill will ...

The hindrance of complacency ...

The hindrance of restlessness and worry ...

The hindrance of doubt is a maker of blindness ... leading away from Enlightenment.

These five hindrances are makers of blindness, causing lack of vision, causing lack of knowledge, detrimental to wisdom, leading to discontentedness, leading away from Enlightenment.

These Seven Factors of Enlightenment, Monks, are makers of vision, makers of knowledge, promoting the growth of wisdom, free from discontentedness, leading towards Enlightenment.

What seven?

The Enlightenment factor of mindfulness is a maker of vision ...

The Enlightenment factor of investigation is a maker of vision ...

The Enlightenment factor of energy is a maker of vision ...

The Enlightenment factor of joy is a maker of vision ...

The Enlightenment factor of tranquility is a maker of vision ...

The Enlightenment factor of concentration is a maker of vision ...

The Enlightenment factor of equanimity is a maker of vision ... leading towards Enlightenment.

These Seven Factors of Enlightenment are makers of vision, makers of knowledge, promoting the growth of wisdom, free from discontentedness, leading towards Enlightenment.

(Reference: SN 46.40)

Chapter 55

Reappearance in Accordance with One's Objectives

Monks, I shall teach you reappearance in accordance with one's objectives.

Listen and attend closely to what I shall say.

Here, Monks, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He thinks: 'Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of well-to-do Nobles!' ... 'Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of well-to-do Brāhmins!'... 'Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of well-to-do Householders'! He fixes his mind on that, determined upon it, develops it. These objectives and this residing of his, thus developed and cultivated, lead to his reappearance there.

This, Monks, is the path, the way that leads to reappearance there.

Again, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He hears that the gods of the heaven of The Four Great Kings are long-lived, beautiful, and enjoy great happiness. He thinks: 'Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of the gods of the heaven of The Four Great Kings!' He fixes his mind on that, determined upon it, develops it. These objectives and this residing of his, thus developed and cultivated, lead to his reappearance there.

This, Monks, is the path, the way that leads to reappearance there.

Again, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He hears that the gods of the heaven of the Thirty-three ... the Yāma gods ... the gods of the Tusita heaven ... the gods who excite in creating ... the gods who wield power over others' creations are long-lived, beautiful, and enjoy great happiness. He thinks: 'Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of the gods who wield power over others' creations!' He fixes his mind on that, determined upon it, develops it. These objectives and this residing of his, thus developed and cultivated, lead to his reappearance there.

This, Monks, is the path, the way that leads to reappearance there.

Again, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He hears that the Brahmā of a Thousand is long-lived, beautiful, and enjoys great happiness. Now the Brahmā of a Thousand resides determined on permeating a world-system of a thousand worlds, and he resides determined on permeating the beings that have reappeared there. Just as a man with good sight might take a gallnut (plant growth that resembles a nut) in his hand and review it, so the Brahmā of a Thousand resides determined on permeating a world-system of a thousand [worlds], and he resides determined on permeating the beings that have reappeared there. The Monk thinks: 'Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of the Brahmā of a Thousand!' He fixes his mind on that, determined upon it, develops it. These objectives and this residing of his, thus developed and cultivated, lead to his reappearance there.

This, Monks, is the path, the way that leads to reappearance there.

Again, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He hears that the Brahmā of Two Thousand... the Brahmā of Three Thousand ... the Brahmā of Four Thousand... the Brahmā of Five Thousand is long-lived, beautiful, and enjoys great happiness. Now the Brahmā of Five Thousand resides determined on permeating a world-system of five thousand worlds, and he resides determined on permeating the beings that have reappeared here. Just as a man with good sight might take five gallnuts (plant growth that resembles a nut) in his hand and review them, so the Brahmā of Five Thousand resides determined on permeating a world-system of five thousand worlds, and he resides determined on permeating the beings that have reappeared there. The Monk thinks: 'Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of the Brahmā of Five Thousand!' He fixes his mind on that, determined upon it, develops it. These objectives and this residing of his, thus developed and cultivated, lead to his reappearance there.

This, Monks, is the path, the way that leads to reappearance there.

Again, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He hears that the Brahmā of Ten Thousand is long-lived, beautiful, and enjoys great happiness. Now the Brahmā of Ten Thousand resides determined on permeating a world-system of ten thousand worlds, and he resides determined on permeating the beings that have reappeared there. Just as a fine beryl gem (mineral composed of beryllium aluminium cyclosilicate; a rare stone) of purest water, eight-faceted, well cut, lying on red brocade, glows, radiates, and shines, so the Brahmā of Ten Thousand resides determined on permeating a world-system of ten thousand worlds, and he resides determined on permeating the beings that have

reappeared there. The Monk thinks: ‘Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of the Brahmā of Ten Thousand!’ He fixes his mind on that, determined upon it, develops it. These objectives and this residing of his, thus developed and cultivated, lead to his reappearance there.

This, Monks, is the path, the way that leads to reappearance there.

Again, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He hears that the Brahmā of a Hundred Thousand is long-lived, beautiful, and enjoys great happiness. Now the Brahmā of a Hundred Thousand resides determined on permeating a world-system of a hundred thousand worlds, and he resides determined on permeating the beings that have reappeared there. Just as an ornament of finest gold, very skillfully created in the furnace by a clever goldsmith, lying on red brocade, glows, radiates, and shines, so the Brahmā of a Hundred Thousand resides determined on permeating a world-system of a hundred thousand worlds, and he resides determined on permeating the beings that have reappeared there. The Monk thinks: ‘Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of the Brahmā of a Hundred Thousand!’ He fixes his mind on that, determined upon it, develops it. These objectives and this residing of his, thus developed and cultivated, lead to his reappearance there.

