

# THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHA

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## The Path to Enlightenment

Revealing The Hidden



## The Natural Law of Kamma

Volume 6

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# THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHA

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## 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

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## **The Natural Law of Kamma (Volume 6)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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## **Note from Author**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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## **The Problem - The Wisdom of Enlightenment Has Been Lost**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **The Words of The Buddha Book Series**

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

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

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

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

**Daily Wisdom - Walking The Path with The Buddha**

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

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

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



# Preface

## The Natural Law of Kamma

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 To Know About “Action”**



# Chapter 1

## Six Aspects of Kamma to Be Understood

Monks, when it was said: Kamma should be understood; the creation of Kamma should be understood; the diversity of Kamma should be understood; the result of Kamma should be understood; the elimination of the creation of Kamma should be understood; the way leading to the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma should be understood, for what reason was this said?

### **(1) It is volition (choices/decisions), Monks, that I call Kamma.**

For having willed (intentional choices/decisions), one acts by body, speech, or mind.

### **(2) And what is the creation of Kamma?**

Contact is its creation.

### **(3) And what is the diversity of Kamma?**

There is Kamma to be experienced in hell; there is Kamma to be experienced in the animal realm; there is Kamma to be experienced in the realm of afflicted spirits; there is Kamma to be experienced in the human realm; and there is Kamma to be experienced in the heavenly realm.

This is called the diversity of Kamma.

### **(4) And what is the result of Kamma?**

The result of Kamma, I say, is threefold: [to be experienced] in this very life, or in the [next] rebirth, or on some subsequent occasion.

This is called the result of Kamma.

### **(5) And what, Monks, is the elimination of the creation of Kamma?**

With the elimination of contact there is elimination of the creation of Kamma.

**(6) This Noble Eight Fold Path is the way leading to the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma, namely,**

Right View,  
Right Intention,  
Right Speech,  
Right Action,  
Right Livelihood,  
Right Effort,  
Right Mindfulness,  
and Right Concentration.

When, Monks, a Noble Disciple thus understands Kamma, the creation of Kamma, the diversity of Kamma, the result of Kamma, the elimination of the creation of Kamma, and the way leading to the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma, he understands this penetrative spiritual life to be the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma.

When it was said:

Kamma should be understood;  
the creation of Kamma should be understood;  
the diversity of Kamma should be understood;  
the result of Kamma should be understood;  
the elimination of the creation of Kamma should be understood;  
the way leading to the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma should be understood, it is because of this that this was said.

---

(Reference: AN 6.63)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares an overview of The Natural Law of Kamma. It is very clear and straightforward so no further explanation will be provided.

The Path to Enlightenment is entirely based on The Natural Law of Kamma, thus, The Buddha's Teachings are helping one to awaken to this natural law.

The more you learn, reflect on, and develop a life practice based on The Natural Law of Kamma, the more liberated the mind will become.

The goal and objective is to train the mind through The Eight Fold Path and all the associated Teachings to progress towards Enlightenment. Through learning, reflecting, and practicing The Eight Fold Path to include deeply understanding The Natural Law of Kamma, a Practitioner will progress towards experiencing Enlightenment. A Practitioner will need to eliminate all unwholesome Kamma by producing only wholesome Kamma through practicing The Eight Fold Path.

It is suggested that you read Chapter 9 titled "What is Kamma and How Does It Affect Me?" In the book "Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment" (Volume 1) prior to reading this book.

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).

## Chapter 2

### Three Causes for the Origination of Unwholesome Kamma

Monks, there are these three causes for the origination of (unwholesome) Kamma.

What three?

- (1) Craving (Desire/Greed/Attachment) is a cause for the origination of (unwholesome) Kamma;
- (2) Anger (Hatred/Ill Will) is a cause for the origination of (unwholesome) Kamma;
- (3) Ignorance (Delusion/Unknowing of True Reality) is a cause for the origination of (unwholesome) Kamma.

Suppose, Monks, seeds that are intact, unspoiled, not damaged by wind and the sun's heat, fertile, well preserved, were deposited in well-prepared ground in a good field and receive proper rainfall: in this way, those seeds would grow, increase, and mature.

So too, any (unwholesome) Kamma, Monks, created through craving, born of craving, caused by craving, originated by craving, ripens wherever the individual is reborn. Wherever that (unwholesome) Kamma ripens, it is there that one experiences its result, either in this very life, or in the [next] rebirth, or on some subsequent occasion.

So too, any (unwholesome) Kamma created through anger, born of anger, caused by anger, originated by anger, ripens wherever the individual is reborn. Wherever that (unwholesome) Kamma ripens, it is there that one experiences its result, either in this very life, or in the [next] rebirth, or on some subsequent occasion.

So too, any (unwholesome) Kamma created through ignorance born of ignorance, caused by ignorance, originated by ignorance, ripens wherever the individual is reborn. Wherever that (unwholesome) Kamma ripens, it is there that one experiences its result, either in this very life, or in the [next] rebirth, or on some subsequent occasion.

These are the three causes for the origination of (unwholesome) Kamma.

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(Reference: AN 3.34)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the three causes for the origination of unwholesome Kamma. It is craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) that causes all unwholesome Kamma.

Craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) are known as The Three Poisons, The Three Unwholesome Roots, or The Three Fires.

A Practitioner will need to understand The Three Unwholesome Roots to attain Enlightenment as these are the three (3) high-level descriptions of the problems within the unEnlightened mind. It is through eliminating The Three Unwholesome Roots that the mind can experience Enlightenment. In order to eliminate The Three Unwholesome Roots, you will need to understand what they are and their remedies.

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



## Chapter 3

### **Three Causes for the Origination of Unwholesome & Wholesome Kamma (Another Discourse)**

Monks, there are these three causes for the origination of (unwholesome) Kamma.

What three?

- (1) Craving (Desire/Greed/Attachment) arises with reference to things in the past that are the basis for craving and desire.
- (2) Craving (Desire/Greed/Attachment) arises with reference to things in the future that are the basis for craving and desire.
- (3) Craving (Desire/Greed/Attachment) arises with reference to things presently existing that are the basis for craving and desire.

And how, Monks, does craving arise with reference to things in the past that are the basis for craving and desire? One thinks about and mentally examines things in the past that are the basis for craving and desire. As one does so, craving arises. When craving springs up, one is fettered by those things. The mental obsession is what I call the fetter. It is in this way that craving arises with reference to things in the past that are the basis for craving and desire.

And how does craving arise with reference to things in the future that are the basis for craving and desire? One thinks about and mentally examines things in the future that are the basis for craving and desire. As one does so, craving arises. When craving springs up, one is fettered by those things. The mental obsession is what I call the fetter. It is in this way that craving arises with reference to things in the future that are the basis for craving and desire.

And how does craving arise with reference to things presently existing that are the basis for craving and desire? One thinks about and mentally examines things presently existing that are the basis for craving and desire. As one does so, craving arises. When craving springs up, one is fettered by those things. The mental obsession is what I call the fetter. It is in this way that craving arises with reference to things presently existing that are the basis for craving and desire.

These are the three causes for the origination of (unwholesome) Kamma.

There are, Monks, these three causes for the origination of (wholesome) Kamma.

What three?

- (1) Craving (Desire/Greed/Attachment) does not arise with reference to things in the past that are the basis for craving and desire.
- (2) Craving (Desire/Greed/Attachment) does not arise with reference to things in the future that are the basis for craving and desire.
- (3) Craving (Desire/Greed/Attachment) does not arise with reference to things presently existing that are the basis for craving and desire.

And how, Monks, does craving not arise with reference to things in the past that are the basis for craving and desire? One understands the future result of things in the past that are the basis for craving and desire. Having understood the future result, one avoids it. Having avoided it, one becomes free from strong feelings in the mind, and having pierced through with wisdom, one sees. It is in this way that craving does not arise with reference to things in the past that are the basis for craving and desire.

And how, Monks, does craving not arise with reference to things in the future that are the basis for craving and desire? One understands the future result of things in the future that are the basis for craving and desire. Having understood the future result, one avoids it. Having avoided it, one becomes free from strong feelings in the mind, and having pierced through with wisdom, one sees. It is in this way that craving does not arise with reference to things in the future that are the basis for craving and desire.

And how, Monks, does craving not arise with reference to things presently existing that are the basis for craving and desire? One understands the future result of things presently existing that are the basis for craving and desire. Having understood the future result, one avoids it. Having avoided it, one becomes free from strong feelings in the mind, and having pierced through with wisdom, one sees. It is in this way that craving does not arise with reference to things presently existing that are the basis for craving and desire.

These are the three causes for the origination of (wholesome) Kamma.

(Reference: AN 3.112)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how craving/desire/attachment is the cause for the origination of unwholesome and wholesome Kamma in the past, future, and presently.

Craving/desire/attachment is a cause of unwholesome Kamma in the past, future, and presently.

When craving/desire/attachment does not arise in the mind, wholesome Kamma is originated in the past, future, and presently.

As the mind becomes more familiar with The Natural Law of Kamma and how craving/desire/attachment produces unwholesome Kamma, a Practitioner will make wise decisions to eliminate any decisions based in craving/desire/attachment.

A Practitioner can train the mind to make decisions through The Three Wholesome Roots rather than The Three Unwholesome Roots.

## Chapter 4

### Three Causes for the Origination of Wholesome Kamma

Monks, there are these three causes for the origination of (wholesome) Kamma.

What three?

(1) Non-Craving (Generosity) is a cause for the origination of (wholesome) Kamma;

(2) Non-Anger (Loving-kindness) is a cause for the origination of (wholesome) Kamma;

(3) Non-Ignorance (Wisdom) is a cause for the origination of (wholesome) Kamma.

Suppose, Monks, there are seeds that are intact, unspoiled, not damaged by wind and the sun's heat, fertile, well preserved. Then a man would burn them in a fire, reduce them to ashes, and the ashes would blow in a strong wind or let them be carried away by the swift current of a river. In this way, those seeds would be cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated so that they are no more subject to future arising.

So too, any Kamma that is created through non-craving (generosity), born of non-craving, caused by non-craving, originated by non-craving, is abandoned when craving has vanished; it is cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated so that it is no more subject to future arising (of unwholesome Kamma).

So too, any Kamma that is created through non-anger (loving-kindness), born of non-anger, caused by non-anger, originated by non-anger, is abandoned when anger has vanished; it is cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated so that it is no more subject to future arising (of unwholesome Kamma).

So too, any Kamma that is created through non-ignorance (wisdom), born of non-ignorance, caused by non-ignorance, originated by non-ignorance, is abandoned when ignorance has vanished; it is cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated so that it is no more subject to future arising (of unwholesome Kamma).

These, Monks, are the three causes for the origination of (wholesome) Kamma.

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(Reference: AN 3.34)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares three causes for wholesome Kamma. Generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom are The Three Wholesome Roots producing wholesome Kamma.

It is when a Practitioner makes decisions based on generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom that they will produce wholesome results (i.e. Kamma). A Practitioner needs to cultivate these mental qualities in the mind to be able to eliminate The Three Unwholesome Roots so that one can base their decisions on The Three Wholesome Roots.

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

## Chapter 5

### Inconceivable Matters

Monks, there are these four inconceivable matters that one should not try to conceive; one who tries to conceive them would reap either madness or frustration.

What four?

- (1) The experiences of the Buddhas is an inconceivable matter that one should not try to conceive; one who tries to conceive it would reap either madness or frustration.
- (2) The experiences of one in the Jhānas is an inconceivable matter that one should not try to conceive; one who tries to conceive it would reap either madness or frustration.
- (3) The (exact) result of Kamma is an inconceivable matter that one should not try to conceive; one who tries to conceive it would reap either madness or frustration.
- (4) Speculation about the world is an inconceivable matter that one should not try to conceive; one who tries to conceive it would reap either madness or frustration.

These are the four inconceivable matters that one should not try to conceive; one who tries to conceive them would reap either madness or frustration.

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(Reference: AN 4.77)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares four inconceivable matters that one should not try to conceive or understand. Attempting to understand these four inconceivable matters would produce either madness or frustration.

(1) The experiences of the Buddhas is a topic that is not easily or readily understood by the average person, therefore, The Buddha guides Students to not attempt to understand this topic. To deeply understand the experiences of a Buddha, one would need to be a Buddha and through one's experience, they would be able to understand the experiences of a Buddha. But since a Buddha is a rare individual who meets unique criteria, Gotama Buddha shares that if you attempted to understand "the experiences of the Buddhas" it would create either madness or frustration. Since you are not a Buddha, to attempt to understand "the experiences of the Buddhas" would produce only madness or frustration.

(2) The experiences of one in the Jhānas is a topic that is not easily or readily understood by the average person, therefore, The Buddha guides Students to not attempt to understand this topic. To deeply understand the experiences of one in the Jhānas, one would need to be in the Jhānas and through one's experience, they would be able to understand the experiences of being in the Jhānas. The Buddha shares that if you attempted to understand "the experiences of one in the Jhānas" it would create either madness or frustration. If you attempted to understand the Jhānas when you are not in the Jhānas, to attempt to understand "the experiences of one in the Jhānas" would produce only madness or frustration.

(3) The Buddha shares that attempting to understand the exact result of Kamma is a topic that one should not attempt to understand. Attempting to understand this would only create madness or frustration. It is wise for a Practitioner to understand The Natural Law of Kamma and gaining the wisdom to make wise decisions for one's moral conduct and mental discipline. But, if one were to attempt to understand each individual situation and the results, The Buddha shares this would lead to madness or frustration because one cannot determine Kamma to this level of detail.

(4) Speculation about the world such as conspiracy theories or topics that are incapable of being determined as true or untrue would only lead to madness or frustration. A Practitioner who is on The Path to Enlightenment should be interested in discovering the truth to acquire wisdom rather than speculating about what could be, should be, or might be.

If the mind is obsessed with the future and worried about countless eventual outcomes that have not come to be, the mind would experience only madness or frustration. Instead, train the mind to reside in the present moment and when making plans, do so based on tangible information currently available rather than being worried or obsessed about those things not yet known as 100% true. Speculating about what will or will not occur, with an obsessed mind, would lead to only madness or frustration.

Attempting to understand these topics will not lead one further on The Path to Enlightenment and, therefore, The Buddha provided guidance that one should not pursue them. A Practitioner should let go of attempting to understand these "four inconceivable matters" because they would only produce "madness or frustration" not progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

# Kinds of “Action”



## Chapter 6

### Ten Courses of Unwholesome Kamma

Impurity by body, Cunda, is threefold.

Impurity by speech is fourfold.

Impurity by mind is threefold.

#### **And how, Cunda, is impurity by body threefold?**

- (1) Here, someone destroys life. He is murderous, bloody-handed, given to blows and violence, merciless to living beings.
- (2) He takes what is not given. He steals the wealth and property of others in the village or forest.
- (3) He engages in sexual misconduct. He has sexual relations with women who are protected by their mother, father, mother and father, brother, sister, or relatives; who are protected by their Teachings; who have a husband; whose violation entails a penalty; or even with one already engaged.

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

#### **And how, Cunda, is impurity by speech fourfold?**

- (1) Here, someone speaks falsehood. If he is summoned to a council, to an assembly, to his relatives' presence, to his club, or to the court, and questioned as a witness thus: 'So, good man, tell what you know'. Then, not knowing, he says, 'I know,' or knowing, he says, 'I do not know'; not seeing, he says, 'I see', or seeing, he says, 'I do not see!' Thus he knowingly speaks falsehood for his own benefit, or for another's benefit, or for some insignificant worldly benefit.
- (2) He speaks argumentatively. Having heard something here, he repeats it elsewhere in order to divide (those people) from these; or having heard something elsewhere, he repeats it to these people in order to divide (them) from those. Thus he is one who divides those who are united, a creator of divisions, one who enjoys separation, rejoices in separation, finds pleasure in separation, a speaker of words that create separation.

- (3) He speaks harshly. He speaks such words as are rough, hard, hurtful to others, offensive to others, bordering on anger, uncondusive to concentration.
- (4) He indulges in idle chatter. He speaks at an improper time, speaks falsely, speaks what is unbeneficial, speaks opposite to The Teachings and the discipline; at an improper time, he speaks such words as are unwise, unreasonable, rambling, and unbeneficial.

It is in this way that impurity by speech is fourfold.

**And how, Cunda, is impurity by mind threefold?**

- (1) Here, someone is full of longing (craving). He longs (craves) for the wealth and property of others thus: Oh, may what belongs to another be mine!
- (2) He has a mind of ill will and intentions of hate thus: May these beings be slain, slaughtered, cut off, destroyed, or obliterated!
- (3) He holds wrong view (ignorance: unknowing of true reality) and has an incorrect perspective thus: There is nothing given, nothing sacrificed, nothing offered; there is no fruit or result of wholesome and unwholesome actions; there is no this world, no other world; there is no mother, no father; there are no beings spontaneously reborn; there are in the world no Ascetics and Brāhmins of right conduct and right practice who, having realized this world and the other world for themselves by direct knowledge (experience), make them known to others.

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

These, Cunda, are the ten courses of unwholesome Kamma.

...It is because people engage in these ten courses of unwholesome Kamma that hell, the animal realm, the realm of afflicted spirits, and other bad destinations are seen.

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(Reference: AN 10.176)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares “Ten Courses of Unwholesome Kamma” based on impurity of body, speech, and mind.

The origin of all unwholesome Kamma is craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) known as The Three Poisons, The Three Unwholesome Roots, or The Three Fires. But in this Teaching, The Buddha shares more specific guidance to help Practitioners more deeply understand some of the specifics that produce unwholesome Kamma.

This Teaching will help one to further purify their intentions, speech, and actions using The Eight Fold Path as a foundational Teaching.

Body = Right Action

Speech = Right Speech

Mind = Right Intention

This Teaching provides one with detailed guidance of what impurities of body, speech, and mind lead to unwholesome outcomes or results known as unwholesome Kamma.

The Path to Enlightenment is to train the mind to no longer make unwholesome decisions and instead, purify one’s bodily actions, speech or communication, and mind or thoughts. Through deeply understanding and practicing this Teaching along with all the others shared by Gotama Buddha, a Practitioner moves the mind closer to Enlightenment where one is only ever making wholesome decisions producing wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

If you have done any of these in the past, then through training the mind, with a comprehensive approach to improvements in developing a life practice, a Practitioner will “clean up” their life practice experiencing improved results in the condition of the mind and their life.

Through gradual training and gradual practice, one will experience gradual progress observing the condition of the mind becomes more peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy, permanently, through training the mind to attain Enlightenment.

## Chapter 7

### Ten Courses of Wholesome Kamma

Purity by body, Cunda, is threefold.

Purity by speech is fourfold.

Purity by mind is threefold.

#### **And how, Cunda, is purity by body threefold?**

- (1) Here, someone, having abandoned the destruction of life, abstains from the destruction of life. With the rod and weapon laid aside, diligent and kindly, he resides compassionate towards all living beings.
- (2) Having abandoned the taking of what is not given, he abstains from taking what is not given. He does not steal the wealth and property of others in the village or in the forest.
- (3) Having abandoned sexual misconduct, he abstains from sexual misconduct. He does not have sexual relations with women who are protected by their mother, father, mother and father, brother, sister, or relatives; who are protected by their Teachings; who have a husband; whose violation entails a penalty; or even with one already engaged.

It is in this way that purity by body is threefold.

#### **And how, Cunda, is purity by speech fourfold?**

- (1) Here, someone, having abandoned false speech, abstains from false speech. If he is summoned to a council, to an assembly, to his relatives' presence, to his club, or to the court, and questioned as a witness thus: So, good man, tell what you know, then, not knowing, he says, 'I do not know', or knowing, he says, 'I know'; not seeing, he says, 'I do not see,' or seeing, he says, 'I see'. Thus he does not knowingly speak falsehood for his own benefit, or for another's benefit, or for some insignificant worldly benefit.
- (2) Having abandoned argumentative speech, he abstains from argumentative speech. Having heard something here, he does not repeat it elsewhere in order to divide (those people) from these; or having heard something elsewhere, he does not repeat it to these people in order to divide (them) from those. Thus he is one who reunites those who are

divided, a promoter of unity, who enjoys calmness, rejoices in calmness, encourages calmness, a speaker of words that promote calmness.