This, Monks, is the path, the way that leads to reappearance there.

Again, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He hears that the gods of Radiance ... the gods of Limited Radiance ... the gods of Immeasurable Radiance ... the gods of Streaming Radiance ... the gods of Glory... the gods of Limited Glory ... the gods of Immeasurable Glory... the gods of Refulgent Glory... the gods of Great Fruit... the Aviha gods... the Atappa gods... the Sudassa gods ... the Sudassī gods... the Akaniṭṭha gods are long-lived, beautiful, and enjoy great happiness. He thinks: ‘Oh, that on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of the Akaniṭṭha gods!’ He fixes his mind on that, determined upon it, develops it. These objectives and this residing of his, thus developed and cultivated, lead to his reappearance there.

This, Monks, is the path, the way that leads to reappearance there.

Again, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He hears that the gods of the base of infinite space ... the gods of the base of infinite consciousness ... the gods of the base of nothingness ... the gods of the base of neither perception-nor-non-perception are long-lived, long-enduring, and enjoy great happiness. He thinks: ‘Oh, that

on the dissolution of the body, after death, I might reappear in the company of the gods of the base of neither perception-nor-non-perception!’ He fixes his mind on that, determined upon it, develops it. These objectives and this residing of his, thus developed and cultivated, lead to his reappearance there.

This, Monks, is the path, the way that leads to reappearance there.

Again, a Monk possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom. He thinks: ‘Oh, that by realizing for myself with direct knowledge (experience), I might 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!’ And by realizing for himself with direct knowledge (experience), he here and now enters upon and resides in the liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.

Monks, this Monk does not reappear anywhere at all.

(Reference: MN 120)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a human being can develop certain qualities of mind, and in doing so, will lead to rebirth in an improved designation.

Again, it is important to keep in mind that the goal of these Teachings and The Path to Enlightenment is to attain Enlightenment so that there isn’t rebirth. Likewise, the way leading to rebirth in an improved destination is the same path that leads to Enlightenment.

The qualities of mind that The Buddha highlights is confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom.

For a Practitioner to experience an improved designation upon rebirth, The Buddha describes these qualities of mind as important to accomplishing the objective.

Lastly, The Buddha describes that a Practitioner who possesses confidence, virtue (moral conduct), learning, generosity, and wisdom, but sets their objective towards the attainment of Enlightenment, does not reappear anywhere at all. In other words, a being who attains Enlightenment is not reborn.

This is the ultimate goal of The Path to Enlightenment, to eliminate discontentedness and escape The Cycle of Rebirth.

Chapter 56

Who Does Sakka Worship?

Then, Monks, Sakka, Ruler of the Heavenly Beings, descending from the Vejayanta Palace, raised his joined hands in respectful salutation, and worshipped the different quarters. Then Mātali the charioteer addressed Sakka in verse:

These all humbly worship you
Those versed in the Triple Veda,
All the Khattiyas reigning on earth,
The Four Great Kings and the glorious Thirty
So who, O Sakka, is that spirit
To whom you bow in worship?

(Sakka)
These all humbly worship me
Those versed in the Triple Veda,
All the Khattiyas reigning on earth,
The Four Great Kings and the glorious Thirty
But I worship those endowed with virtue,
Those long trained in concentration,
Those who have properly gone forth
With the holy life their destination.

I worship as well, O Mātali,
Those Household Practitioners making merit,
The Household Practitioners possessed of virtue
Who righteously maintain a wife.

(Mātali)
Those whom you worship, my Ruler Sakka,
Are indeed the best in the world.
I too will worship them
Those whom you worship, Sakka.

(The Perfectly Enlightened One)
Having given this explanation,
Having worshipped the different quarters,
The heavenly being - King Maghavā, Sujā's husband,
The chief, climbed into his chariot.

(Reference: SN 11.18)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that Sakka, Ruler of the Heavenly Beings, worships Household Practitioners who make merit, are practicing virtuous moral conduct, and maintain a life partner with loyalty.

Then, Mātali, a driver for a chariot says that they “are indeed the best in the world” and that he “too will worship” Household Practitioners meeting those same qualities of making merit, practicing virtuous moral conduct, and maintaining a life partner with loyalty.

Chapter 57

Truly Favorable and Optimistic

Monks, those beings who engage in wholesome conduct by body, speech, and mind in the morning have a good morning.

Those beings who engage in wholesome conduct by body, speech, and mind in the afternoon have a good afternoon.

And those beings who engage in wholesome conduct by body, speech, and mind in the evening have a good evening.

Truly favorable and optimistic, a peaceful daybreak and a joyful rising, a precious moment and a cheerful hour will come for those who offer alms (a donation) to those leading the spiritual life.

(Reference: AN 3.155)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how individuals who practice wholesome moral conduct in the morning, afternoon, and evening by body, speech, and mind, will have a good morning, afternoon, and evening.

If one understands and practices wholesome moral conduct and understands The Natural Law of Kamma, all worries and fears can be eliminated.

By knowing that you are not causing any harm to any being through your moral conduct of body, speech, and mind, then there is no harm that will come to you.

Through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings described in detailed as part of The Eight Fold Path and all the other Teachings that connect into The Eight Fold Path, a Practitioner will gradually improve the condition of the mind and their life. As a Practitioner chooses to no longer cause harm in the world through one's body, speech, and mental conduct, then as the harm one causes diminishes, so will the harm coming back to them. Eventually, as one extinguishes all craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality), no longer making decisions through a polluted mind with The Ten Fetters, then one's mind and life is completely and entirely peaceful.

To accomplish this goal, a Practitioner needs to take it one day at a time and one moment at a time - as detailed in this Teaching.

If one practices wholesome moral conduct in the morning by body, speech, and mind, they will have a good morning.

If one practices wholesome moral conduct in the afternoon by body, speech, and mind, they will have a good afternoon.

If one practices wholesome moral conduct in the evening by body, speech, and mind, they will have a good evening.

Body = Right Action

Speech = Right Speech

Mind = Right Intention

Choosing to take your life one moment at a time through focusing on what needs to be accomplished right now in the present moment, will lead to wholesome results. Rather than, focusing on what the mind "wants" from the past that no longer exists or focusing on what the mind "wants" in the future, instead, just focus on right now - the present moment.

Chapter 58

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,
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 can receive help 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”, “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 59

The Paccorohanī Festival in the Noble One's Discipline (First Discourse)

Now on that occasion, on the Uposatha Day, the Brāhmin Jānussonī stood to one side not far from The Perfectly Enlightened One, with his head washed, wearing a new pair of linen clothes, holding a handful of wet kusa grass. The Perfectly Enlightened One saw him standing there and said to him:

Why is it, Brāhmin, that on the Uposatha Day you stand to one side with your head washed, wearing a new pair of linen clothes, holding a handful of wet kusa grass? What is happening today with the Brāhmin clan?

‘Today, Master Gotama, is the Brāhmin clan’s paccorohanī festival.’

But how, Brāhmin, do the Brāhmins observe the paccorohanī festival?

‘Here, Master Gotama, on the Uposatha Day, the Brāhmins wash their heads and put on a pair of new linen clothes. They then smear the ground with wet cow dung, cover this with green kusa grass, and lie down between the boundary and the fire house. In the course of the night, they get up three times, and with respectful salutation pay homage (respect) to the fire: We descend in honor of the respected one. We descend in honor of the respected one. They offer abundant ghee, oil, and butter to the fire. When the night has passed, they offer excellent food of various kinds to Brāhmins. It is in this way, Master Gotama, that the Brāhmins observe the paccorohanī festival.’

The paccorohanī festival in the Noble One's discipline, Brāhmin, is quite different from the paccorohanī festival of the Brāhmins.

‘But how, Master Gotama, is the paccorohanī festival observed in the Noble One's discipline? It would be good if Master Gotama would teach me The Teachings by explaining how the paccorohanī festival is observed in the Noble One's discipline.’

Well then, Brāhmin, listen and attend closely. I will speak.

(1) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of the destruction of life is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons the destruction of life; he descends from the destruction of life.

(2) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of taking what is not given is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons taking what is not given; he descends from taking what is not given.

(3) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of sexual misconduct is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons sexual misconduct; he descends from sexual misconduct.

(4) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of false speech is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons false speech; he descends from false speech.

(5) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of argumentative speech is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons argumentative speech; he descends from argumentative speech.

(6) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of harsh speech is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons harsh speech; he descends from harsh speech.

(7) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of idle chatter is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons idle chatter; he descends from idle chatter.

(8) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of craving is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus he abandons craving; he descends from craving.

(9) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of anger is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons anger; he descends from anger.

(10) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of ignorance (unknowing of true reality) is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons ignorance; he descends from ignorance.

It is in this way, Brāhmin, that the paccorohanī festival is observed in the Noble One's discipline.

'The paccorohanī festival in the Noble One's discipline, Master Gotama, is quite different from the paccorohanī festival of the Brāhmins. And the paccorohanī festival of the Brāhmins is not worth a sixteenth part of the paccorohanī festival in the Noble One's discipline.'

Excellent, Master Gotama! Excellent, Master Gotama!

Master Gotama has made The Teachings clear in many ways, as though he were turning upright what had been overthrown, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who was lost, or holding up a lamp in the darkness so those with good eyesight can see forms. I now go for refuge to Master Gotama, to The Teachings, and to The Community of Monks. Let Master Gotama consider me a Household Practitioner who from today has gone for refuge for life.'

(Reference: AN 10.119)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the way of practice that he suggests on the Uposatha Day with a Brāhmin.

The Uposatha is an observance where one might choose to pay particularly close attention to one's life practice, ensuring one does not cause any harm through bodily, verbal, and mental conduct. Household Practitioners will oftentimes increase their practice of The Five Precepts by practicing The Eight Precepts during the Uposatha.

The Buddha guided his Students to observe the Uposatha through dedicated practice of The Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment to help invigorate their practice during these special times of the month dedicated to the cleansing of the defiled/polluted mind.

Observing the Uposatha was traditionally done for two to six days each lunar month.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, the average person could understand time through the lunar calendar as the modern day calendar was not yet invented. People understood time based on the lunar schedule and could observe time by just looking into the sky. Today, depending which community one might live and participate in, there are some communities who practice this one day a week based on the modern calendar, or they might still follow the lunar calendar to observe the Uposatha.

The Uposatha is described by The Buddha based on how it is practiced by his own Students - The Noble Ones or The Noble Disciples.

An uninstructed worldling is a person who is not learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to train the mind on The Path to Enlightenment.

An instructed Noble Disciple is a Practitioner of The Buddha's Teachings who is deeply learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings.

Items 1-4 are directly from 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).

Items 5-7 are a further Teaching on Right Speech.

Detailed explanation of Right Speech 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).

Items 8-10 are to eliminate The Three Poisons, The Three Unwholesome Roots, or The Three Fires - all describing the same unwholesome qualities of mind.

Detailed explanation of The Three Poisons: Craving, Anger, and Ignorance 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).

It is important to understand that The Buddha described observing the Uposatha Day in multiple ways, it was not described only in the way detailed within this Chapter. Instead, each additional Teaching is shared in layers, providing further content to deepen one's understanding of his Teachings and how to practice them successfully.