- (3) Having abandoned harsh speech, he abstains from harsh speech. He speaks such words as are gentle, pleasing to the ear, and lovable, as go to the heart, are courteous, desired by many, and agreeable to many.
- (4) Having abandoned idle chatter, he abstains from idle chatter. He speaks at a proper time, speaks truth, speaks what is beneficial, speaks on The Teachings and the discipline; at a proper time, he speaks such words as are worth recording, reasonable, concise, and beneficial.

It is in this way that purity by speech is fourfold.

### **And how, Cunda, is purity by mind threefold?**

- (1) Here, someone is without longing (craving). He does not long (crave) for the wealth and property of others thus: Oh, may what belongs to another be mine!
- (2) He is of good will (loving-kindness) and his intentions are free of hate thus: May these beings live peacefully, free from hostility, harm, and anxiety!
- (3) He holds Right View (wisdom) and has a correct perspective thus: There is what is given, sacrificed, and offered: there is fruit and result of wholesome and unwholesome actions; there is this world and the other world; there is mother and father; there are beings spontaneously reborn; there are in the world Ascetics and Brāhmins of right conduct and right practice who, having realized this world and the other world for themselves by direct knowledge (experience), make them known to others.

It is in this way that purity by mind is threefold.

These, Cunda, are the ten courses of (wholesome) Kamma.

...It is because people engage in these ten courses of (wholesome) Kamma that the heavenly beings, human beings, and other good destinations are seen.

---

(Reference: AN 10.176)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares “Ten Courses of Wholesome Kamma” based on purity of body, speech, and mind.

The origin of all wholesome Kamma is generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom known as The Three Wholesome Roots. But in this Teaching, The Buddha shares more specific guidance to help Practitioners more deeply understand some of the specifics that produce wholesome Kamma.

This Teaching will help one to further purify their intentions, speech, and actions using The Eight Fold Path as a foundational Teaching.

Body = Right Action

Speech = Right Speech

Mind = Right Intention

This Teaching provides one with detailed guidance of what purities of body, speech, and mind lead to wholesome outcomes or results known as wholesome Kamma.

The Path to Enlightenment is to train the mind to no longer make unwholesome decisions and instead, purify one’s bodily actions, speech or communication, and mind or thoughts. Through deeply understanding and practicing this Teaching along with all the others shared by Gotama Buddha, a Practitioner moves the mind closer to Enlightenment where one is only ever making wholesome decisions producing wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

If you have not done any of these in the past, then through training the mind, with a comprehensive approach to improvements in developing a life practice, a Practitioner will “clean up” their life practice experiencing improved results in the condition of the mind and their life.

Through gradual training and gradual practice, one will experience gradual progress observing the condition of the mind becomes peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy, permanently, through training the mind to attain Enlightenment.

## Chapter 8

### New and Old Kamma

Monks, I will teach you new and old Kamma, the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma, and the way leading to the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma.

Listen to that and attend closely, I will speak.

#### **And what, Monks, is old Kamma?**

The eye is old Kamma, to be seen as generated and created by volition (choices/decisions), as something to be felt. The ear is old Kamma, to be seen as generated and created by volition, as something to be felt. The nose is old Kamma, to be seen as generated and created by volition, as something to be felt. The tongue is old Kamma, to be seen as generated and created by volition, as something to be felt. The body is old Kamma, to be seen as generated and created by volition, as something to be felt. The mind is old Kamma, to be seen as generated and created by volition, as something to be felt.

This is called old Kamma.

#### **And what, Monks is new Kamma?**

Whatever action one does now by body, speech, or mind.

This is called new Kamma.

#### **And what, Monks, is the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma?**

When one reaches liberation through the elimination of (unwholesome) bodily action, verbal action, and mental action, this is called the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma.

#### **And what, Monks, is the way leading to the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma?**

It is this Noble Eight Fold Path; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

Thus, Monks, I have taught old Kamma, I have taught new Kamma, I have taught the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma, I have taught the way leading to the elimination of (unwholesome) Kamma.

Whatever should be done, Monks, by a compassionate Teacher out of compassion for his disciples, aspiring for their welfare, that I have done for you.

These are the feet of trees, Monks these are empty huts.

Meditate, Monks, do not be complacent, lest you regret it later.

This is my instruction to you.

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(Reference: SN 35.146)



In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares Teachings that guide a Practitioner in understanding new and old Kamma as well as the elimination of unwholesome Kamma.

To attain Enlightenment, a Practitioner will need to understand wholesome and unwholesome Kamma as well as new and old Kamma.

Kamma, or The Natural Law of Kamma, refers to the fact that everything in life has a cause and effect or action and result. Essentially, our intentions, speech, and actions, wholesome or unwholesome, have an effect on us. One way to think of Kamma is that Kamma is “the results of our own decisions” or “the effects of our own decisions”.

You may have been exposed to the word “Karma” which is referring to the same natural law but using a different language. Karma is from the Sanskrit language while Kamma is from the Pāli language. The source of Gotama Buddha’s Teachings is in the Pāli language. Those who are learning and practicing these Teachings from The Pāli Canon, the most complete source of Gotama Buddha’s Teachings, will typically use the word “Kamma” instead of “Karma”.

All of Gotama Buddha’s Teachings center on the importance of “not doing any harm”. By doing harm to other beings, we do harm to ourselves because of The Natural Law of Kamma.

If we put out wholesome intentions, speech and actions, wholesomeness will come back to us. With wholesome and pure intentions, speech, actions, and livelihood, we know that our life will be wholesome, calm, steady, and peaceful as we eliminate more and more attachments on our pursuit to Enlightenment.

Likewise, if our intentions, speech, actions, and livelihood are unwholesome, unwholesome things will come back to us. If we harm other beings, through our intentions, speech, actions, or livelihood, harm will return back to us.

Kamma is not necessarily instantaneous or immediate. It may not come back in exactly the same form we put it out in. For example, if we put calm, steady, kind, and polite waves into the world’s seas, that’s what will come back to us. Maybe not immediately, but over time we will see this steadiness and calmness come back to us.

Conversely, if we put out damaging and vicious waves into our world’s seas, then that is what will come back to us. Fierce, strong, and violent waters will create havoc and floods in our life. Kamma is not a system of rewards and punishments but instead a natural law of “cause and effect” or “action and results” - the results of our decisions.

Kamma does not need to be feared. The Natural Law of Kamma needs to be understood so that we can make wise choices in our life that lead to a more peaceful mind and a more peaceful existence for us individually and all of humanity.

There is no fear in these Teachings and there is no fear in Kamma.

The only one who fears Kamma is the person who does not understand The Natural Law of Kamma and is unable to make wise decisions that would lead to a more peaceful existence.

The more you learn and practice The Teachings of Gotama Buddha, the more awakened the mind will become to The Natural Law of Kamma and the better decisions one can make. This will result in a more peaceful existence to include a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy.

Gotama Buddha's Teachings are guiding you in understanding this Natural Law of Kamma to awaken the mind to better life choices that lead to an improved existence.

Each person has 100% ability to make decisions in their life, these are personal choices. Based on the personal choices we make, the resulting effect will be experienced. This is our Kamma.

The Natural Law of Kamma is something that is talked about in modern society but oftentimes as a joke or said in passing. Kamma is sometimes thought to be a mystical or mysterious concept. However, Kamma is the governing factor of all things in life through "cause and effect" or "action and result".

Kamma is the results or effects of our own decisions. It is a natural law that exists, and Gotama Buddha's Teachings are awakening the mind to deeply understand this natural law, so that you can make good wholesome decisions to function peacefully in life. Through understanding The Natural Law of Kamma, you will make much better decisions in life and, thus, experience better results.

There is no one that governs this natural law or oversees its functioning. The Natural Law of Kamma just exists and it is absolutely one-hundred percent truth.

### **Examples of Kamma are:**

- 1.) You murder someone and then you are put into jail. Your quality of life is impacted by becoming worse.
- 2.) You steal something and then you are put into jail and people steal from you. Your quality of life is impacted by becoming worse.
- 3.) You commit sexual misconduct having sexual contact with a person already involved in a relationship. This relationship is discovered, and the partner finds you and a verbal and/or physical attack transpires. Your quality of life is impacted by becoming worse.
- 4.) You are someone who speaks with false truth through lying, gossip, and slander. People cannot trust your words and you find it difficult to have relationships, conduct business, and people constantly lie to you. Your quality of life is impacted by becoming worse.
- 5.) You take substances becoming heedless and find yourself lacking concentration or mindfulness with the inability to focus on work, relationships, and everyday activities. Your quality of life is impacted by becoming worse.

When our intentions, speech, actions, and livelihood are pure without craving, anger, or ignorance (unknowing of true reality), we are creating wholesome Kamma for ourselves, thus, goodness will come back to us.

## **New and Old Kamma**

New Kamma is the result of any decisions that you are making right now in the present moment. As one makes decisions in the present moment through body, speech, and mind, they are producing new Kamma that is either wholesome or unwholesome. All bodily, verbal, and mental conduct in the present moment is creating new Kamma. Through wise decisions making, new wholesome Kamma is created. Through unwise decisions making, new unwholesome Kamma is created.

Old Kamma are decisions that were made in the past including in past lives that lead to results experienced now in this life. For example, the physical body is old Kamma. The type of physical body one acquires at conception is based on decisions made in the previous life. There were no decisions made in this life to create the physical body acquired at conception because the mind has not yet reached existence to be able to make decisions. Instead, as the mind moves into existence at conception, it acquires a physical body that is based on decisions from one's previous life.

## **Wholesome and Unwholesome**

Wholesome Kamma are all decisions that are harmless. Through producing decisions that do not cause any harm, these wise decisions will produce wholesome Kamma or wholesome results.

Unwholesome Kamma are all decisions that are harmful. Through producing decisions that cause harm, these unwise decisions will produce unwholesome Kamma or unwholesome results.

It is craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) in the mind that produces all unwholesome decisions leading to unwholesome results.

It is generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom in the mind that produces all wholesome decisions leading to wholesome results.

Eliminating craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) from the mind and cultivating generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom into the mind is how one transforms the unEnlightened mind to the Enlightened mind. One might choose to view this that as a Practitioner cultivates generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom, this eliminates the craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality), pushing it out of the mind.

A Practitioner's well developed life practice to train the mind in meditation and daily life through these Teachings, is how one comes to understand the arising of craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) and the cultivation of generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom eliminating the pollution of mind that causes all unskillful conduct. Through developing generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom in the mind, a Practitioner is able to then produce skillful decisions that lead to wholesome results in all situations.

## **Can you explain complacency and how to eliminate it from the mind?**

Complacency is a hindrance to Enlightenment and will obstruct an individual from attaining this mental state.

Complacency is experienced in the mind where it is dull, lethargic, and unmotivated, it will hinder a Practitioner from the attainment of Enlightenment.

Complacency includes: being disinterested to learn and practice The Teachings of The Buddha. This can be experienced as a disinterest to read books, come to classes, seek guidance from a Teacher, meditate, etc. The Buddha describes complacency to the point where, if the mind experiences an unwholesome thought/idea/feeling and the Practitioner does nothing about it, then the mind is complacent. What a Practitioner is taught to do on The Path to Enlightenment is to “cut off and let go” of all unwholesome thoughts/ideas/feelings, therefore, if one does nothing about an unwholesome thought/idea/feelings, the mind is complacent.

Again, this will hinder an individual from the attainment of Enlightenment, which is a purification of the mind.

If the mind is unEnlightened, then there is the fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as ignorance (unknowing of true reality) still in the mind. A Practitioner does not understand things as they truly are, the mind lacks wisdom of The Natural Laws of Existence. This is an all encompassing pollution of mind and is the last one that will be eliminated from the mind prior to Enlightenment.

As long as one's mind is unEnlightened, it does not have the needed wisdom to attain Enlightenment because it is not yet practicing The Teachings (i.e. The Natural Laws of Existence), thus, there is ignorance, confusion, misunderstanding, misperception, a lack of wisdom, or “the unknowing of true reality” still in the mind. Ignorance is eliminated through learning, reflecting (i.e. independently verifying), and practicing The Teachings of The Buddha to acquire wisdom. Wisdom is just the opposite of “the unknowing of true reality” and will eradicate the mind's fetter/taint/pollution of mind described as ignorance.

While ignorance is involved in all the fetters/taints/pollutions, the fetters that are directly involved in complacency are “Doubt” and “Sensual Desire”.

The mind doubts The Teachings of The Buddha and their ability to guide an individual to Enlightenment. And, the mind is having sensual desire, in that, it is holding on to certain things with craving/desire/attachment being unmotivated to learn and practice The Teachings while also indulging in unwholesome thoughts/ideas/feelings.

Doubt (Elimination of doubts about The Teachings and the ability of them to attain Enlightenment. Confidence in The Buddha, The Teachings, The Community, your Teacher, and your own ability to attain Enlightenment.)

Sensual desire (Elimination of the desire for pleasures from The Six Sense Bases: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and the mind.)

There is a remedy, or solution to eliminate complacency, that can be implemented to ensure the mind is able to overcome this obstacle and continue its journey to Enlightenment.

The solution is to practice The Eight Fold Path to include, the Enlightenment factors of investigation, energy, and joy from The Seven Factors of Enlightenment. The Enlightenment factors of investigation, energy, and joy are just the opposites of the dullness, lethargy, and lack of motivation that exists in the mind during the time of complacency. Some older texts use the phrase “sloth and torpor” for complacency but, “complacency” is a much better way to understand this aspect of the unEnlightened mind with language we use today.

Investigation: (Dedicated examination, exploration, research, study, and questioning to learn The Teachings.)

Energy: (Effort, determination, ambition, initiative, motivation, vigor, and enthusiasm; willingness to do something.)

Joy: (Pleased and delighted not associated with any specific object; unconditioned gladness; the Practitioner is not attaining it by craving/desire/attachment.)

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

You can learn more about complacency and its remedy using these resources.

Volume 1 - Chapter 3 and the recorded classes where I teach The Five Hindrances, this is one of those.

Free Books - The Words of The Buddha

<https://www.buddhadailywisdom.com/freebuddhabooks>

The Five Hindrances & The Seven Factors of Enlightenment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7t6VKPshUn0>

## Chapter 9

### This Body is Old Kamma

Monks, this body is not yours, nor does it belong to others. It is old Kamma, to be seen as generated and created by volition (choices/decisions) as something to be felt.

Therein, Monks, the instructed Noble Disciple attends carefully and closely to Dependent Origination itself thus:

When this exists, that comes to be;  
With the arising of this, that arises.  
When this does not exist, that does not come to be;  
With the elimination of this, that is eliminated.

That is,  
With ignorance as condition, volitional formations (come to be);  
With volitional formations as condition, consciousness;  
With consciousness as condition, name-and-form;  
With name-and-form as condition, the six sense bases;  
With the six sense bases as condition, contact;  
With contact as condition, feeling;  
With feeling as condition, craving;  
With craving as condition, clinging;  
With clinging as condition, existence;  
With existence as condition, birth;  
With birth as condition, aging-and-death, sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure, and despair come to be.

Such is the origin of this whole mass of discontentedness.

But with the remainderless fading away and elimination of ignorance (unknowing of true reality) comes elimination of volitional formations (choices/decisions); with the elimination of volitional formations, elimination of consciousness, ... (all aspects of dependent origination) ... with the elimination of birth, aging-and-death, sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure and despair is eliminated.

Such is the elimination of this whole mass of discontentedness.

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(Reference: SN 12.37)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares what is “Old Kamma” and then shares “Dependent Origination” explaining how one comes into existence through birth.

There are three components that are needed to create a living being. An egg, sperm, and a consciousness (i.e. a mind). If these things are present, there is a living being.

When the mind comes together with the egg and sperm, it has not yet made any decisions, therefore, what it experiences in terms of the physical body is “old kamma”.

The physical body of the new being is experiencing the results of decisions from past lives.

If the new being has beneficial features and a healthy body, that is based on decisions from their prior life - old Kamma.

If the new being has unbeneficial features and an unhealthy body, that is based on decisions from their prior life - old Kamma.

New Kamma is generated based on current decisions while old Kamma is the results of decisions made in the past. The physical body is a perfect example of old Kamma as the condition of the physical body at birth is based on the results of decisions from previous lives.

Volition or volitional formations are the choices/decisions we make. It is our choices or decisions that lead to certain outcomes or results. The results of our decisions is our Kamma. The Natural Law of Kamma is “cause and effect” or “action and results”, essentially the results of our decisions.

A Practitioner would need to understand New and Old Kamma as well as Wholesome and Unwholesome Kamma to attain Enlightenment.

Old Kamma is the results of our decisions that we have made in the past. New Kamma is the results of our decisions that we are making right now. Any decisions that you are making right now, will produce certain outcomes or results referred to as new Kamma.

The fact that we are in existence right now as a human being is “old Kamma”.

The decisions that we have made in all our prior lives did not lead to Enlightenment, therefore, we have been reborn into this new existence. Any decisions we make now is new Kamma and will affect whether we will be reborn in the future or not.

Through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings, one eliminates ignorance (unknowing of true reality) which eliminates the condition that is causing rebirth as explained in Dependent Origination.

Dependent Origination is explaining the “cause and effect” or “action and result” of how beings come into existence through The Cycle of Rebirth and why we experience discontentedness.

Through ignorance (unknowing of true reality) one makes choices/decisions. This puts into motion a whole series of events that lead to birth, aging-and-death, and massive amounts of discontentedness.

But with the elimination of ignorance (unknowing of true reality) through acquiring wisdom, a being can improve the condition of the mind eliminating 100% of all discontentedness.

Dependent Origination is providing a step-by-step understanding of how discontentedness comes to be and how it is eliminated with ignorance being the primary causation of what keeps the unEnlightened mind in The Cycle of Rebirth, thus, wisdom being the primary remedy to eliminate The Cycle of Rebirth.

Through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings with guidance from a Teacher, a Practitioner can independently verify The Buddha's Teachings to discover the truth to acquire wisdom.

Nothing in Gotama Buddha's Teachings is based on belief. All his Teachings can be learned and practiced to independently observe the truth as the mind gradually acquires wisdom through independent verification of his Teachings through practice of his Teachings.

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.

While Dependent Origination shares, in detail, the step-by-step causation of how ignorance leads to "birth, aging-and-death, sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure, and despair (i.e. discontentedness), a Practitioner will need to study this deeply with guidance from a Teacher. It is best if Dependent Origination is taught in an environment where Students can learn and then ask questions with a Teacher.

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



## Chapter 10

### The Most Reprehensible for the Performance of Unwholesome Actions

Then the Nigantha Dīgha Tapassi asked The Perfectly Enlightened One:

*‘And you, friend Gotama, how many kinds of rod do you describe for the performance of unwholesome action, for the carrying out of unwholesome action?’*

Tapassi, The Tathāgata is not accustomed to use the description ‘rod, rod’; The Tathāgata is accustomed to use the description ‘action, action’.

*‘But, friend Gotama, how many kinds of action do you describe for the performance of unwholesome action, for the carrying out of unwholesome action?’*

Tapassi, I describe three kinds of action for the performance of unwholesome action, for the carrying out of unwholesome action: that is, bodily action, verbal action, and mental action.

*‘How then, friend Gotama, is bodily action one, verbal action another, and mental action still another?’*

Bodily action is one, Tapassi, verbal action is another, and mental action is still another.

*‘Of these three kinds of action, friend Gotama, thus analyzed and distinguished, which kind of action do you describe as the most reprehensible for the performance of unwholesome action, for the carrying out of unwholesome action: bodily action or verbal action or mental action?’*

Of these three kinds of action, Tapassi, thus analyzed and distinguished, I describe mental action as the most reprehensible for the performance of unwholesome action, for the carrying out of unwholesome action, and not so much bodily action and verbal action.

*‘Do you say mental action, friend Gotama?’*

I say mental action, Tapassi.

*'Do you say mental action, friend Gotama?'*

I say mental action, Tapassi.

*'Do you say mental action, friend Gotama?'*

I say mental action, Tapassi.