Detailed explanation of The Great Fruit and Benefits of the Noble Ones' Uposatha Observance is available in this same book series found in Chapter 74 of the book "Realms of Existence" (Volume 11).

Chapter 60

The Paccorohanī Festival in the Noble One's Discipline (Second Discourse)

Now on that occasion, on the Uposatha Day, the Brāhmin Jānussonī stood to one side not far from The Perfectly Enlightened One, with his head washed, wearing a new pair of linen clothes, holding a handful of wet kusa grass. The Perfectly Enlightened One saw him standing there and said to him:

Why is it, Brāhmin, that on the Uposatha Day you stand to one side with your head washed, wearing a new pair of linen clothes, holding a handful of wet kusa grass? What is happening today with the Brāhmin clan?

‘Today, Master Gotama, is the Brāhmin clan’s paccorohanī festival.’

But how do the Brāhmins observe the paccorohanī festival?

‘Here, Master Gotama, on the Uposatha Day, the Brāhmins wash their heads and put on a pair of new linen clothes. They then smear the ground with wet cow dung, cover this with green kusa grass, and lie down between the boundary and the fire house. In the course of the night, they get up three times, and with respectful salutation pay homage (respect) to the fire: We descend in honor of the respected one. We descend in honor of the respected one. They offer abundant ghee, oil, and butter to the fire. When the night has passed, they offer excellent food of various kinds to Brāhmins. It is in this way, Master Gotama, that the Brāhmins observe the paccorohanī festival.’

The paccorohanī festival in the Noble One's discipline, Brāhmin, is quite different from the paccorohanī festival of the Brāhmins.

‘But how, Master Gotama, is the paccorohanī festival observed in the Noble One's discipline? It would be good if Master Gotama would teach me The Teachings by explaining how the paccorohanī festival is observed in the Noble One's discipline.’

Well then, Brāhmin, listen and attend closely. I will speak.

(1) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong view is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong view; he descends from wrong view.

(2) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong intention is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong intention; he descends from wrong intention.

(3) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong speech is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong speech; he descends from wrong speech.

(4) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong action is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong action; he descends from wrong action.

(5) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong livelihood is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong livelihood; he descends from wrong livelihood.

(6) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong effort is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong effort; he descends from wrong effort.

(7) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong mindfulness is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong mindfulness; he descends from wrong mindfulness.

(8) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong concentration is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong concentration; he descends from wrong concentration.

(9) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong wisdom is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong wisdom; he descends from wrong wisdom.

(10) Here, Brāhmin, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong liberation is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having

reflected thus, he abandons wrong liberation; he descends from wrong liberation.

It is in this way, Brāhmin, that the paccorohanī festival is observed in the Noble One's discipline.

'The paccorohanī festival in the Noble One's discipline, Master Gotama, is quite different from the paccorohanī festival of the Brāhmins. And the paccorohanī festival of the Brāhmins is not worth a sixteenth part of the paccorohanī festival in the Noble One's discipline.'

Excellent, Master Gotama! Excellent, Master Gotama!

Master Gotama has made The Teachings clear in many ways, as though he were turning upright what had been overthrown, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who was lost, or holding up a lamp in the darkness so those with good eyesight can see forms. I now go for refuge to Master Gotama, to The Teachings, and to The Community of Monks. Let Master Gotama consider me a Household Practitioner who from today has gone for refuge for life.'

(Reference: AN 10.167)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the way of practice that he suggests on the Uposatha Day with a Brāhmin.

The Uposatha is an observance where one might choose to pay particularly close attention to one's life practice, ensuring one does not cause any harm through bodily, verbal, and mental conduct. Household Practitioners will oftentimes increase their practice of The Five Precepts by practicing The Eight Precepts during the Uposatha.

The Buddha guided his Students to observe the Uposatha through dedicated practice of The Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment to help invigorate their practice during these special times of the month dedicated to the cleansing of the defiled/polluted mind.

Observing the Uposatha was traditionally done for two to six days each lunar month.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, the average person could understand time through the lunar calendar as the modern day calendar was not yet invented. People understood time based on the lunar schedule and could observe time by just looking into the sky. Today, depending which community one might live and participate in, there are some communities who practice this one day a week based on the modern calendar, or they might still follow the lunar calendar to observe the Uposatha.

The Uposatha is described by The Buddha based on how it is practiced by his own Students - The Noble Ones or The Noble Disciples.

An uninstructed worldling is a person who is not learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to train the mind on The Path to Enlightenment.

An instructed Noble Disciple is a Practitioner of The Buddha's Teachings who is deeply learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings.

Items 1-10 are directly from The Ten Fold Path.

Detailed explanation of The Ten 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).

It is important to understand that The Buddha described observing the Uposatha Day in multiple ways, it was not described only in the way detailed within this Chapter. Instead, each additional Teaching is shared in layers, providing further content to deepen one's understanding of his Teachings and how to practice them successfully.

Detailed explanation of The Great Fruit and Benefits of the Noble Ones' Uposatha Observance is available in this same book series found in Chapter 74 of the book "Realms of Existence" (Volume 11).

Chapter 61

The Noble Paccorohanī Festival (First Discourse)

Monks, I will teach you the noble paccorohanī festival.

Listen and attend closely. I will speak.

And what, Monks, is the noble paccorohanī festival?

(1) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of the destruction of life is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons the destruction of life; he descends from the destruction of life.

(2) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of taking what is not given is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons the taking of what is not given; he descends from the taking of what is not given.

(3) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of sexual misconduct is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons sexual misconduct; he descends from sexual misconduct.

(4) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of false speech is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons false speech; he descends from false speech.

(5) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of argumentative speech is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons argumentative speech; he descends from argumentative speech.

(6) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of harsh speech is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons harsh speech; he descends from harsh speech.

(7) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of idle chatter is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons idle chatter; he descends from idle chatter.

(8) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of craving is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons craving; he descends from craving.

(9) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of anger is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons anger; he descends from anger.

(10) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of ignorance (unknowing of true reality) is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons ignorance; he descends from ignorance.

This is called the noble paccorohanī festival.

(Reference: AN 10.168)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the way of practice that he suggests on the Uposatha Day with his Students.

The Uposatha is an observance where one might choose to pay particularly close attention to one's life practice, ensuring one does not cause any harm through bodily, verbal, and mental conduct. Household Practitioners will oftentimes increase their practice of The Five Precepts by practicing The Eight Precepts during the Uposatha.

The Buddha guided his Students to observe the Uposatha through dedicated practice of The Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment to help invigorate their practice during these special times of the month dedicated to the cleansing of the defiled/polluted mind.

Observing the Uposatha was traditionally done for two to six days each lunar month.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, the average person could understand time through the lunar calendar as the modern day calendar was not yet invented. People understood time based on the lunar schedule and could observe time by just looking into the sky. Today, depending which community one might live and participate in, there are some communities who practice this one day a week based on the modern calendar or they might still follow the lunar calendar to observe the Uposatha.

The Uposatha is described by The Buddha based on how it is practiced by his own Students - The Noble Ones or The Noble Disciples.

An uninstructed worldling is a person who is not learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to train the mind on The Path to Enlightenment.

An instructed Noble Disciple is a Practitioner of The Buddha's Teachings who is deeply learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings.

Items 1-4 are directly from 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).

Items 5-7 are a further Teaching on Right Speech.

Detailed explanation of Right Speech 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).

Items 8-10 are to eliminate The Three Poisons, The Three Unwholesome Roots, or The Three Fires - all describing the same unwholesome qualities of mind.

Detailed explanation of The Three Poisons: Craving, Anger, and Ignorance 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).

It is important to understand that The Buddha described observing the Uposatha Day in multiple ways, it was not described only in the way detailed within this Chapter. Instead, each additional Teaching is shared in layers, providing further content to deepen one’s understanding of his Teachings and how to practice them successfully.

Detailed explanation of The Great Fruit and Benefits of the Noble Ones’ Uposatha Observance is available in this same book series found in Chapter 74 of the book “Realms of Existence” (Volume 11).

Chapter 62

The Noble Paccorohanī Festival (Second Discourse)

Monks, I will teach you the noble paccorohanī festival.

Listen and attend closely. I will speak.

And what, Monks, is the noble paccorohanī festival?

(1) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong view is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong view; he descends from wrong view.

(2) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong intention is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong intention; he descends from wrong intention.

(3) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong speech is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong speech; he descends from wrong speech.

(4) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong action is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong action; he descends from wrong action.

(5) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong livelihood is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong livelihood; he descends from wrong livelihood.

(6) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong effort is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong effort; he descends from wrong effort.

(7) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong mindfulness is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong mindfulness; he descends from wrong mindfulness.

(8) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong concentration is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected

thus, he abandons wrong concentration; he descends from wrong concentration.

(9) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong wisdom is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong wisdom; he descends from wrong wisdom.

(10) Here, the Noble Disciple reflects thus: The result of wrong liberation is unwholesome both in this present life and in future lives. Having reflected thus, he abandons wrong liberation; he descends from wrong liberation.

This is called the noble paccorohanī festival.

(Reference: AN 10.168)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the way of practice that he suggests on the Uposatha Day with his Students.

The Uposatha is an observance where one might choose to pay particularly close attention to one's life practice, ensuring one does not cause any harm through bodily, verbal, and mental conduct. Household Practitioners will oftentimes increase their practice of The Five Precepts by practicing The Eight Precepts during the Uposatha.

The Buddha guided his Students to observe the Uposatha through dedicated practice of The Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment to help invigorate their practice during these special times of the month dedicated to the cleansing of the defiled/polluted mind.

Observing the Uposatha was traditionally done for two to six days each lunar month.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, the average person could understand time through the lunar calendar as the modern day calendar was not yet invented. People understood time based on the lunar schedule and could observe time by just looking into the sky. Today, depending which community one might live and participate in, there are some communities who practice this one day a week based on the modern calendar or they might still follow the lunar calendar to observe the Uposatha.

The Uposatha is described by The Buddha based on how it is practiced by his own Students - The Noble Ones or The Noble Disciples.

An uninstructed worldling is a person who is not learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to train the mind on The Path to Enlightenment.

An instructed Noble Disciple is a Practitioner of The Buddha's Teachings who is deeply learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings.

Items 1-10 are directly from The Ten Fold Path.

Detailed explanation of The Ten 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).

It is important to understand that The Buddha described observing the Uposatha Day in multiple ways, it was not described only in the way detailed within this Chapter. Instead, each additional Teaching is shared in layers, providing further content to deepen one's understanding of his Teachings and how to practice them successfully.

Detailed explanation of The Great Fruit and Benefits of the Noble Ones' Uposatha Observance is available in this same book series found in Chapter 74 of the book "Realms of Existence" (Volume 11).

Chapter 63

Responsibilities of a Teacher

Monks, when a cattle worker possesses eleven factors, he is capable of keeping and caring for a herd of cattle.

What eleven?

Here a cattle worker has wisdom of form, he is skilled in characteristics, he removes flies' eggs, he dresses wounds, he smokes out the sheds, he knows the watering place, he knows what it is to have drunk, he knows the road, he is skilled in pastures, he does not milk dry, and he shows extra veneration to those bulls who are fathers and leaders of the herd.