*(Thus the Nigantha Dīgha Tapassi made The Perfectly Enlightened One maintain his statement up to the third time, after which he rose from his seat and went to the Nigantha Nataputta.*

*Thereafter, the Householder Upali came to The Perfectly Enlightened One to ask about the conversation The Perfectly Enlightened One had with Nigantha Tapassi and discussed that the bodily action is the most reprehensible for the performance of unwholesome act for the carrying out of unwholesome action, and not so much the verbal action and the mental action. The Perfectly Enlightened One, however maintained his doctrine and spoke further.)*

What do you think, Householder? Is this town of Nalanda successful and prosperous, is it populous and crowded with people?

*'Yes, Venerable Sir, it is.'*

What do you think, Householder? Suppose a man came here brandishing a sword and spoke thus: In one moment, in one instant, I will make all the living beings in this town of Nalanda into one mass of flesh, into one heap of flesh: What do you think, Householder, would that man be able to do that?

*'Venerable Sir, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or even fifty men would not be able to make all the living beings in this town of Nalanda into one mass of flesh, into one heap of flesh in one moment or instant, so what does a single trivial man count for?'*

What do you think, Householder? Suppose some Ascetic or Brāhmin came here possessed of supernormal power and attained to mastery of mind, and he spoke thus: I will reduce this town of Nalanda to ashes with one mental act of hate: What do you think, Householder, would such an Ascetic or Brāhmin be able to do that?

*'Venerable Sir, such an Ascetic or Brāhmin possessed of supernormal power and attained to mastery of mind would be able to reduce ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or even fifty Nalandas to ashes with one mental act of hate, so what does a single trivial Nalanda count for?'*

Householder, Householder, pay attention how you reply! What you said afterwards does not agree with what you said before, nor does what you said before agree with what you said afterwards...

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(Reference: MN 56)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that unwholesome mental actions are the most harmful between bodily, verbal, and mental actions (i.e. conduct).

The Buddha was a Master at asking people questions and guiding them to the answer so that they could see the truth for themselves, rather than just give an answer to a specific question asked of him.

In this Teaching, we see an example where The Buddha was asked a question and answered it directly. He was asked the question three (3) times to ensure he was fully committed to the answer as being the truth.

Once confirmed, the questioner Nigantha Dīgha Tapassi leaves going away from The Buddha. Later, the Householder Upali came to The Buddha to ask about the conversation with Nigantha Dīgha Tapassi seeking clarification.

The Buddha then skillfully questions the Householder Upali leading him to discover the truth through the answers Upali gives to the questions asked.

The Householder Upali answers The Buddha that it would be impossible for one person to destroy a town in one instance through an unwholesome bodily action. But, he answers The Buddha that it would be possible for one person to destroy a town in one instance through an unwholesome mental action.

An individual would be unable to destroy a town with just one bodily action but through one mental action of hate, this then spreads throughout the town and, over time, destroys the town.

Through the Householder Upali observing this as being the truth, he can then understand that unwholesome mental actions are the worst and most reprehensible actions. Thus, this entire Path to Enlightenment is about training the mind and purification of the mind.

All bodily and verbal actions are produced by the mind, therefore, as a Practitioner chooses to purify the mind, all bodily and verbal actions will also be purified.

# Learning Resources for Further Exploration

## **Youtube Video(s)**

***(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 1-10)***

<https://youtu.be/JkDo9mmzKzg>

## **Podcast(s)**

***Ep. 274 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 1-10)***

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--274---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Natural-Law-of-Kamma---Volume-6---Chapter-1-10-e1dnflh/a-a7au0fa>

# **What to Reflect On When One Intends to Do An “Action”**

# Chapter 11

## To Do An Action

Rāhula, when you intend to do an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: Would this action that I intend to do with the body lead to my own harm or to the harm of others, or to the harm of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?

When you reflect, if you know: This action that I intend to do with the body would lead to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to the harm of both; it is an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results:

Then you definitely should not do such an action with the body.

But when you reflect, if you know: This action that I intend to do with the body would not lead to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to the harm of both: it is a wholesome bodily action with wholesome consequences, with wholesome results:

Then you may do such an action with the body.

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(Reference: MN 61)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how one should reflect prior to performing an action considering whether it would produce any harm. If the action will cause one's own harm, harm to others, or both one's own harm and harm to others, then The Buddha guides one to not do this action.

While this Teaching is specifically discussing bodily actions, this same Teaching can be applied to verbal and mental actions as well.

Through consideration by a Practitioner of whether their bodily, verbal, or mental actions would be harmful or harmless based on The Teachings of The Path to Enlightenment, one can decide whether they should or should not do such an action ensuring no unwholesome Kamma is produced.

Through choosing to only perform wholesome bodily, verbal, and mental actions, one is generating exclusively new wholesome Kamma leading to wholesome results. In this way, a Practitioner will be able to “clean up” any and all decisions from the past leading to exclusively wholesome results.

If one notices they are about to perform an unwholesome bodily, verbal, or mental actions, if the Practitioner has been training the mind using Breathing Mindfulness Meditation, they can apply Right Effort to eliminate the thought to perform this conduct through cutting it off and letting it go.

**You may need to take note of the unwholesome thoughts and work to actively eliminate them from the mind so they will not arise in the future. In this way, a Practitioner can stop the conduct before doing the action and eliminate any harmful results. One may be quietly and inwardly frustrated or irritated but at least you have not caused harm to others which would result in harm returning to you.**

As a Practitioner learns and practices The Eight Fold Path for an extended period of time, they will be able to make wise wholesome decisions that lead to only wholesome results. Over time, one's mind and life improve through improved decision making based on generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom.

Decisions from the past, prior to learning and practicing The Path to Enlightenment, were based in craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) leading to unwholesome results in one's life. The mind did not have the wisdom of these Teachings to make wise decisions and is why you have been experiencing constant struggles throughout life.

There is much unwholesome Kamma that one needs to extinguish through making all wise wholesome decisions that will lead to more and more wholesome results. In this way, over time a Practitioner will be cleaning up their past decisions leading to improved results in their life. The wisdom of how to make wise decisions is found in these Teachings from The Buddha.

With a mind that is eliminating craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) as part of training on The Path to Enlightenment, unwise decisions based in The Three Unwholesome Roots can be reduced. Eventually, with the elimination of craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality), decisions are no longer tainted or polluted with these defilements and exclusively wholesome results are experienced. Through The Eight Fold Path, a Practitioner is learning how to make wise decisions to extinguish any and all craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) that would negatively affect one's decisions leading to unwholesome results (i.e. unwholesome Kamma).

To attain Enlightenment, a Practitioner will closely learn and practice The Eight Fold Path that leads to wise decision making to extinguish all unwholesome Kamma. Attaining Enlightenment is to eliminate 100% of one's unwholesome Kamma through making exclusively wise wholesome decisions based on The Eight Fold Path producing wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

# Chapter 12

## While Doing An Action

Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: Does this action that I am doing with the body lead to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to the harm of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with unwholesome consequences, with unwholesome results?

When you reflect, if you know: This action that I am doing with the body leads to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to the harm of both; it is an unwholesome bodily action with unwholesome consequences, with unwholesome results;

Then you should suspend such a bodily action.

But when you reflect, if you know: This action that I am doing with the body does not lead to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to the harm of both; it is a wholesome bodily action with wholesome consequences, with wholesome results;

Then you may continue in such a bodily action.

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(Reference: MN 61)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how one should reflect while performing an action considering whether it is producing any harm. If the action is causing one's own harm, harm to others, or both one's own harm and harm to others, then The Buddha guides one to stop doing this action (i.e. suspend such a bodily action).

While this Teaching is specifically discussing bodily actions, this same Teaching can be applied to verbal and mental actions as well.

Through consideration by a Practitioner of whether their bodily, verbal, or mental actions are harmful or harmless based on The Teachings of The Path to Enlightenment, one can decide whether they should or should not continue to do such an action ensuring no unwholesome Kamma is produced.

Through choosing to only perform wholesome bodily, verbal, and mental actions, one is generating exclusively new wholesome Kamma leading to wholesome results. In this way, a Practitioner will be able to "clean up" any and all decisions from the past leading to exclusively wholesome results.



**If one notices they are performing unwholesome bodily, verbal, or mental actions, if the Practitioner has been training the mind using Breathing Mindfulness Meditation, they can apply Right Effort to eliminate this conduct through cutting it off and letting it go.**

**You may need to apologize and make amends with anyone involved ensuring that they understand you know that you were wrong and sincerely apologize for the harmful conduct. In this way, a Practitioner can stop the conduct while doing the action and limit any harmful results.**

As a Practitioner learns and practices The Eight Fold Path for an extended period of time, they will be able to make wise wholesome decisions that lead to only wholesome results. Over time, one's mind and life improve through improved decision making based on generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom.

Decisions from the past, prior to learning and practicing The Path to Enlightenment, were based in craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) leading to unwholesome results in one's life. The mind did not have the wisdom of these Teachings to make wise decisions and is why you have been experiencing constant struggles throughout life.

There is much unwholesome Kamma that one needs to extinguish through making all wise wholesome decisions that will lead to more and more wholesome results. In this way, over time a Practitioner will be cleaning up their past decisions leading to improved results in their life. The wisdom of how to make wise decisions is found in these Teachings from The Buddha.

With a mind that is eliminating craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) as part of training on The Path to Enlightenment, unwise decisions based in The Three Unwholesome Roots can be reduced. Eventually, with the elimination of craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality), decisions are no longer tainted or polluted with these defilements and exclusively wholesome results are experienced. Through The Eight Fold Path, a Practitioner is learning how to make wise decisions to extinguish any and all craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) that would negatively affect one's decisions leading to unwholesome results (i.e. unwholesome Kamma).

To attain Enlightenment, a Practitioner will closely learn and practice The Eight Fold Path that leads to wise decision making to extinguish all unwholesome Kamma. Attaining Enlightenment is to eliminate 100% of one's unwholesome Kamma through making exclusively wise wholesome decisions based on The Eight Fold Path producing wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

## Chapter 13

### Having Done An Action

Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: Does this action that I have done with the body lead to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to the harm of both? Was it an unwholesome bodily action with unwholesome consequences, with unwholesome results?

When you reflect, if you know: This action that I have done with the body leads to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to the harm of both; it was an unwholesome bodily action with unwholesome consequences, with unwholesome results:

Then you should confess such a bodily action, reveal it, and lay it open to the Teacher or to your wise companions in the holy life. Having confessed it, revealed it, and laid it open, you should undertake restraint for the future.

But when you reflect, if you know: This action that I have done with the body does not lead to my own harm, or to the harm of others, or to the harm of both; it was a wholesome bodily action with wholesome consequences, wholesome results:

You can reside peaceful and joyful, training day and night in wholesome states.

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(Reference: MN 61)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how one should reflect after performing an action considering whether it has produced any harm. If the action has caused one's own harm, harm to others, or both one's own harm and harm to others, then The Buddha guides one to share this with their Teacher or your wise friends who are on The Path to Enlightenment. This allows a Practitioner to gain insight into how to eliminate the unwholesome conduct in the future exercising restraint. Through sharing what one has done that is unwholesome with their Teacher or wise friends, you are admitting that you are not perfect and are seeking guidance. This is helpful to eliminate any ego and allows you to further develop your life practice through gaining wisdom from others.

While this Teaching is specifically discussing bodily actions, this same Teaching can be applied to verbal and mental actions as well.

Through consideration by a Practitioner of whether their bodily, verbal, or mental actions were harmful or harmless based on The Teachings of The Path to Enlightenment, one can

decide whether they should or should not continue to do such an action in the future ensuring no unwholesome Kamma is produced.

Through choosing to only perform wholesome bodily, verbal, and mental actions, one is generating exclusively new wholesome Kamma leading to wholesome results. In this way, a Practitioner will be able to “clean up” any and all decisions from the past leading to exclusively wholesome results.

**If one notices they have performed unwholesome bodily, verbal, or mental actions, if the Practitioner has been training the mind using Breathing Mindfulness Meditation, they can apply Right Effort to eliminate this conduct through cutting it off and letting it go exercising restraint in future situations.**

**You may need to apologize and make amends with anyone involved ensuring that they understand you know that you were wrong and sincerely apologize for the harmful conduct. In this way, a Practitioner can clean up any unwholesome results that would be generated from performing the action and limit any harmful results.**

As a Practitioner learns and practices The Eight Fold Path for an extended period of time, they will be able to make wise wholesome decisions that lead to only wholesome results. Over time, one’s mind and life improve through improved decision making based on generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom.

Decisions from the past, prior to learning and practicing The Path to Enlightenment, were based in craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) leading to unwholesome results in one’s life. The mind did not have the wisdom of these Teachings to make wise decisions and is why you have been experiencing constant struggles throughout life.

There is much unwholesome Kamma that one needs to extinguish through making all wise wholesome decisions that will lead to more and more wholesome results. In this way, over time a Practitioner will be cleaning up their past decisions leading to improved results in their life. The wisdom of how to make wise decisions is found in these Teachings from The Buddha.

With a mind that is eliminating craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) as part of training on The Path to Enlightenment, unwise decisions based in The Three Unwholesome Roots can be reduced. Eventually, with the elimination of craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality), decisions are no longer tainted or polluted with these defilements and exclusively wholesome results are experienced. Through The Eight Fold Path, a Practitioner is learning how to make wise decisions to extinguish any and all craving, anger, and ignorance (unknowing of true reality) that would negatively affect one’s decisions leading to unwholesome results (i.e. unwholesome Kamma).

To attain Enlightenment, a Practitioner will closely learn and practice The Eight Fold Path that leads to wise decision making to extinguish all unwholesome Kamma. Attaining Enlightenment is to eliminate 100% of one’s unwholesome Kamma through making exclusively wise wholesome decisions based on The Eight Fold Path producing wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

# **What One Should Know to Prevent Wrong Views About “Actions”**

# Chapter 14

## 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.

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(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 15

### Discontentedness Is Dependently Arisen

On one occasion, Ānanda, I was residing right here in Rajagaha, in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrel Sanctuary. Then, in the morning, I dressed and, taking bowl and robe, I entered Rajagaha for almsfood. Then it occurred to me: It is still too early to walk for almsfood in Rajagaha. Let me go to the park of the wanderers of other communities. Then I went to the park of the wanderers of other communities. I exchanged greetings with those wanderers and, when we had concluded our greetings and cordial talk, I sat down to one side.

The wanderers then said to me as I was sitting to one side:

*‘Friends, ... some Ascetics and Brāhmins, proponents of Kamma, maintain that discontentedness is created by oneself: some Ascetics and Brāhmins, proponents of Kamma, maintain that discontentedness is created by another; some Ascetics and Brāhmins, proponents of Kamma, maintain that discontentedness is created both by oneself and by another; some Ascetics and Brāhmins, proponents of Kamma, maintain that discontentedness has arisen randomly being created neither by oneself nor by another.*

*Now, what does the Ascetic Gotama say about this? What does he teach? How should we answer if we are to state what has been said by the Ascetic Gotama and not misrepresent him with what is contrary to the truth? And how should we explain in accordance with The Teachings so that no reasonable consequence of our assertion would give ground for criticism?’*

I have said, Ānanda, that discontentedness is dependently arisen.

*‘Dependent on what?’*

Dependent on contact.

If one were to speak thus one would be stating what has been said by me and would not misrepresent me with what is contrary...

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(Reference: SN 12.24)



In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that in order to produce discontentedness, that it is dependent on “contact”. This can be understood through his Teaching on Dependent Origination.

Whether it be either a pleasant feeling, a painful feeling, or a feeling that is neither painful-nor-pleasant, discontentedness is unable to be experienced in the mind without contact through The Six Sense Bases.

Contact is also a required condition to create Kamma. Without contact, Kamma cannot be created. Whether it be wholesome or unwholesome, new or old, the creation of Kamma is dependent on contact.

This is helpful to know because as the mind is progressing towards Enlightenment, not yet Enlightened, as the mind experiences the arising of discontentedness and there is potential for the creation of unwholesome Kamma, a Practitioner can eliminate “contact” to eliminate the production of unwholesome Kamma.

Through ignoring, walking away, or otherwise disengaging, a Practitioner can eliminate the production of unwholesome Kamma. If one has contact through bodily, verbal, or mental conduct that is unwholesome, unwholesome Kamma will be created.

To attain Enlightenment a Practitioner will need to completely eliminate 100% of all unwholesome Kamma and to accomplish that goal, one will need to exercise restraint in situations where the mind needs to be disciplined to not produce unwholesome bodily, verbal, or mental conduct. There are situations where disengaging is the wisest solution to not produce any unwholesome Kamma.

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

Detailed explanation of The Six Sense Bases 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 in the book “The Six Sense Bases” (Volume 9).

## Chapter 16

### **Walking The Middle Way Two Extremes That Should Not Be Followed**

Monks, these two extremes should not be followed by one who has gone forth into homelessness.

What two?

The pursuit of sensual happiness in sensual pleasures, which is low, vulgar, the way of worldlings, not honorable, unbeneficial; and

The pursuit of self-mortification, which is painful, not honorable, unbeneficial.

Without veering towards either of these extremes, The Tathāgata has awakened to the middle way, which gives rise to vision, which gives rise to wisdom, which leads to peace, to direct knowledge (experience), to Enlightenment, to Nibbāna.

And what, Monks, is that middle way awakened to by The Tathāgata, which gives rise to vision, which leads to Nibbāna (Enlightenment)?

It is this Noble Eight Fold Path; that is, Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

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(Reference: SN 56.11)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the two extremes that should not be followed training the mind to walk the middle way.

Prior to Siddhartha Gotama going out into the forest to train the mind through his own independent pursuit of Enlightenment, he attempted to train with two (2) different Teachers. These two (2) Teachers and others claimed that their teachings lead to Enlightenment.

Siddhartha Gotama trained to the point of being recognized as a Master Teacher in both of these Teachers' disciplines in a short period of time however, he observed that his mind was still discontent. The condition of his mind had not improved. Therefore, he left and went out on his own to attempt to solve the discontent mind, which he did, discovering The Path to Enlightenment.

During his time training with the other Teachers, the extreme of causing harm to the physical body was taught as a way to overcome and challenge the mind to get to Enlightenment. Once Siddhartha Gotama awakened to Enlightenment becoming a Buddha, he understood that it was not indulging in sensual pleasures nor causing harm to the physical body that produced Enlightenment.

Instead, it was training the mind to reside in the middle described as “the middle way”.

The middle way is what The Buddha had discovered and spent forty-five (45) years teaching. The middle way is The Eight Fold Path where the mind is trained not to chase after sensual pleasures nor disparage the body causing harm.

Instead, the mind is trained to acquire wisdom eradicating ignorance (unknowing of true reality) making wise decisions through the newly acquired wisdom.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, there were countless people training with various Teachers who all claimed their teachings were The Path to Enlightenment. The Buddha spent seven (7) weeks contemplating at the Bodhi tree attempting to determine if it would be wise for him to share his Teachings since they were so different than those that were being shared in that region of the world. He felt that his Teachings were too radically different than others for people to listen, understand, practice, and experience the results he had experienced.

Eventually, he did decide to share his Teachings and we know that it is his Teachings that lead to Enlightenment as they have stood the test of time existing in the world for over 2,500 years.

The Teachings he shared are “the middle way”.

The mind cannot perform optimally if it is too loose or too tight. It is only when the mind is trained and tuned to be in the middle that it can perform optimally. It is The Eight Fold Path that is the training guidance that allows the mind to reside in the middle.

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).

Detailed explanation of The Middle Way and how to apply it to your life is available in this same book series found in Chapter 6 of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1).

## Chapter 17

### **Past Unwholesome Actions Cannot Be Exhausted with the Performance of Piercing Austerities (Harshness)**

Now, Mahanama, on one occasion I was living at Rajagaha on the mountain Vulture Peak. On that occasion a number of Niganthas living on the Black Rock on the slopes of Isigili were practicing continuous standing, rejecting seats, and were experiencing painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to effort. Then, when it was evening, I rose from meditation and went to the Niganthas there.

I asked them: Friends, why do you practice continuous standing, rejecting seats, and experience painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to effort?

When this was said, they replied: *'Friend, the Nigantha Nataputta is omniscient and all-knowing and claims to have complete wisdom and vision thus: Whether I am walking or standing or asleep or awake, wisdom and vision are continuously and uninterruptedly present to me.'*

*He says thus: 'Niganthas, you have done unwholesome actions in the past; exhaust them with the performance of piercing austerities. And when you are here and now restrained in body, speech, and mind, that is doing no unwholesome actions for the future. So by obliterating them with Asceticism past actions and by doing no fresh actions, there will be no consequence in the future. With no consequence in the future, there is the destruction of action. With the destruction of action, there is the destruction of discontentedness. With the destruction of discontentedness, there is the destruction of feeling. With the destruction of feeling, all discontentedness will be exhausted. This is [the doctrine] we approve of and accept, and we are satisfied with it.'*

When this was said, I told them: But, friends, do you know that you existed in the past, and that it is not the case that you did not exist?

*'No, friend.'*

But, friends, do you know that you did unwholesome actions in the past and did not abstain from them?

*'No, friend.'*

But, friends, do you know that you did such and such unwholesome actions?

*'No, friend.'*

But, friends, do you know that so much discontentedness has already been exhausted, or that so much discontentedness has still to be exhausted, or that when so much discontentedness has been exhausted all discontentedness will have been exhausted?

*'No, friend.'*

But, friends, do you know what the abandoning of unwholesome states is and what the cultivation of wholesome states is here and now?

*'No, friend'*

So, friends, it seems that you do not know that you existed in the past and that it is not the case that you did not exist; or that you did unwholesome actions in the past and did not abstain from them; or that you did such and such unwholesome actions; or that so much discontentedness has already been exhausted, or that so much discontentedness has still to be exhausted, or that when so much discontentedness has been exhausted all discontentedness will have been exhausted; or what the abandoning of unwholesome states is and what the cultivation of wholesome states is here and now. That being so, those who are murderers, bloody handed, evil-doers in the world, when they are reborn among human beings, go forth into homelessness as Niganthas.

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(Reference: MN 14)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that unwholesome actions that will produce unwholesome results cannot be extinguished through “experiencing painful, agonizing, piercing feelings”. Discontentedness of mind cannot be extinguished and eliminated through inflicting harm to the physical body.

Instead, it is training the mind to acquire wisdom that the mind is liberated from discontentedness. A Practitioner will need to understand and practice “the abandoning of unwholesome states is and what the cultivation of wholesome states is here and now”.

## Chapter 18

### **Pleasure and Discontentedness Not Only Caused by What Was Done in the Past**

Again, Monks, I said to the Niganthas:

What do you think, friend Niganthas? When there is intense effort, intense striving, do you then feel painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort? But when there is no intense effort, no intense striving, do you then not feel any painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort?

*'When there is intense effort, friend Gotama, intense striving, then we feel painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort; but when there is no intense effort, no intense striving, then we do not feel any painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort.'*

So it seems, friend Niganthas, that when there is intense effort...you feel painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort: but when there is no intense effort...you do not feel any painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort. That being so, it is not fitting for the Venerable Niganthas to declare: Whatever this person feels, whether pleasure or pain or neither pain-nor-pleasure, all that is caused by what was done in the past. So by obliterating them with Asceticism past actions and by doing no fresh actions, there will be no consequence in the future. With no consequence...all discontentedness will be exhausted.

If, friend Niganthas, when there was intense effort, intense striving, then painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort were present, and when there was no intense effort, no intense striving, then painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort were still present, that being so, it would be fitting for the Venerable Niganthas to declare: Whatever this person feels...all discontentedness will be exhausted.

But since, friend Niganthas, when there is intense effort, intense striving, then you feel painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort, but when there is no intense effort, no intense striving, then you do not feel painful, agonizing, piercing feelings due to intense effort, you are therefore feeling only the painful, agonizing, piercing feelings of your self imposed effort, and it is through ignorance, unknowing, and delusion that you mistakenly hold: Whatever this person feels ... all discontentedness will be exhausted.

Speaking thus, Monks, I did not see any legitimate defense of their position by the Niganthas.

Again, Monks, I said to the Niganthas: What do you think, friend Niganthas? Is it possible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced here and now can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced in the next life?

*'No, friend.'*

But is it possible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced in the next life can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced here and now?

*'No, friend.'*

What do you think, friend Niganthas? Is it possible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced as pleasant can, through effort and striving become one [whose result] is to be experienced as painful?

*'No, friend.'*

But is it possible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced as painful can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced as pleasant?

*'No, friend.'*

What do you think, friend Niganthas? Is it possible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced in a matured [personality] can, by effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced in an unmatured [personality]?

*'No, friend.'*

But is it possible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced in an unmatured [personality] can, by effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced in a matured personality?

*'No, friend.'*

What do you think, friend Niganthas? Is it possible that an action [whose result] is to be much experienced can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be little experienced?



*'No, friend.'*

But is it possible that an action [whose result] is to be little experienced can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be much experienced?

*'No, friend.'*

What do you think, friend Niganthas? Is it possible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is not to be experienced?

*'No, friend.'*

But is it possible that an action [whose result] is not to be experienced can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced?

*'No, friend.'*

So it seems, friend Niganthas, that it is impossible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced here and now can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced in the next life, and impossible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced in the next life can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced here and now; impossible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced as pleasant can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced as painful, and impossible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced as painful can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced as pleasant; impossible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced in a matured [personality] can, by effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced in an unmatured [personality], and impossible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced in an unmatured [personality] can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced in a matured [personality]; impossible that an action [whose result] is to be much experienced can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be little experienced, and impossible that an action [whose result] is to be little experienced can through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be much experienced; impossible that an action [whose result] is to be experienced can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is not to be experienced, and impossible that an action [whose result] is not to be experienced can, through effort and striving, become one [whose result] is to be experienced. That being so, the Venerable Niganthas' effort is fruitless, their striving is fruitless.



So speak the Niganthas, Monks. And because the Niganthas speak thus, these ten legitimate deductions from their assertions provide grounds for advising them.

Thus their effort is fruitless, their striving is fruitless.

And how is effort fruitful, Monks, how is striving fruitful?

Here, Monks, a Monk is not overwhelmed by discontentedness and does not overwhelm himself with discontentedness; and he does not give up the pleasure that accords with The Teachings, yet he is not obsessed with that pleasure.

He knows thus: When I strive with determination, this particular source of discontentedness fades away in me because of that determined striving; and when I look on with equanimity, this particular source of discontentedness fades away in me while I develop equanimity. He strives with determination in regard to that particular source of discontentedness which fades away in him because of that determined striving; and he develops equanimity in regard to that particular source of discontentedness which fades away in him while he is developing equanimity.

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

Again, Monks, a Monk considers thus: While I live according to my pleasure, unwholesome states increase in me and wholesome states diminish; but when I exert myself in what is painful, unwholesome states diminish in me and wholesome states increase. What if I exert myself in what is painful? He exerts himself in what is painful. When he does so, unwholesome states diminish in him and wholesome states increase.

At a later time, he does not exert himself in what is painful. Why is that? The purpose for which that Monk exerted himself in what is painful has been achieved; that is why at a later time he does not exert himself in what is painful.

Thus too, Monks, the effort is fruitful, the striving is fruitful.

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(Reference: MN 101)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how discontentedness of mind is not caused by only what one has done in the past, therefore, exerting the body to “painful, agonizing, piercing feelings” will not eliminate discontentedness in the mind. For one to exert the body to such feelings is “fruitless, their striving is fruitless”.

The Buddha guides Students to focus on equanimity with determination and strive to eliminate discontentedness through diminishing unwholesome decisions and arising wholesome decisions.

**Equanimity** (Pāli: upekkhā) is mental calmness, composure, and evenness of temper, especially in a difficult situation; treating everyone impartially.

# **Three Sectarian Tenets With Wrong View About “Action”**

## Chapter 19

### All That Is Caused by What Was Done in the Past

Monks, there are these three sectarian tenets which, when questioned, interrogated, and cross-examined by the wise, and taken to their conclusion, will remain stuck in (a doctrine of) inaction.

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.

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.

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(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 shared in Chapters 19-21, 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) Chapters 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) Chapters 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.

This Chapter provides an overview where the next two (2) Chapters containing The Words of The Buddha provide further details based on this same Teaching.

## Chapter 20

### All Is Caused by God's Creative Action

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.

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(Reference: AN 3.61)

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).



## Learning Resources for Further Exploration

### ***Youtube Video(s)***

***(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 11-20)***

<https://youtu.be/GtmhWdTiiSE>

### ***Podcast(s)***

***Ep. 277 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 11-20)***

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--277---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Natural-Law-of-Kamma---Volume-6---Chapter-11-20-e1e1oen/a-a7c33ic>

## Chapter 21

### All That Occurs Without A Cause or Condition

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.

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(Reference: AN 3.61)

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.

## Chapter 22

### Worst Kind of Doctrine That There Is No Kamma

Monks, a hair blanket is declared to be the worst kind of woven garment. A hair blanket is cold in cold weather, hot in hot weather, ugly, foul-smelling, and uncomfortable.

So too, the doctrine of Makkhali is declared the worst among the doctrines of the various Ascetics.

The unwise man Makkhali teaches the doctrine and view: There is no Kamma, no deed, no energy (that is not only is there no result from Kamma but also no Kamma itself, all deeds are null.)

Monks, the Fortunate Ones, Arahants, The Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the past taught a doctrine of Kamma, a doctrine of deeds, a doctrine of energy. Yet the unwise man Makkhali contradicts them [with his claim]: There is no Kamma, no deed, no energy.

The Fortunate Ones, Arahants, The Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the future will also teach a doctrine of Kamma, a doctrine of deeds, a doctrine of energy. Yet the unwise man Makkhali contradicts them [with his claim]: There is no Kamma, no deed, no energy.

At present I am the Arahant, The Perfectly Enlightened One, and I teach a doctrine of Kamma, a doctrine of deeds, a doctrine of energy. Yet the unwise man Makkhali contradicts me [with his claim]: There is no Kamma, no deed, no energy.

Just as a trap set at the mouth of a river would bring about harm, pain, calamity, and disaster to many fish, so too, the unwise man Makkhali is, as it were, a 'trap for people' who has arisen in the world for the harm, pain, calamity, and disaster of many beings.

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(Reference: AN 3.137)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how another Teacher who teaches there is no such thing as The Natural Law of Kamma is unwise and dangerous. The Teacher Makkhali who shares “there is no Kamma, no deed, no energy (that is not only is there no result from Kamma but also no Kamma itself, all deeds are null)” is compared to an ineffective blanket and as dangerous as a fish trap.

Any person interested in retaining heat would use an effective blanket not an ineffective one. And, one would not be interested in the “harm, pain, calamity, and disaster” of a fish trap if a Practitioner fell into the trap that The Natural Law of Kamma did not exist.

One should not attempt to believe The Natural Law of Kamma but instead, observe the reality of this natural law discovering the truth to acquire wisdom. Through this wisdom, one can then make wise decisions to improve their life practice moving the mind towards Enlightenment.

As you continue the journey on The Path to Enlightenment investigating The Natural Law of Kamma, reflect on past experiences of how your unwise unwholesome decisions led to unwholesome results (i.e. unwholesome Kamma). And, reflect on past experiences of how your wise wholesome decisions led to wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

Through learning and reflecting on The Buddha’s Teachings related to The Natural Law of Kamma, then you can see the truth acquiring wisdom to make improved decisions. Through your practice of improved decisions, the condition of the mind and your life will gradually improve. This is how you can observe The Natural Law of Kamma no longer allowing the mind to believe anything but instead, observe the truth through direct experience.

The wisdom you acquire about The Natural Law of Kamma will allow the mind to gradually awaken and clean up your decision making to improve the results you experience in life.

# **Time Factor and Results of “Action”**

## Chapter 23

### Result of Kamma Is Threefold

And what is the result of Kamma?

The result of Kamma, I say, is threefold: [to be experienced]  
in this very life, or  
in the [next] rebirth, or  
on some subsequent occasion.

This is called the result of Kamma.

This, Monks, is called actions' fruit.

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(Reference: AN 6.63)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how Kamma will be experienced in this very life, the next rebirth, or on some future occasion. In other words, one cannot run or hide from the results of the decisions that they make. It is not possible to do unwholesome bodily, verbal, or mental actions in life and avoid the consequences of those decisions.

Each being will experience the results of their decisions.

The Natural Law of Kamma does not need to be feared. The Natural Law of Kamma needs to be understood so that we can make wise choices in our life that lead to a more peaceful mind and a more peaceful existence for us individually and all of humanity.

There is no fear in these Teachings and there is no fear in Kamma.

The only one who fears Kamma is the person who does not understand The Natural Law of Kamma and is unable to make wise decisions that would lead to a more peaceful existence.

The more you learn and practice The Teachings of Gotama Buddha, the more awakened the mind will become to The Natural Law of Kamma and the better decisions one can make. This will result in a more peaceful existence to include a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy.

Gotama Buddha's Teachings are guiding you in understanding this Natural Law of Kamma to awaken the mind to better life choices that lead to an improved existence.

Each person has 100% ability to make decisions in their life, these are personal choices. Based on the personal choices we make, the resulting effect will be experienced. This is our Kamma.

# **Fruit of “Actions” By Results**



## Chapter 24

### Beings Bound by Action

One is not a Brāhmin by birth,  
Nor by birth a non-Brāhmin.  
By action is one a Brāhmin,  
By action is one a non-Brāhmin.

For men are farmers by their acts,  
And by their acts are craftsmen too;  
And men are merchants by their acts,  
And by their acts are servants too.

And men are robbers by their acts,  
And by their acts are soldiers too;  
And men are chaplains by their acts,  
And by their acts are rulers too.

So that is how the truly wise  
See action as it really is,  
See dependent origination,  
Skilled in action and its results.

Action makes the world go round,  
Action makes this generation turn.  
Living beings are bound by action  
Like the chariot wheel by the linchpin.

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(Reference: SNP 3.9)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how it is one's actions that determine everything about an individual.

During the lifetime of The Buddha, it was believed that based on what type of family you were born into determined what type of life you would live. For example, if you were born into a highly wealthy and influential family, an individual would expect to have a certain type of life versus an individual born into a family of little wealth or influence.

People who were born into Brāhmin families were considered to be holy and able to communicate with the Gods while people of lower castes (i.e. status) were unable to have a spiritual life being dependent on the Brāhmin to do the spiritual work for others. Common people would pay Brāhmin a fee to pray on their behalf. This created an environment where corruption was able to be easily introduced as fees could easily be changed and the common person had no recourse to improve their life because it was

the Brāhmin who controlled access to the Gods that were believed in during that lifetime. Brāhmins were considered to be holy and sacred, all determined by what family an individual was born into not by their deeds or actions.

This Teaching, and others, from The Buddha helped individuals understand that one is not a holy person by birth but by their actions. It is our actions that is the “cause” or “action” that creates certain “effects” or “results” in our life.

If one were to think just because they were born into a certain family, life should be good or bad, then they are not yet understanding The Natural Law of Kamma. The results we experience in this life is not purely based on what family we are born into but is determined by our actions.

As we make wholesome or unwholesome decisions, we experience the corresponding results in our life. As The Buddha shares, “that is how the truly wise see action as it really is”. A wise Practitioner will need to see this cause and effect relationship within all aspects of life. There is nothing that occurs in this world without a “cause” or “action” then there is an “effect” or “result”.

All individuals are able to attain Enlightenment leading a spiritual life, this is not dependent on what family one is born into as part of this life.

The Buddha explains the complete series of events as it relates to The Cycle of Rebirth and the experiencing of discontentedness in his Teaching on Dependent Origination. He points to that in this Teaching when he said, “see dependent origination skilled in action and its results”. Dependent Origination is the ultimate truth that explains the causality or causal relationship between ignorance (unknowing of true reality) and discontentedness along with The Cycle of Rebirth and beings continued wandering in The Cycle of Rebirth.

It is action that determines everything in the world explained by The Buddha as “action makes the world go round, action makes this generation turn. Living beings are bound by action like the chariot wheel by the linchpin”.

It is our actions that determine what we do or do not experience in this life. A chariot or cart is pulled by horses with a primary “linchpin” that connects the cart and horses. Without the “linchpin”, the chariot would not function or move. So too, it is one’s actions that determines what does and does not happen in one’s life. One’s actions are the “linchpin” or primary aspect of one’s life that determines all outcomes.

Purifying one’s bodily, verbal, and mental actions will result in an improved condition of mind and life.

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

## Chapter 25

### To Be Reborn Graceful, Rich, and Influential

Mallika, some women are not prone to anger or often intensely frustrated. Even if she is criticized a lot, she does not lose her temper and become irritated, hostile, and stubborn; she does not display anger, hatred, and bitterness. And she gives things to Ascetics or Brāhmins: food and drink; clothing and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, dwellings, and lighting.

When she passes away from that state, if she comes back to this world, wherever she is reborn she is beautiful, attractive, and graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion; rich, with great wealth and property; and influential.

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(Reference: AN 4.197)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares what leads to an improved rebirth.

While our birth does not guarantee Enlightenment or purely determine what will or will not happen in this life, being born in a family with wealth and influence can decrease one's need to acquire the necessities needed to sustain life.

If you are reading this book, you are fortunate. You have the ability to use electronic devices, purchase a book, and you have the time to devote to learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings. However, there are countless individuals in the world who do not have this opportunity or luxury.

There are many people in the world who are born into families that are in deep poverty lacking the ability to purchase electronic devices, books, or spend time learning to improve their life practice. They are so burdened just to fulfill their daily needs and necessities to sustain life, they could not even aspire to take part in the active learning of The Path to Enlightenment.

So being reborn into a family that is wealthy and influential would provide the opportunity to purchase needed prerequisites just to access these Teachings like electronic devices, books, and have the available time to devote to continued learning.

A being who is learning and practicing these Teachings is able to significantly improve their life through a well developed life practice in this life and should they not attain Enlightenment, their next rebirth will be an improved destination. The Buddha is explaining that in this Teaching, to a certain degree, but explains this more fully in other Teachings that you will have access to in this book series.

Through the elimination of anger, frustration, irritation, hostility, stubbornness, hatred, bitterness and providing offerings to those who are sharing these Teachings into the world, The Buddha explains that should one need to be reborn, this leads to an improved rebirth in the next life.

It is important to understand that the ultimate goal of The Path to Enlightenment is to attain Enlightenment and not be reborn. But, should one fall short of that goal, an improved rebirth will be experienced through improving one's life practice.

Understanding that the ultimate goal is to attain Enlightenment and not be reborn, you can understand that The Buddha did not use rebirth into a better existence in the next life as a reward for learning and practicing his Teachings. Instead, the benefit of learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings is that the condition of the mind and one's life will improve right now as wisdom increases and discontentedness decreases. The ultimate goal of The Path to Enlightenment is to eliminate rebirth but in order to accomplish that goal one would need to develop wisdom through a well developed life practice resulting in the decrease and ultimately the elimination of discontentedness.

The Buddha's Teachings need to be understood in totality rather than looking at them through isolated Teachings. If one were to look at an isolated Teaching such as this and allow conditioning of past experiences to form perceptions, one could form the misperception that The Buddha is attempting to influence one to learn and practice his Teachings to achieve a better rebirth in a future life. But with the wisdom of the ultimate goal of these Teachings being Enlightenment to escape The Cycle of Rebirth, one can

come to the conclusion that The Buddha is merely sharing the truth of “what is” rather than attempting to dangle a reward for learning and practicing his Teachings.

The Buddha knew the truth having acquired deep wisdom. He did not attempt to influence people through coercion or other tricky methods. He offered his Teachings to all those who chose to learn, reflect, and practice. Then on their own, they could see the truth for themselves as the condition of the mind and their life gradually improved.

A Buddha’s mind is already experiencing more peacefulness, calmness, serenity, and contentedness with joy than you could ever imagine in the unEnlightened state. They have developed deep loving-kindness and compassion for all beings. They offer their Teachings out of compassion for the world for all those who choose to learn and practice. A Buddha has no desire for any personal benefits for sharing their Teachings. They have transcended any interest in material gain or personal pursuits. Their goal is to share their Teachings for the benefit of others, not for their own selfish desires as they have eliminated all desire and selfishness from the mind dedicating the rest of their life towards supporting, guiding, encouraging, and helping others experience the mental state they have already attained.