When a cattle worker possesses these eleven factors, he is capable of keeping and caring for a herd of cattle.

So too, Monks, when a Monk possesses these eleven qualities, he is capable of growth, increase, and maturity in The Teachings and Discipline.

What eleven?

Here a Monk has wisdom of form, he is skilled in characteristics, he removes flies' eggs, he dresses wounds, he smokes out the sheds, he knows the watering place, he knows what it is to have drunk, he knows the road, he is skilled in pastures, he does not milk dry, and he shows extra veneration to those elder Monks of long-standing who have long gone forth, the fathers and leaders of The Community.

And how is a Monk skilled in characteristics?

Here, a Monk understands as it really is thus: 'An unwise person is characterized by his actions; a wise person is characterized by his actions.'

It is in this way that a Monk is skilled in characteristics.

And how does a Monk smoke out the sheds?

Here, a Monk teaches The Teachings to others in detail as he has heard it and learned it.

It is in this way that a Monk smokes out the sheds.

And how does a Monk know the watering place?

Here, from time to time a Monk approaches those Monks who are learned, heirs to the heritage, experts on The Teachings, experts on the discipline, experts on the outlines, and inquires of them: 'How is this, Venerable Sir? What is the meaning of this?' Those Venerable Ones then disclose to him what has not been disclosed, clear up what is obscure, and dispel his perplexity about numerous perplexing points.

It is in this way that a Monk knows the watering place.

And how does a Monk know what it is to have drunk?

Here, when The Teachings and discipline proclaimed by the Tathāgata is being taught, a Monk gains inspiration in the meaning, gains inspiration in The Teachings, gains joy connected with The Teachings.

It is in this way that a Monk knows what it is to have drunk.

And how does a Monk know the road?

Here, a Monk understands The Noble Eight Fold Path as it really is.

It is in this way that a Monk knows the road.

And how is a Monk skilled in pastures?

Here, a Monk understands The Four Foundations of Mindfulness as they really are.

It is in this way that a Monk is skilled in pastures.

And how does a Monk not milk dry?

Here, when dedicated Household Practitioners invite a Monk to take robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines and provisions for the sick, a Monk is moderate in accepting donations.

It is in this way that a Monk does not milk dry.

And how does a Monk show extra veneration to those elder Monks of long-standing who have long gone forth, the fathers and leaders of The Community?

Here, a Monk maintains bodily, verbal, and mental acts of loving-kindness both openly and privately toward those elder Monks of long-standing who have long gone forth, the fathers and leaders of The Community.

It is in this way that a Monk shows extra veneration to those elder Monks of long-standing who have long gone forth, the fathers and leaders of The Community.

Possessing these eleven qualities, a Monk is capable of growth, progress, and fulfillment in these Teachings and discipline.

(Here only eight of the eleven factors are shared as these eight apply to 'Generosity and Gratitude'. See the included reference for the entire Teaching.)

(Reference: AN 11.17)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares aspects of an Ordained Practitioner's, or Teacher's, life practice that need to be developed to be able to grow, progress, and fulfill their role within these Teachings and discipline.

And how is a Monk skilled in characteristics?

A Practitioner needs to understand what qualities are wholesome and unwholesome so that one can actively apply energy and effort to cultivate the wholesome and eliminate the unwholesome. And, it is not just one's speech but also one's actions that determine their character.

Through improving one's bodily, verbal, and mental conduct through practicing wholesome conduct, one will experience beneficial outcomes in their life.

A Teacher is a role model for their Students and through practicing wholesome moral conduct, their Students are able to model this conduct within their own practice. Without a Teacher deeply learning The Teachings, they would have no ability to practice these Teachings to cultivate the mind and their Students would not have a well developed Teacher, who is their leader, to model their life practice.

And how does a Monk smoke out the sheds?

A Teacher should share The Teachings in the way that they were shared with them and led to their Enlightenment. There is no situation or circumstance where a Teacher should change The Teachings of The Buddha. Instead, they should deeply learn with The Words of The Buddha, reflect on The Teachings, and practice The Teachings.

As one observes the condition of the mind and their life gradually improving, they will know the truth and acquire deep wisdom.

To be able to share these Teachings in a way that will produce Enlightenment for countless individuals, these Teachings need to be shared in the way that The Buddha shared them. There should be nothing added or taken away unless that is done by a new Buddha.

By sharing The Teachings in this way, we can ensure that countless generations will be able to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to progress to Enlightenment. The entire world can attain Enlightenment through being guided by the life affirming wisdom of The Buddhas who awakened to Enlightenment through their own independent journey, dedicated the remaining time of their life to sharing these Teachings guiding countless Practitioners to Enlightenment, and leaving these Teachings in a condition that they could be continually shared, guiding countless more Practitioners to Enlightenment.

It is The Teachings of a Buddha that lead to Enlightenment, not modifications that are made after their death.

And how does a Monk know the watering place?

A Teacher will need to continue their learning and development on The Path to Enlightenment for their entire life. To be a wise and effective Teacher, one needs to first be a highly developed Practitioner. Without a well developed practice of these Teachings that lead to Enlightenment, one would be incapable of guiding others to Enlightenment as a Teacher.

Therefore, one needs to continually seek guidance from their own Teacher to develop their life practice and develop their ability to share these Teachings in beneficial ways that help others attain Enlightenment.

A Teacher should never share anything that they do not know is 100% the truth through development of their own practice and independent verification of the truth. This may include the need to share with a Student that you do not know the answer to their question and will get back with them after you consult with your own Teacher. If there is no conceit in the mind or one is practicing towards the elimination of conceit, "I do not know" is a valid answer.