**Compassion** (Pāli: karuṇā) is concern for the misfortunes of others.

A Buddha understands that there is nothing you can do to force or coerce an individual into attaining Enlightenment. Because these Teachings are not based on belief, it is not possible to coerce someone into learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to discover the truth and acquire wisdom. Each individual needs to accomplish that goal on their own to experience the results.

The goal of these Teachings is to attain Enlightenment, not rebirth. So while this Teaching is shared by The Buddha, it is not to encourage someone to learn and practice these Teachings but instead, to help one understand the unwholesome qualities of mind to eliminate and wholesome qualities of mind to cultivate. And, should one progress on this path but not reach the ultimate goal of Enlightenment, there is still benefit one is experiencing in this life and future lives. Your actions to learn and practice these Teachings is beneficial to you now and in the future. You can observe the condition of the mind and your life gradually improving through making wise decisions in daily life to improve your life practice.

Detailed explanation of The Cycle of Rebirth is available in this same book series found in the book “The Realms of Existence” (Volume 11).

## Chapter 26

### Gifts of a Wholesome Person

Monks, there are these five gifts of a wholesome person.

What five?

- (1) He gives a gift out of confidence;
- (2) he gives a gift respectfully;
- (3) he gives a timely gift;
- (4) he gives a gift unreservedly;
- (5) he gives a gift without injuring himself or others.

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(1) Because he has given a gift out of confidence, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and he is handsome, attractive, graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion.

(2) Because he has given a gift respectfully, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and his sons and wives, slaves, servants, and workers are obedient, lend an ear, and apply their minds to understand.

(3) Because he has given a timely gift, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and timely benefits come to him in abundance.

(4) Because he has given a gift unreservedly, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and his mind inclines to the enjoyment of the five kinds of fine sensual pleasures.

(5) Because he has given a gift without injuring himself or others, wherever the result of that gift is produced, he becomes rich, with great wealth and property, and no damage comes to his property from any source, whether from fire, floods, Kings, thieves, or displeasing heirs.

These are the five gifts of a wholesome person.

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(Reference: AN 5.148)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the five gifts of a wholesome person.

The Buddha is sharing a basic understanding of the results of giving and sharing known as the practice of generosity.

There are Teachings he shares beyond these however, this is a starting point to understand generosity.

Practicing generosity is a highly important aspect of practice that one needs to develop to attain Enlightenment. Without a practice of generosity, one would retain selfishness being unable to give and share with others. This will allow craving/desire/attachment to stay well rooted in the mind.

The practice of Breathing Mindfulness Meditation and generosity are used to uproot the unwholesome root of craving/desire/attachment. Without a well developed practice of generosity, a Practitioner would be unable to uproot craving/desire/attachment or eliminate selfishness, therefore, they would be unable to attain Enlightenment.

In this Teaching, The Buddha is sharing five (5) aspects of generosity that one will need to practice while giving a gift. A gift will need to be given with confidence, respectfully, timely, unreservedly, and without injuring himself or others.

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

## Chapter 27

### Deeds with Fruit That Result in Great Accomplishment and Power

Having cultivated for seven years a mind of loving-kindness, for seven eons of contraction and expansion I did not return to this world. Whenever the eon contracted I reached the plane of streaming radiance, and when the eon expanded I arose in an empty heavenly mansion.

And there I was Brahma (God), the Great Brahma, the unvanquished victor, the all-knowing, the all-powerful.

Thirty-six times I was Sakka, Ruler of the Heavenly Beings. And many hundreds of times I was a Wheel-Turning Monarch, righteous, a King of righteousness, conqueror of the four regions of the earth, maintaining stability in the land, in possession of the seven treasures.

What need is there to speak of mere local Kingship?

It occurred to me, Monks, to wonder: Of what kind of deed of mine is this the fruit? Of what deed's ripening am I now of such great accomplishment and power?

And then it occurred to me: It is the fruit of three kinds of deeds of mine, the ripening of three kinds of deeds that I am now of such great accomplishment and power: deeds of giving, of mastery of the mind, and of refraining.

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(Reference: ITI 22)



In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he recalls some of his past existences and explains why he has been so fortunate to become a Perfectly Enlightened Buddha.

A Perfectly Enlightened Buddha's mind is very clear and concentrated with deep wisdom. While all Enlightened beings will be able to experience these same qualities of mind, a Perfectly Enlightened Buddha experiences these to a large degree beyond a typical Enlightened being.

The Buddha shares what has led to his fortunate existences in the past and in his present life. He attributes this to "deeds of giving, of mastery of the mind, and of refraining".

**Giving** or generosity produces beneficial outcomes in one's life as they are able to train the mind to eliminate craving/desire/attachment while creating wholesome results with people who accept the generosity.

**Mastery of mind** is to train the mind to have deep mental discipline or control of the mind. Being able to control one's own mind allows for calmness, mindfulness, concentration, and to access deep wisdom.

**Refraining** is to train the mind to have restraint from things such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, ingesting substances that cause heedlessness while practicing other wholesome moral conduct. A Practitioner has trained the mind to refrain from unwholesomeness.

The Buddha attributes his accomplishment to attain Perfect Enlightenment and have the experiences he mentioned from past lives to these three deeds.

## Chapter 28

### Why Human Beings Are Seen to Be Unwholesome and Wholesome?

Then the Brāhmin Student Subha, Todeyya's son, went to The Perfectly Enlightened One and exchanged greetings with him. When this courteous and friendly talk was finished, he sat down at one side and asked The Perfectly Enlightened One:

*'Master Gotama, what is the cause and condition why human beings are seen to be unwholesome and wholesome? For people are seen to be short-lived and long-lived, sickly and healthy, ugly and beautiful, uninfluential and influential, poor and wealthy. low-born and high-born, unwise and wise. What is the cause and condition, Master Gotama, why human beings are seen to be unwholesome and wholesome?'*

Student, beings are owners of their actions, heirs of their actions; they originate from their actions, are bound to their actions, have their actions as their refuge. It is action that distinguishes beings as unwholesome and wholesome.

*'I do not understand in detail the meaning of Master Gotama's statement, which he spoke in brief without expounding the meaning in detail. It would be good if Master Gotama would teach me the Teachings so that I might understand in detail the meaning of Master Gotama's statement.'*

Then, Student, listen and attend closely to what I shall say.

*'Yes, sir'* the Brāhmin Student Subha replied.

The Perfectly Enlightened One said this:

Here, Student, some man or woman kills living beings and is murderous, bloody-handed, given to blows and violence, merciless to living beings. Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a state without basic necessities, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, even in hell. But if on the dissolution of the body, after death, he does not reappear in a state without basic necessities in an unhappy destination, in perdition, in hell, but instead comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is short-lived.

This is the way, Student, that leads to short life, namely, one kills living being and is murderous, bloody-handed, given to blows and violence, merciless to living beings.

But here, Student, some man or woman, abandoning the killing of living beings, abstains from killing living beings; with rod and weapon laid aside, gentle and kindly, he resides compassionate to all living beings. 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 on the dissolution of the body, after death, he does not reappear in a happy destination, in the heavenly world, but instead comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is long-lived.

This is the way, Student, that leads to long life, namely, abandoning the killing of living beings, one abstains from killing living beings; with rod and weapon laid aside, gentle and kindly, one resides compassionate to all living beings.

Here, Student, some man or woman is given to injuring beings with the hand, with a clod, with a stick, or with a knife. Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a state without basic necessities, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, even in hell. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is sickly.

This is the way, Student, that leads to sickliness, namely, one is given to injuring beings with the hand, with a clod, with a stick, or with a knife.

But here, Student, some man or woman is not given to injuring beings with the hand, with a clod, with a stick, or with a knife. Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a happy destination, in the heavenly world. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is healthy.

This is the way, Student, that leads to health, namely, one is not given to injuring beings with the hand, with a clod, with a stick, or with a knife.

Here, Student, some man or woman is of an angry and irritable character; even when criticized a little, he is offended, becomes angry, hostile, and resentful, and displays anger, hate, and bitterness. Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a state without basic necessities, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, even in hell. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is ugly.

This is the way, Student, that leads to ugliness, namely, one is of an angry and irritable character, even when criticized a little, he is offended, becomes angry, hostile, and resentful and displays anger, hate, and bitterness.

But here, Student, some man or woman is not of an angry and irritable character; even when criticized a little, he is not offended, does not become angry, hostile, and resentful, and does not display anger, hate, and bitterness. Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a happy destination, in the heavenly world. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is beautiful.

This is the way, Student, that leads to being beautiful, namely, one is not of an angry and irritable character, even when criticized a little, he is not offended, does not become angry, hostile, and resentful, and does not display anger, hate, and bitterness.

Here, Student, some man or woman is jealous, one who is selfish, resentful, and feels bitter about the gains, honor, respect, appreciation, salutations, and veneration received by others. Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a state without basic necessities, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, even in hell. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is uninfluential.

This is the way, Student, that leads to being uninfluential, namely, one is jealous, resentful, and feels bitter towards the gains, honor, respect, appreciation, salutations, and veneration received by others.

But here, Student, some man or woman is not jealous, one who is not selfish, resentful, and feels bitter about the gains, honor, respect, appreciation, salutations, and veneration received by others. Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a happy destination, in the heavenly world. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is influential.

This is the way, Student, that leads to being influential, namely, one is not jealous, resentful and feels bitter towards the gains, honor, respect, appreciation, salutations, and veneration received by others.

Here, Student, some man or woman does not give 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 state without

basic necessities, in perdition, even in hell. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is poor.

This is the way, Student, that leads to poverty, namely, one does not give food, drink, clothing, carriages, garlands, scents, ointments, beds, dwelling and lamps to Ascetics or Brāhmins.

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, 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.

Here, Student, some man or woman is stubborn and arrogant; he does not pay homage (respect) to one who should receive homage (respect), does not rise up for one in whose presence he should rise up, does not offer a seat to one who deserves a seat, does not make way for one for whom he should make way, and does not honor, respect, appreciate, and venerate one who should be honored, respected, appreciated, and venerated. Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a state without basic necessities, in perdition, even in hell. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is low-born.

This is the way, Student, that leads to low birth, namely, one is stubborn and arrogant; he does not pay homage (respect) to one who should receive homage (respect), does not rise up for one in whose presence he should rise up, does not offer a seat to one who deserves a seat, does not make way for one for whom he should make way, and does not honor, respect, appreciate, and venerate one who should be honored, respected, appreciated, and venerated.

But here, Student, some man or woman is not stubborn and arrogant; he pays homage (respect) to one who should receive homage (respect), rises up for one in whose presence he should rise up, offers a seat to one who deserves a seat, makes way for one for whom he should make way, and honors, respects, appreciates, and venerates one who should be honored, respected, appreciated, and venerated.

Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a happy destination, in the heavenly world. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is high-born.

This is the way, Student, that leads to high birth, namely, one is not stubborn and arrogant; he pays homage (respect) to one who should receive homage (respect), rises up for one in whose presence he should rise up, offers a seat to one who deserves a seat, makes way for one for whom he should make way, and honors, respects, appreciates, and venerates one who should be honored, respected, appreciated, and venerated.

Here, Student, some man or woman does not visit an Ascetic or a Brāhmin and ask: Venerable Sir, what is wholesome? What is unwholesome? What is blameable? What is blameless? What should be cultivated? What should not be cultivated? What kind of action will lead to my harm and discontentedness for a long time? What kind of action will lead to my welfare and peacefulness for a long time? Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a state without basic necessities, in perdition, even in hell. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is unwise.

This is the way, Student, that leads to being unwise, namely, one does not visit an Ascetic or Brāhmin and ask such questions.

But here, Student, some man or woman visits an Ascetic or a Brāhmin and asks: Venerable Sir, what is wholesome? What is unwholesome? What is blameable? What is blameless? What should be cultivated? What should not be cultivated? What kind of action will lead to my harm and discontentedness for a long time? What kind of action will lead to my welfare and peacefulness for a long time? Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a happy destination, in the heavenly world. But if instead he comes back to the human state, then wherever he is reborn he is wise.

This is the way, Student, that leads to wisdom, namely, one visits an Ascetic or Brāhmin and asks such questions.

Thus, Student, the way that leads to short life makes people short-lived, the way that leads to long life makes people long-lived; the way that leads to sickness makes people sickly, the way that leads to health makes people healthy; the way that leads to ugliness makes people ugly, the way that leads to being beautiful makes people beautiful; the way that leads to being uninfluential makes people uninfluential, the way that leads to being

influential makes people influential; the way that leads to poverty makes people poor, the way that leads to wealth makes people wealthy; the way that leads to low birth makes people low-born, the way that leads to high birth makes people highborn; the way that leads to unwise makes people unwise, the way that leads to wisdom makes people wise.

Beings are owners of their actions, Student, heirs of their actions; they originate from their actions, are bound to their actions, have their actions as their refuge. It is action that distinguishes beings as unwholesome and wholesome.

When this was said, the Brāhmin Student Subha, Todeyya's son, said to The Perfectly Enlightened One:

*'Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent, Master Gotama! Master Gotama has made the Teachings clear in many ways, as though he were turning upright what had been overturned, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who was lost, or holding up a lamp in the dark for those with eyesight to see forms. I go to Master Gotama for refuge and to The Teachings and to The Community of Monks. Let Master Gotama remember me as a Household Practitioner who has gone to him for refuge for life.'*

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(Reference: MN 135)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the “cause and effect” relationship between actions that we perform and the results they generate.

These Teachings are not being shared to fear anyone into learning and practicing these Teachings but instead, explaining what true reality is, so that a Practitioner is then able to make improved decisions through improved wisdom.

Notice that The Buddha does not share a Teaching unless someone asks him a question. When asked, The Buddha shares the truth to help his Students acquire wisdom.

In this Teaching, The Buddha is sharing how “beings are owners of their actions, heirs of their actions; they originate from their actions, are bound to their actions, have their actions as their refuge. It is action that distinguishes beings as unwholesome and wholesome”. In other words, there is no action that we perform that does not have some result. And, we are unable to run and hide from that result, unwholesome or wholesome. All actions produce a result. Through the wisdom of these Teachings, Practitioners can discover the qualities of mind and actions that are unwholesome and those that are wholesome. It is one’s actions that determine if they are unwholesome or wholesome.

Essentially, all The Buddha’s Teachings are guiding one to deeply understand The Natural Law of Kamma and through that wisdom, one will make wiser wholesome decisions producing wholesome outcomes.

The Buddha explains how various actions lead to certain results. Keep in mind that there is no being or entity that is overseeing The Natural Law of Kamma. This natural law functions on its own without intervention or judgment by any being.

Rather than believing what you are learning in this Teaching, instead, reflect on what is being shared.

The Buddha is providing actions performed that have certain results.

**Killing living beings** results in a being having a short life span. Do not believe this but instead, look at the natural world around you to determine if this is truth or not so that you can acquire wisdom.

Have you or have you ever known anyone who has destroyed life repeatedly? Did it lead to a short life span? Perhaps you might think of individuals involved in all types of killing, not just killing that is considered illegal but all killing as The Natural Law of Kamma does not function based on societal laws created by humans.

Think of world leaders who, in the past, were dedicated to killing and look at the result of their life. Consider soldiers who are sent into battle. Think of the animal world such as snakes, lions, bears, etc., these animals generally have shorter life span than animals like elephants or turtles which do not kill for food.

Now, apply this same method of reflection on The Teachings to discover the truth on each individual Teaching shared by The Buddha, specifically those in this Teaching.

The Buddha shares that beings who injure other beings are sickly. Those who are angry and irritable are ugly. Jealous beings are uninfluential.



You can take time, effort, and energy to gradually investigate each aspect of these Teachings to reflect through looking at the world around you to determine if what The Buddha is sharing is the truth so that you can acquire wisdom. In this way, you are not believing these Teachings but instead, you are investigating them to independently discover the truth to acquire wisdom.

Remember, these Teachings are not to be believed but instead, one can learn, reflect, and practice to observe the truth for yourself.

Now that you have learned this Teaching, it is time to reflect.

As you reflect on these Teachings and outcomes, one can come to the conclusion that The Buddha's Teachings are the truth and with this new found wisdom choose to no longer make decisions that would include any of these unwholesome qualities while training the mind to practice the wholesome qualities shared by The Buddha. As you do, the condition of the mind and your life will gradually improve as more people will interact with you in wholesome ways because that is what you are doing, making wholesome choices to interact with people and conduct your life through the wisdom of these wholesome Teachings.

As you can see, The Buddha is not attempting to fear, guilt, or shame anyone into learning and practicing his Teachings but instead, sharing the truth of what will or will not happen in one's life now and in the future should one continue to choose to make decisions to include any of these into your life practice.

His Teachings are not attempting to control anyone, because that is not possible. Instead, his Teachings are providing guidance based on the truth of The Natural Law of Kamma for one who chooses to learn, reflect, and practice this "better way of life" so that you can experience peacefulness, calmness, serenity, and contentedness with joy through not causing harm in the world so that, over time, no harm will come to you.

## Chapter 29

### **The Marks of a Great Man Thirty-Two Marks of A Buddha**

And wise Teachers of other communities know these thirty-two marks, but they do not know the karmic reasons for the gaining of them.

A.) Monks, in whatever former life, former existence or dwelling-place The Tathāgata, being born a human being, undertook mighty deeds to wholesome purpose, unwavering in wholesome conduct of body, speech and mind, in generosity, self-discipline, observance of the fast-day, in honoring parents, Ascetics and Brāhmins and the head of the clan, and in other highly meritorious acts; by performing that (wholesome) Kamma, heaping it up, lavishly and abundantly, at the breaking-up of the body after death he was reborn in a happy state, in a heavenly world, where he was endowed beyond other heavenly beings in ten respects: in length of heavenly life, beauty, happiness, splendor, influence, and in heavenly sights, sounds, smells, flavors and contacts. Falling away from there and coming to be reborn here on earth, he acquired this mark of the Great Man:

(1) feet with level tread, so that he places his foot evenly on the ground, lifts it evenly, and touches the ground evenly with the entire sole. Being endowed with this mark, ... He cannot be impeded by any enemy or adversary from within or without, from craving, anger, or ignorance (unknowing of true reality), nor by any Ascetic or Brāhmin, any heavenly being, Māra or Brahma (God), or any being in the world.

B.) Monks, in whatever former life...The Tathāgata, being born a human being, lived for the happiness of the many, as a dispeller of fright and terror, provider of lawful protection and shelter, and supplying all necessities, by performing that (wholesome) Kamma, ... was reborn in a happy state, a heavenly world ... Falling away from there and coming to be reborn here on earth, he acquired this mark of the Great Man: (2) on the soles of his feet are wheels of a thousand spokes, complete with an outer-wheel and hub.

Being endowed with this mark, ... He has a large community: he is surrounded by male and female Ordained Practitioners, male and female Household Practitioners, heavenly beings and humans, asuras, nagas and Gandhabbas.

C.) Monks, in whatever former life ... The Tathāgata, being born a human being, rejecting the taking of life and abstaining from it, and laying aside stick

and sword, resided, kind and compassionate, having friendship and compassion for all living beings, by performing that (wholesome) Kamma, was reborn in a happy state ... Falling away ... from there and coming to be reborn on earth, he acquired these three marks of the Great Man: (3) projecting heels, (4) long fingers and toes, and (15) an excellently straight body.

Being endowed with these marks, ... He is long-lived, long-enduring, attaining a great age, ... no foe, whether an Ascetic or Brāhmin, a heavenly being, Māra or Brahma, or anyone in the world can possibly take his life.

D.) Monks, in whatever former life ... The Tathāgata became a donor of fine food, delicious and tasty, hard and soft, and of drinks, by performing that (wholesome) Kamma, ... he was reborn in a heavenly world ... Falling away from there and being reborn here on earth, he acquired this mark of the Great Man: (16) the seven convex surfaces, on both hands, both feet, both shoulders and his trunk.

Being endowed with this mark, He receives fine food and drinks.

E.) Monks, in whatever former life ... The Tathāgata made himself beloved through the four bases of compassion: generosity, pleasing speech, beneficial conduct, and impartiality, ... on returning to this earth he acquired these two marks of the Great Man: (5) soft and tender hands and feet, and (6) net-like hands and feet.

Being endowed with these two marks, ... All his Students are well-disposed to him: male and female Ordained Practitioners, male and female Household Practitioners, heavenly beings and humans, asuras, nagas, and gandhabbas.

F.) Monks, in whatever former life ... The Tathāgata became a speaker to the people about their welfare, about Teachings, explaining this to people and being a bearer of welfare and peacefulness to beings, a dispenser of Teachings, ... returning to this earth he acquired these two marks of the Great Man: (7) high-raised ankles, and (14) upward-growing body-hairs.

Being endowed with these marks, ... As a Buddha, he becomes the chief, foremost, highest, supreme among all beings.

G.) Monks, in whatever former life ... The Tathāgata became a skilled advocate of a craft, a science, a way of conduct or action, thinking: What can I learn quickly and acquire, quickly practice, without undue weariness? ... on returning to earth, he acquires this mark of the Great Man: (8) legs like an antelope's.

Being endowed with this mark, as a ruler he quickly acquires whatever things are fitting for a ruler, the things that pertain to a ruler, delight him and are appropriate to him. As a Buddha, likewise.

H.) Monks, in whatever former life ... The Tathāgata approached an Ascetic or Brāhmin and asked: Sir, what is the wholesome, what is the unwholesome? What is blameworthy, what is not? What course is to be followed, what is not? What, if I do it, will be to my lasting sorrow and harm, what to my lasting peacefulness? ... on returning to this earth, he acquired this mark of the Great Man: (12) his skin is so delicate and smooth that no dust can adhere to his body.

Being endowed with this mark, ... he will have great wisdom, extensive wisdom, joyous wisdom, swift wisdom, penetrative wisdom, discerning wisdom, and among all beings there will be none equal to him or wholesome to him in wisdom.

I.) Monks, in whatever former life ... The Tathāgata lived without anger, perfectly unruffled, and even after many words had been spoken was not abusive, or agitated, or wrathful, or aggressive, displaying neither anger nor hatred nor resentment, but was in the habit of giving away fine, soft rugs, cloaks, fine linen, cotton, silk and woolen stuffs, ... on returning to this earth, he acquired this mark of the Great Man: (11) a bright complexion, the color of gold.

Being endowed with this mark, ... he will receive such fine stuffs.

J.) Monks, in whatever former life ... The Tathāgata reunited those long-lost with relatives, friends and companions who had missed them, reunited mother with child and child with mother, father with child and child with father, brother with brother, brother with sister and sister with brother, making them one again with great rejoicing, ... on returning to earth he acquired this mark of the Great Man: (10) his male organs are enclosed in a sheath.

Being endowed with this mark, ... he will have numerous sons (disciples), more than a thousand sons, powerfully built heroes, crushers of the enemy host.

K.) Monks, in whatever former life ... The Tathāgata, considering the welfare of people, knew the nature of each, knew each one himself, and knew how each one differed: "This one deserves such-and-such, that one deserves so and-so", so he distinguished them, ... on returning to earth he acquired these two marks of the Great Man: (19) he is proportioned like a banyan-tree, and (9) standing, without bending, he can touch and rub his knees with both hands.

Being endowed with these marks, ... he will be wealthy and rich, and these will be his treasures: confidence, morality, moral wrongdoing, moral concern, learning, generosity and wisdom.

L.) Monks, in whatever former life The Tathāgata ... interested in the welfare of the many, their advantage, comfort, freedom from bondage, thinking how they might increase in confidence, morality, learning, generosity, in Teachings, in wisdom, in wealth and possessions, in two-legged animals and four-legged animals, in wives and children, in servants, workers and helpers, in relatives, friends and acquaintances ... on returning to earth he acquired these three marks of the Great Man: (17) the front part of his body is like a lion's, (18) there is no hollow between his shoulders, and (20) his bust is evenly rounded.

Being endowed with these marks, ... he cannot lose anything: confidence, morality, learning, generosity or wisdom - losing nothing, he will succeed in all things.

M.) Monks, in whatever former life The Tathāgata ... was one who avoided harming beings by hand, by stones, stick or sword, ... on returning to earth he acquired this mark of the Great Man: (21) he has a perfect sense of taste. Whatever he touches with the tip of his tongue he tastes in his throat, and the taste is dispersed everywhere.

Being endowed with this mark, ... he will suffer little distress or sickness, his digestion will be good, being neither too cold nor too hot. As a Buddha likewise, he is also equable and tolerant of struggle.

N.) Monks, in whatever former life The Tathāgata ... was accustomed to look at people not with an attitude, suspicion, or disapproval, indirectly or secretly but directly, openly and straight-forwardly, and with a kindly glance, ... on returning to earth he acquired these two marks of the Great Man: (29) deep blue eyes, and (30) eyelashes like a cow's.

Being endowed with these marks, ... he will be looked upon with love by the common people; he will be popular with and loved by male and female Ordained Practitioners, male and female Household Practitioners, heavenly beings and humans, asuras, nagas and gandhabbas.

O.) Monks, in whatever former life The Tathāgata ... became the foremost in skilled behavior, a leader in Right Action of body, speech and mind, in generosity, virtuous conduct (moral conduct), observance of fasts, in honoring father and mother, Ascetics and Brāhmins and the head of the clan,

and in various other proper activities, ... on returning to earth he acquired this mark of the Great Man: (32) a head like a royal turban.

Being endowed with this mark, ... he will receive the loyalty of male and female Ordained Practitioners, male and female Household Practitioners, heavenly beings and humans, asuras, nagas, and gandhabbas.

P.) Monks, in whatever former life The Tathāgata, ... rejecting false speech, put away lies and became a truth-speaker, wedded to the truth. reliable, consistent, not deceiving the world, ... on returning to earth he acquired these two marks of the Great Man: (13) his body-hairs separate, one to each pore, and (31) the hair between his brows white and soft like cotton-down.

Being endowed with these marks, ... he will be obeyed by male and female Ordained Practitioners, male and female Household Practitioners, heavenly beings and humans, asuras, nagas and gandhabbas

Q.) Monks, in whatever former life The Tathāgata, ... rejecting slander, abstained from it, not repeating there what he had heard here to the detriment of these, or repeating what he had heard there to the detriment of those ... Thus he was a reconciler of those at variance and an encourager of those at one, rejoicing in peace, loving it, delighting in it, one who spoke up for peace ... on returning to earth he acquired these two marks of the Great Man: (23) forty teeth, and (25) no spaces between the teeth.

Being endowed with these marks, ... his followers: male and female Ordained Practitioners, male and female Household Practitioners, heavenly beings and humans, asuras, nagas and gandhabbas will not be divided among themselves.

R.) Monks, in whatever former life The Tathāgata, ... rejecting harsh speech, abstained from it, spoke what was blameless, pleasing to the ear, agreeable, reaching the heart, courteous, pleasing and attractive to the multitude (many people), ... on returning to earth he acquired these two marks of the Great Man: (27) his tongue was very long, and (28) he had a Brahma-like (God-like) voice, like the karavika bird.

Being endowed with these marks, ... he will have a persuasive voice: all his Students: male and female Ordained Practitioners, male and female Household Practitioners, heavenly beings and humans, asuras, nagas and gandhabbas will take his words to heart.

S.) Monks, in whatever former life The Tathāgata, ... rejecting idle chatter, spoke at the right time, what was correct and to the point, of Teachings and



discipline, and what was bound up with profit...on returning to earth he acquired this mark of the Great Man: (22) jaws like a lion's.

Being endowed with this mark,...he cannot be overcome by any foe or hostile thing from within or without, by craving, anger or ignorance (unknowing of true reality), by any Ascetic or Brāhmin, heavenly being, Māra, Brahma (God) or anything in the world.

T.) Monks, in whatever former life The Tathāgata, ... rejecting wrong livelihood, lived by Right Livelihood, refraining from cheating with false weights and measures, from bribery and corruption, deception and insincerity, from wounding, killing, imprisoning, lightway robbery, and taking goods by force, ... on returning to earth he acquired these two marks of the Great Man: (24) even teeth, and (26) very bright canine teeth.

Being endowed with these marks, ... as a Buddha, his Students ... male and female Ordained Practitioners, male and female Household Practitioners, heavenly beings and humans, asuras, nagas and gandhabbas will be pure.

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(Reference: DN 30)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares certain aspects of his existence as a Buddha and what lead to the acquiring of these characteristics.

From The Buddha's description of these qualities, a Practitioner can learn wholesome qualities to cultivate and practice in one's life practice, to further develop on The Path to Enlightenment. The Buddha is providing qualities he cultivated over several lifetimes that led to him becoming a Buddha.

A Buddha's journey to Enlightenment is not started and concluded in just one lifetime. Instead, a Buddha attains Enlightenment through a pursuit of wisdom over several lifetimes as described in this Teaching.

Due to the accumulation of wisdom over several lifetimes, the individual who is a Buddha will be able to attain Enlightenment on their own without the guidance of any Teachers, guide countless beings to Enlightenment based on their independently discovered Teachings, and leave The Teachings in a condition that upon their death countless more beings will be able to attain Enlightenment with their Teachings.

A Buddha's deep wisdom is acquired through their own independent journey to Enlightenment and then he will choose to share that wisdom for the remaining time of his life, out of compassion for all other beings.

**Compassion** (Pāli: karuṇā) is concern for the misfortunes of others.

Detailed explanation of moral wrongdoing and moral concern is available in this same book series found in Chapter 25 of the book "Generosity" (Volume 13).

## Chapter 30

### The Simile of a Lump of Salt

Monks, if one were to say thus: A person experiences Kamma in precisely the same way that he created it, in such a case there could be no living of the spiritual life and no opportunity would be seen for completely making an end of discontentedness.

But if one were to say thus: When a person creates Kamma that is to be experienced in a particular way, he experiences its result precisely in that way, in such a case the living of the spiritual life is possible and an opportunity is seen for completely making an end of discontentedness.

Here, Monks, some person has created a small amount of unwholesome Kamma yet it leads him to hell, while some other person here has created exactly the same small amount of Kamma yet it is to be experienced in this very life, without even a slight (residue) being seen, much less plentiful (residue).

What kind of person creates a small amount of unwholesome Kamma that leads him to hell?

Here, some person is undeveloped in body, virtuous behavior, mind, and wisdom; he is limited and has a mean character, and he dwells in discontentedness. When such a person creates a small amount of unwholesome Kamma, it leads him to hell.

What kind of person creates exactly the same small amount of unwholesome Kamma and yet it is to be experienced in this very life, without even a slight (residue) being seen, much less plentiful (residue)?

Here, some person is developed in body, virtuous behavior, mind, and wisdom. He is unlimited and has a lofty character, and he resides without measure. When such a person creates exactly the same small amount of unwholesome Kamma, it is to be experienced in this very life, without even a slight (residue) being seen, much less plentiful (residue).

Suppose a man would drop a lump of salt into a small bowl of water. What do you think, Monks? Would that lump of salt make the small quantity of water in the bowl salty and undrinkable?

*‘Yes, Venerable Sir.’*



For what reason?

Because the water in the bowl is limited, thus that lump of salt would make it salty and undrinkable.

But suppose a man would drop a lump of salt into the river Ganges. What do you think, Monks? Would that lump of salt make the river Ganges become salty and undrinkable?

*'No, Venerable Sir.'*

For what reason?

Because the river Ganges contains a large volume of water, thus that lump of salt would not make it salty and undrinkable.

So too, Monks, some person here has created a small amount of unwholesome Kamma yet it leads him to hell, while some other person here has created exactly the same small amount of Kamma yet it is to be experienced in this very life, without even a slight (residue) being seen, much less abundant (residue).

Here, Monks, someone is imprisoned for [stealing] half a kahapana (coin/currency), a kahapana, or a hundred kahapanas, while someone else is not imprisoned for [stealing] the same amount of money.

What kind of person is imprisoned for [stealing] half a kahapana (coin/currency), a kahapana, or a hundred kahapanas?

Here, someone is poor, with little property and wealth. Such a person is imprisoned for [stealing] half a kahapana (coin/currency), a kahapana, or a hundred kahapanas.

What kind of person is not imprisoned for [stealing] half a kahapana (coin/currency), a kahapana, or a hundred kahapanas?

Here, someone is rich, with much money and wealth. Such a person is not imprisoned for [stealing] half a kahapana (coin/currency), a kahapana, or a hundred kahapanas.

So too, Monks, some person has created a small amount of unwholesome Kamma yet it leads him to hell, while some other person here has created exactly the same small amount of Kamma yet it is to be experienced in this

very life, without even a slight (residue) being seen, much less abundant (residue).

Monks, take the case of a sheep merchant or butcher, who can execute, imprison, fine, or otherwise penalize someone who has stolen one of his sheep but can't do so to someone else who has stolen his sheep.

What kind of person can the sheep merchant or butcher execute, imprison, fine, or otherwise penalize for stealing a sheep?

One who is poor, with little property and wealth. The sheep merchant or butcher can execute, imprison, fine, or otherwise penalize such a person for stealing a sheep.

What kind of person can't the sheep merchant or butcher execute, imprison, fine, or otherwise penalize for stealing a sheep?

One who is rich, with a lot of money and wealth, a King or royal minister. The sheep merchant or butcher can't execute, imprison, fine, or otherwise penalize such a person for stealing a sheep; he can only plead with him: 'Sir, return my sheep or pay me for it.'

So too, Monks, some person has created a small amount of unwholesome Kamma yet it leads him to hell, while some other person here has created exactly the same small amount of Kamma yet it is to be experienced in this very life, without even a slight (residue) being seen, much less abundant (residue).

If, Monks, one were to say thus: A person experiences Kamma in precisely the same way that he created it, in such a case there could be no living of the spiritual life and no opportunity would be seen for completely making an end of discontentedness.

But if one were to say thus: When a person creates Kamma that is to be experienced in a particular way, he experiences its result precisely in that way, in such a case the living of the spiritual life is possible and an opportunity is seen for completely making an end of discontentedness.

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(Reference: AN 3.100)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how the same unwholesome action can lead to more or less consequences for an individual based on the amount of wholesomeness they have already accumulated in their life.

The Buddha uses a lump of salt to represent the unwholesome action and the water represents wholesome actions.

If a same lump of salt is dropped into a bowl of water versus an entire river, the bowl of water becomes undrinkable while the river of water is still drinkable.

Why is this?

This is because the amount of water (i.e. wholesomeness) that is less will be more highly affected by the lump of salt versus the entire river.

In the same way, a being who has generated an insignificant amount of wholesomeness in their life through making many unwise unwholesome decisions will be more highly affected by the same unwholesome action versus someone who has generated a significant amount of wholesomeness in their life through making many wise wholesome decisions.

The same unwholesome action will produce significant versus less significant effects based on our past actions.

The Buddha is essentially sharing how a Practitioner who has a history of making many wholesome decisions will have accumulated many beneficial results in their life (i.e. wholesome Kamma). Making an unwise decision that is unwholesome will affect this person much less than an individual who has minimal accumulation of wholesome decisions.

As a Practitioner learns, reflects, and practices these Teachings making wiser and wiser decisions, they are accumulating the beneficial results of those decisions through improved opportunities in their life. If there is an occasional unwholesome decision that is made along The Path to Enlightenment, this will be less impactful since there is more accumulation of wholesome decisions.

The more wholesome decisions a Practitioner makes, the more accumulation of beneficial results one will experience. As time goes forward, a Practitioner who will attain Enlightenment will continue to make wise wholesome decisions over an extended period of time leading to the accumulation of wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

The goal of these Teachings is not to learn them and then immediately practice them perfectly. That is not possible.

Instead, a Practitioner will need to gradually learn these Teachings then gradually implement them into their life making an increased amount of wholesome decisions. Over an extended period of time, the accumulation of these wholesome decisions will result in increased amounts of wholesome results to be experienced. When there is an occasional deviation from these Teachings, understand this is normal as you walk towards Enlightenment and know that you are working towards the extinguishing of any and all unwholesome decisions. This will require patience and consistency towards learning, reflecting, and practicing with determination, dedication, and diligence.

## Learning Resources for Further Exploration

### ***Youtube Video(s)***

***(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 21-30)***

<https://youtu.be/pXLR8vyh6DE>

### ***Podcast(s)***

***Ep. 280 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 21-30)***

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--280---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Natural-Law-of-Kamma---Volume-6---Chapter-21-30-e1eanht/a-a7d56fn>

## Chapter 31

### A Great Gift

Monks, here, a Noble Disciple, having abandoned the destruction of life, abstains from the destruction of life.

By abstaining from the destruction of life, the Noble Disciple gives to an immeasurable number of beings freedom from fear, hostility, and harm.

He himself in turn enjoys immeasurable freedom from fear, hostility, and harm. This is the first gift, a great gift, highest, of long standing, traditional, ancient, untainted and never before tainted, which is not being tainted and will not be tainted, not refused by wise Ascetics and Brāhmins.

This is the stream of merit, stream of the wholesome, nutriment of peacefulness - heavenly, ripening peacefulness, conducive to heaven – that leads to what is aspired for, needed, and agreeable, to one's welfare and peacefulness.

*(The other 4 precepts which are abstaining from taking of what is not given, abstaining from sexual misconduct, abstaining from lying and abstaining from consuming intoxicants (substances that cause heedlessness), are repeated with The Buddha's guidance.)*

There are, Monks, these five gifts, great gifts, highest, of long standing, traditional, ancient, untainted and never before tainted, which are not being tainted and will not be tainted, not refused by wise Ascetics and Brāhmins.

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(Reference: AN 8.39)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he explains how through practicing The Five Precepts that a Practitioner “gives to an immeasurable number of beings freedom from fear, hostility, and harm”.

It is through learning, reflecting, and practicing The Five Precepts that a Practitioner significantly reduces the harm they cause in the world. This is beneficial to one’s own mind and life. You will experience that through significantly reducing harm you cause in the world through practicing The Five Precepts, there will be less harm that comes to you.

It is The Eight Fold Path that helps a Practitioner learn and practice Teachings that completely eliminates 100% of all harm one is causing in the world, thus, they will be producing only wholesome Kamma. Extinguishing all unwholesome Kamma through producing only wholesome Kamma is how a Practitioner “cleans up” their unwholesome Kamma and will eventually experience Enlightenment through continued progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

## Chapter 32

### One is Reborn through One's Deeds

Monks, 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.

Here, having abandoned the destruction of life, someone abstains from the destruction of life; with the rod and weapon laid aside, dedicated and kindly, he resides compassionate toward all living beings. He does not creep along by body, speech, and mind. His bodily Kamma is straight; his verbal Kamma is straight; his mental Kamma is straight. His destination is straight; his rebirth is straight.

But for one with a straight destination and rebirth, I say, there is one of two destinations: either the exclusively pleasant heavens or influential families, such as those of affluent Khattiyas, affluent Brāhmins, or affluent Householders, [families that are] rich, with great wealth and property, abundant gold and silver, abundant treasures and belongings, abundant wealth and grain.

Thus a being is reborn from a being; one is reborn through one's deeds. When one has been reborn, contacts affect one.

It is in this way, I say, that beings are the heirs of their Kamma.

*(The Tathāgata spoke of 'abandoning of taking what is not given' and 'abandoning of sexual misconduct' with discourses similar to that of 'abandoning taking life': He also spoke of 'the fourfold wholesome conduct of speech and the threefold wholesome conduct of mind' in the same way.)*

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(Reference: AN 10.216)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how rebirth occurs based on one's deeds or actions.

While craving is the fuel that determines if there is rebirth, it is the results of our actions that determines where and in what condition one will be reborn. The location and condition of one's rebirth is determined by The Natural Law of Kamma.

**Rebirth: a new being that has come into existence through The Cycle of Rebirth based on a previous being's craving and Kamma.**

Gotama Buddha taught rebirth through The Cycle of Rebirth.

Rebirth is a new existence of a new being that has been reborn based on a previous being's craving. Craving is the fuel that causes rebirth. If there is craving at the time of death, there will be rebirth into a new existence. If Enlightenment has been attained (i.e. all craving, anger, and ignorance are fully extinguished), there will be no rebirth.

The new being may or may not have residual memories of previous existences in its new consciousness that may be recalled over time during the new being's life. Rebirth is not based on a permanent soul or spirit of any kind but instead is caused by the craving of the previous being which produces a new birth into a new existence.