Sharing untruthful and unverified Teachings would only cause harm to your own mind and the mind of those who choose to learn without reflection and practice to independently verify the truth to acquire wisdom. A Teacher will need to ensure they are not causing harm within their life practice to include, not harming their Students through taking the time, effort, energy, and resources to independently verify any and all Teachings they choose to share. Sharing unverified Teachings would cause harm to Students and the Teacher. A Teacher should consult with their own Teacher anytime they do not know the answer to a question to ensure that they continue to develop their own practice, they are not lying, and that they are not causing harm to their Students.

A Teacher will need the support of their own Teachers, therefore, maintaining healthy relationships with one's Teachers will be required to fully develop one's own life practice to attain Enlightenment and to be able to develop one's abilities to share these Teachings as a Teacher.

And how does a Monk know what it is to have drunk?

A Teacher should be inspired, motivated, enthusiastic, and joyful towards The Teachings of The Buddha. If one is experiencing Enlightenment, this is very easy to do.

The results of the Enlightened mind are beyond anything that one has experienced at any time during their life. The mind is so peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy, it is steady and unshakable. It is a mental state that is completely unknown to an unEnlightened being and as one experiences increased qualities of Enlightenment, inspiration, motivation, enthusiasm, and joy are qualities that fill the mind.

Through practicing inspiration, motivation, enthusiasm, and joy, those around a Teacher will learn to cultivate the qualities of inspiration, motivation, enthusiasm, and joy.

And how does a Monk know the road?

A Teacher will need to deeply understand The Eight Fold Path. An Enlightened being will know The Eight Fold Path inside, outside, backwards, and forwards. They would be able to easily discuss The Eight Fold Path (i.e. The Path to Enlightenment) with anyone who seeks guidance to learn and practice these Teachings.

A wise Teacher will know that it is The Eight Fold Path that guides human and heavenly beings to Enlightenment.

Without a deep understanding and practice of The Eight Fold Path, a Teacher would be unable to attain Enlightenment or guide Students to Enlightenment. The Eight Fold Path is the central and core Teaching of The Buddha and all Teachers will need to know this Teaching inside, outside, backwards, and forwards. The Teachings on The Path to Enlightenment interconnect with The Eight Fold Path in one way or another.

The Eight Fold Path is the map, the guidance, the way leading to the complete end 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).

And how is a Monk skilled in pastures?

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness is part of The Eight Fold Path and is a required Teaching to attain Enlightenment. Without a well developed understanding and practice of The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, a Teacher would be unable to attain Enlightenment or guide Students to Enlightenment.

It is through observation of the mind and developing awareness of the bodily sensations, feelings, condition of the mind, and mental objects that a Practitioner is able to uproot the unwholesome and arise the wholesome to eliminate discontentedness and attain 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).

And how does a Monk not milk dry?

Students will need to support Teachers through offerings and gifts. A Teacher will need to accept offerings and gifts from their Students. But, in doing so, a wise Teacher needs to understand how to ensure they are accepting donations without allowing their Students to exhaust their resources.

Students should be taught the practice of generosity and creating merit, as they would be unable to attain Enlightenment without these practices. But the practice of generosity and creating merit needs to be taught and practiced as part of “the middle way”.

If a Student was to not provide offerings to their Teacher, the mind would retain its selfishness and would not experience Enlightenment. If a Student was to provide excessive offerings to their Teachers beyond their abilities, this would not allow them to conduct their life in a way that provides the needed necessities to sustain their life.

A Teacher needs to understand this approach and provide guidance to Students while also exercising discernment (i.e. wise decisions making) in accepting donations without allowing their Students to exhaust their resources.

A Teacher will oftentimes have well developed knowledge of their Students’ life and lifestyle. One should use this wisdom to guide their Students in how to practice generosity and creating merit ensuring a Student finds “the middle way”.

And how does a Monk show extra veneration to those elder Monks of long-standing who have long gone forth, the fathers and leaders of The Community?

Politeness, kindness, friendliness, and respect are core and central qualities of mind that need to be cultivated by every Practitioner who chooses to progress towards Enlightenment. Practitioners will need to develop the ability to practice these qualities of mind with every individual they come into contact with. An Enlightened being will be polite, kind, friendly, and respectful to everyone at all times. There is no situation or circumstances where an Enlightened being would be impolite, unkind, unfriendly, or disrespectful.

This is possible when a Practitioner eliminates all pollution of mind, and one will need to gradually work in this direction.

A Teacher would find it extremely difficult to share these Teachings and benefit others if their mind was polluted with craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) to include The Ten Fetters. Therefore, a wise Teacher would focus on their own practice ensuring they eradicate all fetters/taints/pollutions of mind through eliminating the defilements.

This includes practicing loving-kindness openly and in private towards all individuals including, senior Ordained Practitioners and senior Household Practitioners. These are

the elders of The Community and will help a Teacher to develop their Community of Practitioners through informal mentorship of newer members to one's Community.

Through a Teacher practicing politeness, kindness, friendliness, respect, and loving-kindness towards all senior members of The Community, these qualities of mind will be developed within The Community among all their Students.

If we treat our elders politely, kindly, friendly, and respectfully, this "supreme wisdom" continues to be developed and cultivated within humanity and we can all experience Enlightenment.

We "win" when we all "win". We do not "win" until everyone attains Enlightenment.

Why Do The Teachings of The Buddha Flourish in Asia?

One of the major reasons we see The Buddha's Teachings flourishing in Asia is due to the high degree of appreciation, gratitude, support, and respect that is given to individuals who choose to share The Teachings of The Buddha.