Each new birth is a new existence or new life. In reality, this should be shared and discussed as The Cycle of New Existence because there is nothing that is actually being reborn.

Kamma of the previous being will determine the destination and life situation of the new being. Kamma of the previous being determines in which realm the new being will be reborn, Hell, Animal, Afflicted Spirits, Human, or the Heavenly realm. Kamma from the previous being also determines the quality of life of the new being. For example, the family and life situation (poverty vs. wealth) one is born into, the appearance of the new being, and the condition of the new being's body and mind are all determined based on the Kamma of the previous being.

If the previous being generated significant amounts of wholesome Kamma to be reborn into the human realm, the new being is reborn into a favorable destination within a wealthy family, beautiful appearance, and/or with a healthy body and mind.

If the previous being generated significant amounts of unwholesome Kamma, the new being is reborn into an unfavorable destination of the lower realms (Hell, Animal, or Afflicted Spirits Realm) or if reborn into the human realm, the being will be reborn into difficult circumstances in the new existence based on the previous being's Kamma.

Difficult circumstances that result from the previous being's Kamma would include what realm the new being is reborn, what part of the world, the type of family, the amount of wealth, ability to acquire necessities to sustain life, appearance, and the health of the body and the mind.

Craving determines if there is rebirth while Kamma determines in what realm, what situation, and the condition of the new being upon rebirth.

The Buddha shares that when one has wholesome conduct through body, speech, and mind, one's Kamma (i.e. results) are also wholesome (i.e. straight). Therefore, with wholesome (i.e. straight) bodily, verbal, and mental conduct one's rebirth is wholesome or straight.

The Buddha provides guidance on wholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct throughout his Teachings. Specifically, you can see Chapter 7 of this book for detailed explanation of these Teachings.



## Chapter 33

### One is Reborn through One's Creeping Deeds

Monks, I will teach you a discourse of The Teachings on creeping.

Listen and attend closely...

And what, Monks, is that discourse of The Teachings on creeping?

Monks, 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.

Here, someone destroys life; he is murderous, bloody-handed, given to blows and violence, merciless to living beings. He creeps along by body, speech, and mind. His bodily Kamma is crooked; his verbal Kamma is crooked; his mental Kamma is crooked.

His destination is crooked; his rebirth is crooked. But for one with a crooked destination and rebirth, I say, there is one of two destinations: either the exclusively painful hells or a species of creeping animal. And what are the species of creeping animals? The snake, the scorpion, the centipede, the mongoose, the cat, the mouse, and the owl, or any other animals that creep away when they see people.

Thus a being is reborn from a being; one is reborn through one's deeds. When one has been reborn, contacts affect one.

It is in this way, I say, that beings are the heirs of their Kamma.

*(The Tathāgata spoke of 'taking what is not given' and 'engages in sexual misconduct' with discourses similar to that of 'taking life'. He also spoke of 'the fourfold misconduct of speech and the threefold misconduct of mind' in the same way.)*

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(Reference: AN 10.216)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the opposite of Chapter 32 focusing on unwholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct that would lead to an unwholesome rebirth.

The Buddha is once again focusing Practitioners development of their life practice on improving their decisions leading to improved results in this life or future lives. Through acquiring the wisdom of what is wholesome and unwholesome, a Practitioner can then make wise wholesome decisions that lead to wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

The Buddha provides guidance on unwholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct throughout his Teachings. Specifically, you can see Chapter 6 of this book for detailed explanation of these Teachings.

## Chapter 34

### At Minimum Leads to Deeds

Monks, the destruction of life, repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, leads to hell, to the animal realm, and to the realm of afflicted spirits; for one reborn as a human being the destruction of life at minimum leads to a short life span.

Taking what is not given, repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, leads to hell, to the animal realm, and to the realm of afflicted spirits; for one reborn as a human being taking what is not given at minimum leads to loss of wealth.

Sexual misconduct, repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, leads to hell, to the animal realm, and to the realm of afflicted spirits; for one reborn as a human being sexual misconduct at minimum leads to hostility and competition.

False speech, repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, leads to hell, to the animal realm, and to the realm of afflicted spirits; for one reborn as a human being false speech at minimum leads to false accusations.

Argumentative speech, repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, leads to hell, to the animal realm, and to the realm of afflicted spirits; for one reborn as a human being argumentative speech at minimum leads to being separated from one's friends.

Harsh speech, repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, leads to hell, to the animal realm, and to the realm of afflicted spirits; for one reborn as a human being harsh speech at minimum leads to disagreeable sounds.

Idle chatter, repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, leads to hell, to the animal realm, and to the realm of afflicted spirits; for one reborn as a human being idle chatter at minimum leads to others distrusting one's words.

Drinking liquor and wine (ingestion of substances that cause heedlessness), repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, leads to hell, to the animal realm, and to the realm of afflicted spirits; for one reborn as a human being drinking liquor and wine (ingestion of substances that cause heedlessness) at minimum leads to madness.

(Reference: AN 8.40)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares more details related to unwholesome moral conduct and the results of this conduct. This Teaching is connecting The Five Precepts and The Eight Fold Path to The Cycle of Rebirth, explaining the truth of how our decisions that lack the wisdom of these Teachings practicing unwholesome moral conduct, lead to unpleasant rebirth in the lower realms.

The Buddha expands Right Speech adding more details to help one understand that false speech, argumentative speech, harsh speech, and idle chatter all need to be eliminated from one's life practice to experience Enlightenment.

He explains the resulting unpleasant rebirth but also explains the outcome of not practicing each of these individual Teachings.

Remember, these Teachings are not to be believed but instead, one can learn, reflect, and practice to observe the truth for yourself.

Now that you have learned this Teaching, now it is time to reflect.

1.) Have you or have you ever known anyone who has destroyed life repeatedly? Did it lead to a short life span? Perhaps you might think of individuals involved in all types of killing, not just killing that is considered illegal but all killing as The Natural Law of Kamma does not function based on societal laws created by humans.

Think of world leaders who, in the past, were dedicated to killing and look at the result of their life. Consider soldiers who are sent into battle. Think of the animal world such as snakes, lions, bears, etc. these animals have shorter life span than animals like elephants or turtles who do not kill for food.

2.) Have you or have you ever known of anyone who steals repeatedly? Did they experience loss of wealth through going to jail, paying courts, or lawyers? Did people steal from them?

3.) Have you or have you ever known of anyone who has been involved in sexual misconduct repeatedly? Did it lead to hostility in their relationships and/or competition amongst friends and associates?

4.) Have you or have you ever known of anyone who has used speech that is false, argumentative, harsh, or have idle chatter repeatedly? Did it lead to false accusations, separation from friends, hearing disagreeable things, or distrusting one's words?

5.) Have you or have you ever known of anyone who has ingested substances that cause heedlessness repeatedly? What was or is the condition of that person's life? Did they or do they experience a peaceful, calm, serene, and content life with joy or did it lead to madness?

As you reflect on these Teachings and outcomes, one can come to the conclusion that The Buddha's Teachings are the truth and with this new found wisdom choose to no longer make decisions that would include any of these. As you do, the condition of the mind and your life will gradually improve as more people will interact with you in wholesome ways because that is what you are doing, making wholesome choices to

interact with people and conduct your life through the wisdom of these wholesome Teachings.

As you can see, The Buddha is not attempting to fear, guilt, or shame anyone into learning and practicing his Teachings but instead, sharing the truth of what will or will not happen in one's life now and in the future should one continue to choose to make decisions to include any of these into your life practice.

His Teachings are not attempting to control anyone, because that is not possible. Instead, his Teachings are providing guidance based on the truth of The Natural Law of Kamma for one who chooses to learn, reflect, and practice this "better way of life" so that you can experience peacefulness, calmness, serenity, and contentedness with joy through not causing harm in the world so that, over time, no harm will come to you.

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).

## Chapter 35

### Indebtedness is Discontentedness in the World

Poverty is called discontentedness in the world; so too is getting into debt. A poor person who becomes indebted is troubled while enjoying himself.

Then they prosecute him, and he also incurs imprisonment. This imprisonment is indeed discontentedness for one yearning for gain and sensual pleasures.

Just so in the Noble One's discipline, one in whom confidence is lacking, who sees no danger in wrongdoing and brash, heaps up a mass of evil (unwholesome) Kamma.

Having engaged in misconduct by body, speech, and mind, he forms the wish: May no one find out about me.

He twists around with his body, [twists around] by speech or mind; he piles up his evil (unwholesome) deeds, in one way or another, repeatedly.

This unwise evildoer, knowing his own misdeeds, is a poor person who falls into debt, troubled while enjoying himself.

His thoughts then prosecute him; painful mental states born of remorse [follow him wherever he goes] whether in the village or the forest.

This unwise evildoer, knowing his own misdeeds, goes to a certain [animal] realm or is even bound in hell.

This indeed is the discontentedness of bondage...

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(Reference: AN 6.45)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a person who makes decisions to go into debt and is troubled by their indebtedness is similar to a person who has unwholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct.

When an individual is doing unwholesome conduct, the mind knows and worries about these deeds. The unwise decisions lead to worry and despair. The Buddha explains: “His thoughts then prosecute him; painful mental states born of remorse [follow him wherever he goes] whether in the village or the forest”.

Conversely, for one who purifies their bodily, verbal, and mental conduct on The Path to Enlightenment and attains Enlightenment knows they have purified their moral conduct. Wise wholesome decisions lead to elimination of all worry and despair. One aspect of eliminating discontentedness as part of The Path to Enlightenment is that a Practitioner knows they have purified their moral conduct and, in doing so, they are not causing any harm to other beings. The mind can be at ease and peaceful knowing their life practice is not causing harm and, therefore, no harm will come to them. All fears can be eliminated of any harm returning to you because you are not causing any harm in the world.

But, for one who continues to make unwise decisions to have unwholesome moral conduct “this unwise evildoer, knowing his own misdeeds, goes to a certain [animal] realm or is even bound in hell”. A being is reborn based on the results of their decisions. No one, no being, or no entity is sending you to a harmful and painful place such as hell or the animal realm but instead, it is one’s own decisions that create this outcome. Likewise, it is our own decisions that can lead to an improved rebirth or even Enlightenment in this life.

Continued craving/desire/attachment leads to continued discontentedness and the mind is bound or tied to The Cycle of Rebirth continuing to experience wandering and roaming with sorrow, grief, displeasure, and despair. “This indeed is the discontentedness of bondage...”.

For a Practitioner who continues to choose to make unwise unwholesome decisions, these are decisions to remain bound to continued sorrow, grief, displeasure, and despair. It is like a prison to remain in The Cycle of Rebirth, while one who has attained Enlightenment is experiencing freedom from strong feelings, the mind is liberated, and no longer bound to discontentedness or continued rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth.

The Buddha is sharing that choosing to have craving/desire/attachment and go into debt, is a source of discontentedness. It is not being poor that causes the discontentedness, it is the craving/desire/attachment that causes the discontentedness. If one continues to decide to incur debt due to the mind’s craving/desire/attachment, there will be discontentedness because of the craving/desire/attachment.

Have you been in debt and experienced the pressure and anxiety of owing others money?

This was caused by the mind’s craving/desire/attachment which led to the debt being incurred. It is craving/desire/attachment that causes the discontentedness leading to the decision to incur debt falsely thinking that acquiring the objects of our affection will solve the problem. Conversely, eliminating debt through living within one’s own means, will liberate the mind from the constant pressure of owing others money due to your own cravings and desires.

The Buddha himself, once having left the palace, was poor. He was a roaming, homeless Ascetic, yet his mind was completely peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy experiencing the Enlightened mind. So being poor is not what causes the discontentedness, it is the craving/desire/attachment for material wealth (i.e. the longing and yearning of the mind) that leads to discontentedness.

As one decides to incur debt to fulfill the mind's craving/desire/attachment, when one is in debt the mind becomes "troubled while enjoying himself" due to "one yearning for gain and sensual pleasures".

Additionally, everything that happens in our life is "a result of our own decisions". While it is very challenging to escape generational poverty, the cause that led to being reborn into that situation is rooted in our own decisions within prior lives. It is our choices/decisions that are the cause of our rebirth into a family that is impoverished. And, it is our own decisions that will lead to escaping generational poverty.

Lacking resources to sustain life is generational poverty. Lacking resources to purchase everything that mind "wants", is due to cravings/desires in the mind. Living life based on our needs rather than our wants, will produce conditions conducive to liberation of mind.

The problem is not that one is lacking the resources to purchase what the mind "wants". The problem is that the mind has craving/desire "wanting" something to fulfill its own sensual desires falsely thinking that this will satisfy the mind and create lasting inner satisfaction. Eliminating craving/desire/attachment will liberate the mind from its constant longing and yearning for sensual pleasures. As long as there is craving/desire/attachment in the mind, it will continue to experience discontentedness never being "satisfied with what is".

So while now you may feel that poverty is not one's own choice, if you understand The Natural Law of Kamma more deeply, you can come to understand that every single aspect of our life is from our own choices and decisions. There is nothing that happens in our life that is not due to our own decisions.

## **The Natural Law of Kamma**

"Cause and Effect" or "Action and Result" - essentially, the results of our decisions.

Your Life -> Your Decisions -> Your Results

Nothing happens by chance or as a result of anything other than our own decisions. Gaining the wisdom of these Teachings will help you to make wise choices/decisions that lead to wholesome results. Incurring debt to please the mind's sensual desires (i.e. sensual pleasures) will only create more problems in one's own life through continuous stress and anxiety to acquire the needed funds to repay the debt, even more funds than the original item purchased due to interest payments.

Therefore, a wise Practitioner will eliminate craving/desire/attachment to acquire items living outside its means and instead, focus on using financial resources to acquire that which is needed to sustain life. If there are additional funds available, one might consider how to apply that wealth to beneficial outcomes without spending in excess which might lead to the choice to incur debt.



To eliminate debt, one may need to adjust their lifestyle and spending decisions for a period of time to repay the loan. To be successful, an individual will need to choose to restrain the mind from its constant cravings/desires so that there are funds available to repay the debt. Once an individual is debt free, the mind can be more liberated from its constant cravings/desires no longer needing to feel the pressure, stress, and anxiety it caused through its own choices to incur debt.

One is no longer “troubled while enjoying himself”.

Further detailed explanation of Indebtedness is Discontentedness in the World is available in this same book series found in Chapter 7 of the book “The Foremost Householder” (Volume 8).

## Chapter 36

### Four Kinds of Persons

At Savathi,..The Perfectly Enlightened One then said to (King Pasenadi of Kosala):

Great King, there are these four kinds of persons found existing in the world.

What four?

The one heading from darkness to darkness;  
The one heading from darkness to light;  
The one heading from light to darkness;  
The one heading from light to light.

And how, Great King, is a person one heading from darkness to darkness?

Here some person has been reborn in a low family - a family of Candālas, bamboo workers, hunters, cartwrights, or waste-collectors - a poor family in which there is little food and drink and which subsists with difficulty, one where food and clothing are obtained with difficulty; and he is unsightly, deformed, chronically blind or cripple-handed or lame or paralyzed. He is not one who gains food, drink, clothing, and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting. He engages in misconduct of body, speech, and mind. Having done so, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the nether world, in hell. Suppose, Great King, a man would go from darkness to darkness, or from gloom to gloom, or from stain to stain: this person, I say, is exactly similar.

It is in this way, Great King, that a person is one heading from darkness to darkness.

And how, Great King, is a person one heading from darkness to light?

Here some person has been reborn in a low family - a family of Candālas, bamboo workers, hunters, cartwrights, or waste-collectors - a poor family in which there is little food and drink and which subsists with difficulty, one where food and clothing are obtained with difficulty; and he is ugly, unsightly, deformed, chronically blind or cripple-handed or lame or paralyzed. He is not one who gains food, drink, clothing, and vehicles: garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting. He engages in wholesome

conduct of body, speech, and mind. Having done so, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world. Suppose, Great King, a man would climb from the ground on to a palanquin, or from a palanquin on to horseback, or from horseback to an elephant mount, or from an elephant mount to a mansion: this person, I say, is exactly similar.

It is in this way, Great King, that a person is one heading from darkness to light.

And how, Great King, is a person one heading from light to darkness?

Here some person has been reborn in a high family - an affluent Khattiya family, an affluent Brāhmin family, or an affluent Householder family - one which is rich, with great wealth and property, with abundant gold and silver, abundant treasures and commodities, abundant wealth and grain; and he is handsome, attractive, graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion. He is one who gains food, drink, clothing, and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting. He engages in misconduct of body, speech, and mind. Having done so, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the nether world, in hell. Suppose, Great King, a man would descend from a mansion to an elephant mount, or from an elephant mount to horseback, or from horseback to a palanquin, or from a palanquin to the ground, or from the ground to underground darkness: this person, I say, is exactly similar.

It is in this way, Great King, that a person is one heading from light to darkness.

And how, Great King, is a person one heading from light to light?

Here some person has been reborn in a high family - an affluent Khattiya family, an affluent Brāhmin family, or an affluent Householder family - one which is rich, with great wealth and property, with abundant gold and silver, abundant treasures and commodities, with abundant wealth and grain; and he is handsome, attractive, graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion. He is one who gains food, drink, clothing, and vehicles; garlands, scents, and ointments; bedding, housing, and lighting. He engages in wholesome conduct of body, speech, and mind. Having done so, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world. Suppose, Great King, a man would cross over from palanquin to palanquin, or from horseback to horseback, or from elephant mount to elephant mount, or from mansion to mansion: this person, I say, is exactly similar.

It is in this way, Great King, that a person is one heading from light to light.

These, Great King, are the four kinds of persons found existing in the world.

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(Reference: SN 3.21)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how a person who is reborn into a low family or high family, which is based on one's decisions in their past life, can then move from there towards a better life in the heavenly realm or a worse rebirth in a lower realm. In this way, one is moving "from darkness to darkness", "from darkness to light", "from light to darkness", or "from light to light".

**Darkness to darkness:** a being who is born into difficult circumstances finding it difficult to find the necessities to sustain life and due to their own unwholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct are reborn into a lower realm of existence for their next rebirth.

**Darkness to light:** a being who is born into difficult circumstances finding it difficult to find the necessities to sustain life and due to their own wholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct are reborn into the heavenly realm of existence for their next rebirth.

**Light to darkness:** a being who is born into beneficial circumstances finding it easy to find the necessities to sustain life and due to their own unwholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct are reborn into a lower realm of existence for their next rebirth.

**Light to light:** a being who is born into beneficial circumstances finding it easy to find the necessities to sustain life and due to their own wholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct are reborn into the heavenly realm of existence for their next rebirth.

The Buddha is explaining that it does not matter what circumstances you are born into, what truly matters is one's decisions in this life to have wholesome conduct that leads to an improved life.

During The Buddha's lifetime, people thought if you were born into a low family your life was destined to be no good. Conversely, if you were born into a high family your life was destined to be good. In this Teaching and others, he is helping Students to see that it is one's wise and wholesome decisions that lead to an improved life and an improved rebirth, should one need to be reborn.

It is through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings that one moves to a better destination upon any potential future rebirths.

It is important to understand that the goal of these Teachings is for a being to attain Enlightenment so that there is no longer any rebirth into any realm of existence. But, should one need to be reborn, through the effort to attain a more developed mind in this life their next rebirth will be in an improved destination.

Gotama Buddha never used rebirth in an improved destination to motivate or encourage his Students to learn and practice these Teachings because the goal was for them to attain Enlightenment no longer experiencing rebirth in any realm of existence.

And, a Buddha does not need to guilt, shame, or fear anyone into learning and practicing their Teachings. The Teachings themselves are to eliminate discontent feelings such as guilt, shame, and fear so they would not use these feelings to motivate Students to eliminate guilt, shame, and fear - that does not work.

Instead, The Buddha is providing understanding in this Teaching of how one does not need to be hindered by a birth into a low family. During his lifetime, the caste system inhibited people from moving to an improved existence through lack of wealth or social status because of the lack of opportunities to improve one's life.