In order for The Teachings of The Buddha to flourish in the West and all other parts of the world, we will need to look to Asia as a role model for these Teachings to be able to become established and flourish.

Those who choose to share The Teachings of The Buddha, and are doing so in the way that The Buddha taught, have no expectations of their Students. There is nothing that they want from their Students. Instead, the Teachers who share these Teachings are only doing so out of loving-kindness and compassion for others. Teachers are the guiding light that help others to progress to improvements in the condition of the mind and their life. Teachers are the lifeblood that ensures the wisdom of The Buddha can permeate into the world and shine bright for everyone to progress to Enlightenment.

For a Teacher to be successful at helping others progress to Enlightenment, they would need to be close to Enlightenment themselves or actually Enlightened. Without having done the work on their own mind, they would not have the wisdom of how to help others and guide them to Enlightenment.

To get to Enlightenment, an individual would need to have developed appreciation, gratitude, support, and respect for The Teachings. Without these qualities, one would never be able to experience the Enlightened mind.

Through Students choosing to have appreciation, gratitude, and respect for Teachers while providing support to The Teacher and for The Teachings, then The Path to Enlightenment can shine in the world and flourish.

More and more beings will be willing and able to teach. More and more beings can come to understand The Path to Enlightenment and we will observe improvements within our communities as more and more people experience liberation of mind, peace, joy, Enlightenment which includes having love and kindness for "all beings".

Develop the mind to eliminate anger/hatred/ill will towards others. Learn how to “love all beings” regardless of your disagreements, as disagreement is a normal part of life - permanent agreement is not possible.

Choose “peacefulness” over hostility.

Choose “harmony” over division and separation.

Choose to have appreciation, gratitude, and respect towards Teachers and support The Teachings to come into the world for your benefit and the benefit of others.

Living in a world of love and kindness is much more enjoyable than the opposite. Living in Thailand, I have the opportunity to live in a world of love and kindness. I aspire for you to experience what it feels like to live in a world of nothing but love and kindness.

We can only accomplish that goal when there is appreciation, gratitude, and respect for Teachers and support for The Teachings.

Look to Asia as a role model for how they practice appreciation, gratitude, and respect towards Teachers while providing support for The Teachings.

Chapter 64

Who Should You Not Teach and Who Should You Teach

Monks, someone with six features is unable to enter the sure path with regards to skillful qualities, even when listening to the true Teachings.

What six?

When The Teachings and practice proclaimed by The Perfectly Enlightened One is being taught

- (1) they are not interested to listen
- (2) they do not actively listen
- (3) they do not apply effort to understand
- (4) they learn the incorrect meaning
- (5) they ignore the correct meaning
- (6) they adopt views that contradict The Teachings.

Someone with these six features is unable to enter the sure path with regards to skillful qualities, even when listening to the true Teaching.

Someone with six qualities is able to enter the sure path with regards to skillful qualities when listening to the true Teachings.

What six?

When The Teachings and practice proclaimed by The Perfectly Enlightened One is being taught

- (1) they are interested to listen
- (2) they actively listen
- (3) they apply effort to understand
- (4) they learn the correct meaning
- (5) they ignore the incorrect meaning
- (6) they adopt views that match with The Teachings.

Someone with these six qualities is able to enter the sure path with regards to skillful qualities when listening to the true Teachings.

(Reference: AN 6.88)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares in what situation an individual is able to learn The Teachings to make improvements in their life and in what situation an individual is unable to learn The Teachings to make improvements in their life.

If an individual is not interested to listen, does not actively listen, does not apply effort to understand, learns the incorrect meaning, adopts the incorrect meaning, and adopts views that contradict The Teachings, they are unable to develop their life practice. This individual is not a Student. They have not chosen to actively learn, therefore, they will be unable to make progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

However, if an individual is interested to listen, actively listens, applies effort to understand, learns the correct meaning, adopts the correct meaning, and adopts views that match with The Teachings, they are able to develop their life practice. This individual is a Student. They have chosen to actively learn, therefore, they will be able to make progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

It is impossible to force an individual to attain Enlightenment. Each individual needs to choose to learn, reflect (i.e. independently verify), and practice The Teachings of The Buddha to experience improvements to the condition of the mind and their life. Without the willingness to learn, grow, and evolve, an individual would be unable to make improvements on The Path to Enlightenment or progress to Enlightenment.

There is no part of The Path to Enlightenment that involves attempting to force others to make progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

There are a million and one decisions that an individual would need to make in order to progress to Enlightenment. You are unable to force an individual to be a Student of these Teachings or to make progress on The Path to Enlightenment. Therefore, it would be highly unbeneficial to even try and, it would be your own craving/desire/attachment to do so.

Instead, you can invite and welcome people to learn, reflect, and practice. But, the choice to do so or not is up to each individual.

A Teacher needs to ensure they are only sharing Teachings with individuals who have chosen to actively learn and practice to improve the condition of their mind and their life. Then, a person who has chosen to actively listen, learn, and practice could be considered a Student and it would be wise to share these Teachings with them to help them progress to Enlightenment.

Learning Resources for Further Exploration

Youtube Video(s)

(Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 51-64)

<https://youtube.com/live/whRZ-JiCVDc>

Podcast(s)

Ep. 679 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - Lowly Arts - Volume 12 - (Chapter 50-64)

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--679---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---Lowly-Arts---Volume-12---Chapter-51-64-e2jrbdl>

Now that you have completed reading (Volume 12) 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:

Teacher - David Roylance
hello@buddhadailywisdom.com
www.BuddhaDailyWisdom.com

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

Volume 9

The Six Sense Bases

Volume 10

The Buddha's Way

Volume 11

The Realms of Existence

Volume 12

Lowly Arts

Volume 13

Generosity

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