Gotama Buddha is encouraging Students that no matter what your birth is, either in a low or high family, both individuals can experience the same destination upon their next rebirth. This Teaching shared by Gotama Buddha is not what was being shared among the population of people prior to his Teaching. Instead, people were taught that they were subjected to a life of misery now and in the future due to being reborn into a low family, and through being reborn into a high family one is destined for a life of luxury. But, The Buddha makes clear to his Students that all beings can improve their life through training of the mind and wise decision making based on The Natural Laws of Existence.

A Practitioner can observe the results and improvements to the condition of the mind when learning and practicing these Teachings. A Buddha does not need to guilt, shame, or fear anyone into learning and practicing his Teachings because they can independently observe the truth for themselves that The Teachings are true and through the acquired wisdom, the condition of the mind gradually improves.

Instead, Gotama Buddha helps the Students in this Teaching to understand they are not destined to a life of misery now and in the future but instead, they can improve their life through learning, reflecting, and practicing these Teachings to train the mind and make wise decisions.

# **Actions Towards The Ending of “Actions”**

## Chapter 37

### Path to Attain the Ending of Unwholesome Kamma

Monks, I will teach you the Noble Eight Fold Path and I will analyze it for you.

Listen to that and attend closely, I will speak.

And what, Monks, is the Noble Eight Fold Path?

Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration.

And what, Monks, is Right View?

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

And what, Monks, is Right Intention?

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

And what, Monks, is Right Speech?

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

And what, Monks, is Right Action?

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

And what, Monks, is Right Livelihood?

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

And what, Monks, is Right Effort?

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

And what, Monks, is Right Mindfulness?

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

And what, Monks, is Right Concentration?

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

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

(Reference: SN 45.8)



## **Details Regarding Right Action**

Here, someone, having abandoned the destruction of life, abstains from the destruction of life. With the rod and weapon laid aside, diligent and kindly, he resides compassionate toward all living beings.

Having abandoned the taking of what is not given, he abstains from taking what is not given. He does not steal the wealth and property of others in the village or in the forest.

Having abandoned sexual misconduct, he abstains from sexual misconduct. He does not have sexual relations with women [men] who are protected by their mother, father, mother and father, brother, sister, or relatives; who are protected by their Teachings; who have a husband [wife or partner]: whose violation entails a penalty; or even with one already engaged.

(The Tathāgata spoke of the other two of the five virtues: Abstaining from Lying and Using of Substances that Cause Heedlessness, in the same way.)

(Reference: AN 10.211)

## Right Action - Twofold

And what, Monks, is Right Action?

Right Action, I say, is twofold: there is Right Action that is affected by taints, production of merit, ripening on the side of attachment: and there is Right Action that is noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path.

And what, Monks, is Right Action that is affected by taints, production of merit, ripening on the side of attachment?

Abstaining from killing living beings, abstaining from taking what is not given, abstaining from misconduct in sensual pleasures: this is Right Action that is affected by taints, production of merit, ripening on the side of attachment.

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

The elimination from the three kinds of bodily misconduct, the abstaining, refraining, abstaining from them **in one whose mind** is noble, **whose mind is taintless**, who possesses the noble path and is developing the noble path: this is Right Action that is noble, taintless, world-transcending, a factor of the path.

(Reference: MN 117)

## Trades Not to Be Plied Wrong Livelihood

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.

(Reference: MN 117)

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In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how to eliminate unwholesomeness through training in The Eight Fold Path. It is The Eight Fold Path that leads to the complete elimination of discontentedness through the complete elimination of unwholesome Kamma.

A Practitioner who deeply trains the mind and practices The Eight Fold Path will no longer be producing any unwholesome Kamma, therefore, will not be experiencing any unwholesome results. The Eight Fold Path trains the mind in how to eliminate all unwholesome and harmful conduct no longer producing any unwholesome Kamma. A Practitioner will only be making wise wholesome decisions that leads to wholesome results (i.e. wholesome Kamma).

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

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

This Chapter provides additional Words of The Buddha that further clarify Right Actions and Right Livelihood.

A Practitioner will need to purify all factors of The Eight Fold Path for an extended period of time to attain Enlightenment.

Detailed explanation of Right Livelihood 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 Chapter 14 of the book “Lowly Arts” (Volume 12).

### **What are the Jhānas and how can I experience them?**

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

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

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

The Jhānas are oftentimes misunderstood, especially outside of Asia.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Final Knowledge = Enlightenment

**Enlightenment is not achieved “all at once”.**

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

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

No, of course not.

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

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

These are The Words of The Buddha on the Jhānas.

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

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

(Reference: DN 22)

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **The mind “resides” in the Jhānas.**

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

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

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

Oneness of mind, or unification of the mind, is when the conscious mind and subconscious mind have merged. They have become “one”. The Practitioner will have “full awareness” of the entire mind, the mind becomes highly introspective being able to

easily look inward. This is sometimes referred to as “the opening of the third eye, divine eye, or inward looking eye”.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Be well and enjoy your journey...

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

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wgxpbmW6bO4&list=PLFuun1phKgQn\\_7rDGqXFDF-Pz4cRrIBa\\_&index=3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wgxpbmW6bO4&list=PLFuun1phKgQn_7rDGqXFDF-Pz4cRrIBa_&index=3)



## Chapter 38

### With the Destruction of Craving Comes the Destruction of Unwholesome Kamma

Monks, develop the path and the way that leads to the destruction of craving.

And what is the path and the way that leads to the destruction of craving?

It is The Seven Factors of Enlightenment.

What seven?

The Enlightenment factor of mindfulness, the Enlightenment factor of investigation, the Enlightenment factor of energy, the Enlightenment factor of joy, the Enlightenment factor of tranquility, the Enlightenment factor of concentration, the Enlightenment factor of equanimity.

*When this was said, the Venerable Udāyi asked The Perfectly Enlightened One: ‘Venerable Sir, how are The Seven Factors of Enlightenment developed and cultivated so that they lead to the destruction of craving?’*

Here, Udāyi, a Monk develops the Enlightenment factor of mindfulness, which is based upon seclusion, freedom from strong feelings and elimination, maturing in release; which is immense, superb, measureless, without ill will. When he develops the Enlightenment factor of mindfulness, which is based upon seclusion, freedom from strong feelings and elimination, maturing in release; which is immense, superb, measureless, without ill will, craving is abandoned. With the abandoning of craving, (unwholesome) Kamma is abandoned. With the abandoning of (unwholesome) Kamma, discontentedness is abandoned...

*(All of The Seven Factors of Enlightenment are explained in the same way to include the Enlightenment factor of investigation, energy, joy, tranquility, and concentration with the final factor being described in the same way as in the below.)*

He develops the Enlightenment factor of equanimity, which is based upon seclusion, freedom from strong feelings and elimination, maturing in release; which is immense, superb, measureless, without ill will. When he develops the Enlightenment factor of equanimity, which is based upon seclusion, freedom from strong feelings and elimination, maturing in release; which is

immense, superb, measureless, without ill will, craving is abandoned. With the abandoning of craving, (unwholesome) Kamma is abandoned. With the abandoning of (unwholesome) Kamma, discontentedness is abandoned.

Thus, Udāyi,

With the destruction of craving, comes the destruction of (unwholesome) Kamma;

With the destruction of (unwholesome) Kamma, comes the destruction of discontentedness.

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(Reference: SN 46.26)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how The Seven Factors of Enlightenment lead to the elimination of craving/desire/attachment. With the elimination of craving/desire/attachment unwholesome Kamma is eliminated, thus, all discontentedness is eliminated.

A Practitioner on The Path to Enlightenment will need to learn and practice The Seven Factors of Enlightenment to move the mind to “the middle” and keep it there on a consistent basis.

He further discusses how a Practitioner who develops The Seven Factors of Enlightenment leads to freedom from strong feelings and elimination, “maturing in release”.

“Maturing in release” is the experience one may have that as they deeply develop the mind, they may experience the bodily sensation of specific cravings/desires/attachments and/or specific taints/fetters being “released” from the mind.

The more one develops The Eight Fold Path starting with Right View (The Four Noble Truths) the mind can develop the ability to readily, and in some cases, instantly eliminate specific craving/desire/attachments and/or specific taints/fetters from the mind. There is much learning, reflecting, and practicing of these Teachings that is required as a prerequisite to developing this aspect of the mind.

Gotama Buddha is explaining the bodily sensation experienced upon the elimination of these pollutions of the mind as “maturing in release”

## What are The Seven Factors of Enlightenment?

The Seven Factors of Enlightenment are not to determine if someone is or is not Enlightened but instead, they are used to fine tune the mind bringing it to a balanced state - “in the middle”. If a Practitioner is noticing that the mind is not “in the middle”, as described in the Chapter titled “The Middle Way: Walking The Middle Way” (Chapter 6) of the book “Developing a Life Practice: The Path That Leads to Enlightenment” (Volume 1), use the associated factors of Enlightenment to move the mind to practicing the middle way.

When the mind becomes complacent, sluggish, lethargic, dull, or lazy, this is the time to practice the Enlightenment factors of Investigation, Energy, and Joy.

When the mind is excited, elated, ecstatic, euphoric, or over stimulated, this is the time to practice the Enlightenment factors of Tranquility, Concentration, and Equanimity.

The Enlightenment factor of Mindfulness is always useful and should be practiced in each and every moment. Mindfulness will need to be developed as part of training the mind through The Eight Fold Path using Breathing Mindfulness Meditation on a consistent and ongoing basis.

**1.) Mindfulness:** (Awareness of mind as described in The Eight Fold Path as “Right Mindfulness”.)

**2.) Investigation:** (Dedicated examination, exploration, research, study, and questioning to learn The Teachings.)

**3.) Energy:** (Effort, determination, ambition, initiative, motivation, vigor, and enthusiasm; willingness to do something.)

**4.) Joy:** (Pleased and delighted not associated with any specific object; unconditioned gladness; the Practitioner is not attaining it by craving/desire/attachment.)

**5.) Tranquility:** (Relaxed, steadiness, stability, peacefulness, and stillness of mind.)

**6.) Concentration:** (Mental alertness, attentiveness, the ability to give your attention or thought to a single object or activity. “Singleness of mind” as described in The Eight Fold Path as “Right Concentration”.)

**7.) Equanimity:** (Mental calmness, composure, and evenness of temper, especially in a difficult situation; treating everyone impartially.)

It is, Monks, when The Seven Factors of Enlightenment are developed and cultivated in this way that they fulfill true wisdom and liberation.

(Gotama Buddha)

(Reference: SN 46.6)

## Chapter 39

### Anyone Can Produce Nibbāna (Enlightenment)

And what, Ānanda, are the six classes?

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

— — — — —

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

These, Ānanda, are the six classes.

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(Reference: AN 6.57)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares guidance similar to Chapter 36 in this same book. In this Teaching, The Buddha goes beyond what was shared in Chapter 36 describing that anyone can attain Enlightenment no matter what your background.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**(Youtube)**

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

<https://youtu.be/mY8xw5wPRiQ>

**(Podcast)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## **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)

# **Kamma As Explained by Dependent Origination**

**(Discontentedness is Dependently Arisen)**

## Chapter 40

### The Arising of Discontentedness

I have said, Ānanda, that discontentedness is dependently arisen.

Dependent on what?

Dependent on contact. If one were to speak thus one would be stating what has been said by me and would not misrepresent me with what is contrary to the truth; one would explain in accordance with The Teachings, and no reasonable consequence of one's assertion would give ground for criticism.

Therein, Ānanda, in the case of those Ascetics and Brāhmins, advocates of Kamma, who maintain that discontentedness is created by oneself, that is conditioned by contact.

Also in the case of those Ascetics and Brāhmins, advocates of Kamma, who maintain that discontentedness is created by another, that too is conditioned by contact.

Also, in the case of those Ascetics and Brāhmins, advocates of Kamma, who maintain that discontentedness is created both by oneself and by another, that too is conditioned by contact.

Also, in the case of those Ascetics and Brāhmins, advocates of Kamma, who maintain that discontentedness has arisen randomly, being created neither by oneself nor by another, that too is conditioned by contact.

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(Reference: SN 12:25)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares that discontentedness is conditioned, or comes to be, due to contact.

When there is contact through The Six Sense Bases, it is possible for one to experience discontentedness. All discontentedness will be experienced through The Six Sense Bases or the doorways to discontentedness.

Contact requires an internal sense base (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind) to experience an external sense base (form, sound, odor, flavor, physical object, mental object), and to have awareness. These are the three (3) things required to have contact. To create either wholesome or unwholesome Kamma, there needs to be contact.

Once contact is established, the unEnlightened mind will either experience pleasant feelings, painful feelings, or feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant.

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

Once contact is established, the Enlightened mind will not experience pleasant feelings, painful feelings, or feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant. The Enlightened mind will not base its inner feelings on impermanent conditions created through contact with The Six Sense Bases.

The Enlightened mind will be peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently.

## Learning Resources for Further Exploration

### ***Youtube Video(s)***

***(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 31-40)***

<https://youtu.be/KE9xtKDlYe8>

### ***Podcast(s)***

***Ep. 283 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 31-40)***

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--283---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Natural-Law-of-Kamma---Volume-6---Chapter-31-40-e1emlrj/a-a7f0h0o>

# Chapter 41

## The True Definition of ‘A Being’

*Venerable Sir, it is said, ‘a being, a being’.*

*In what way, Venerable Sir, is one called a being?*

One is stuck, Rādha, tightly stuck, in desire, lust, excitement, and craving for form; therefore one is called a being.

One is stuck, tightly stuck, in desire, lust, excitement, and craving for feeling, for perception, for volitional formations (choices/decisions), for consciousness; therefore one is called ‘a being’.

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(Reference: SN 23.2)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares the definition of a living being.

A living being will have The Five Aggregates of form, feelings, perceptions, volitional formations (choices/decisions), and consciousness.

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

### The Five Aggregates

Form: the physical body.

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

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

Volitional Formations: choices or decisions that are made.

Consciousness: the mind.

For example, a tree is unable to make a choice or decision to uproot itself, move to a new location, and replant itself. Therefore, while we may consider a plant alive in some respects, it is not a living being based on The Five Aggregates.

But, a human and animal has form, feelings, perceptions, volitional formations (choices/decisions), and consciousness.

A being is “tightly stuck, in desire, lust, excitement, and craving for form, feelings, perceptions, volitional formations (choices/decisions), consciousness; therefore one is called a being”. It is when a Practitioner is able to no longer cling, crave, or hold on to The Five Aggregates that it can eliminate discontentedness and escape The Cycle of Rebirth no longer taking pleasure in existence or in non-existence.

## Chapter 42

### The Nutriment Consciousness

...the Venerable Moliyaphagguna said to The Perfectly Enlightened One:

*‘Venerable Sir, who consumes the nutriment consciousness?’*

Not a valid question, The Perfectly Enlightened One replied. I do not say, ‘One consumes’. If I should say, ‘One consumes’, in that case this would be a valid question: ‘Venerable Sir, who consumes?’ But I do not speak thus.

Since I do not speak thus, if one should ask me, ‘Venerable Sir, for what is the nutriment consciousness [a condition]?’ this would be a valid question.

To this the valid answer is: The nutriment consciousness is a condition for the production of future renewed existence. When that which has come into being exists, the six sense bases [come to be]; with the six sense bases as condition, contact.

*‘Venerable Sir, who makes contact?’*

Not a valid question, The Perfectly Enlightened One replied. I do not say, ‘One makes contact’. If I should say, ‘One makes contact’: in that case this would be a valid question: Venerable Sir, who makes contact? But I do not speak thus.

Since I do not speak thus, if one should ask me, ‘Venerable Sir, with what as condition does contact [come to be]?’ this would be a valid question. To this the valid answer is: With the six sense bases as condition, contact [comes to be]; with contact as condition, feeling.

*‘Venerable Sir, who feels?’*

Not a valid question, The Perfectly Enlightened One replied. I do not say, ‘One feels’. If I should say, One feels: in that case this would be a valid question: Venerable Sir, who feels? But I do not speak thus.

Since I do not speak thus, if one should ask me, ‘Venerable Sir, with what as condition does feeling [come to be]?’ this would be a valid question. To this the valid answer feeling [comes to be] is:

With contact as condition feeling [comes to be], with feeling as condition, craving.

*‘Venerable Sir, who craves?’*

Not a valid question, The Perfectly Enlightened One replied. I do not say, ‘One craves’. If I should say, ‘One craves’: in that case this would be a valid question: Venerable Sir, who craves? But I do not speak thus.

Since I do not speak thus, if one should ask me, ‘Venerable Sir, with what as condition does craving [come to be]?’ this would be a valid question. To this the valid answer is: With feeling as condition, craving [comes to be]; with craving as condition, clinging; with clinging as condition, existence; with existence as condition, birth: with birth as condition, aging-and-death, sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure, and despair come to be.

Such is the origin of this whole mass of discontentedness.

But, Phagguna, with the remainderless fading away and elimination of the six sense bases for contact comes elimination of contact; with the elimination of contact, elimination of feeling; with the elimination of feeling, elimination of craving; with the elimination of craving, elimination of clinging; with the elimination of clinging, elimination of existence; with the elimination of existence, elimination of birth; with the elimination of birth, aging-and-death, sorrow, grief, pain, displeasure and despair is eliminated.

Such is the elimination of this whole mass of discontentedness.

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(Reference: SN 12.12)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he replies to questions related to Dependent Origination.

The Student Venerable Moliyaphagguna ask The Buddha questions related to understanding Dependent Origination. But, the Venerable Moliyaphagguna is not asking the question in the way in which Dependent Origination is taught and understood.

Venerable Moliyaphagguna is asking the question as if there is a “self” rather than understanding that there is no self and that the conditions that are described in Dependent Origination are not based on a self or “personal existence view” instead, these are conditions that exist arising the next condition.

The Venerable Moliyaphagguna asks The Buddha, “Venerable Sir, who makes contact?”. The “who” of this question assumes there is a self or personal existence view and because of The Universal Truth of Non-self, The Buddha replies that this is not a valid question because The Buddha understands there is no self.

The Buddha replies to multiple questions this way: “I do not say, ‘One makes contact’. If I should say, ‘One makes contact’: in that case this would be a valid question: Venerable Sir, who makes contact? But I do not speak thus”.

Because The Buddha did not say “one makes contact”, as if there is an actual self that makes contact, he shares this is “not a valid question”.

“Since I do not speak thus, if one should ask me, ‘Venerable Sir, with what as condition does contact [come to be]?’ this would be a valid question. To this the valid answer is: With the six sense bases as condition, contact [comes to be]; with contact as condition, feeling”. It is The Six Sense Bases making contact and with contact as condition feelings arise in the mind.

The individual conditions that come to be that arise the next condition are not a being itself or a self. Instead, they are just conditions that exist that cause the effect of the next condition coming to be.

With an understanding of Dependent Origination and The Universal Truth of Non-self, a Practitioner can understand why The Buddha is sharing that the Venerable Moliyaphagguna is not asking a valid question and will understand what is a valid question is based on what The Buddha has taught.

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

Detailed explanation of Personal Existence View 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).



## Chapter 43

### The Observation of Existence

*Venerable Sir, it is said: ‘existence, existence’. In what way, Venerable Sir, is there existence?*

(1) If, Ānanda, there were no Kamma ripening in the sensory realm, would sense-sphere existence be observed?

*‘No, Venerable Sir.’*

Thus, Ānanda, for beings hindered by ignorance (unknowing of true reality) and fettered by craving, Kamma is the field, consciousness the seed, and craving the moisture for their consciousness to be established in an inferior realm (Hell, Animal, or Afflicted Spirits realms).

In this way there is the production of renewed existence in the future.

(2) If, Ānanda, there were no Kamma ripening in the form realm, would form-sphere existence be observed?

*‘No, Venerable Sir.’*

Thus, Ānanda, for beings hindered by ignorance (unknowing of true reality) and fettered by craving, Kamma is the field, consciousness the seed, and craving the moisture for their consciousness to be established in a middling realm (Human realm). In this way there is the production of renewed existence in the future.

(3) If, Ānanda, there were no Kamma ripening in the formless realm, would formless-sphere existence be observed?

*‘No, Venerable Sir.’*

Thus, Ānanda, for beings hindered by ignorance (unknowing of true reality) and fettered by craving, Kamma is the field, consciousness the seed, and craving the moisture for their consciousness to be established in the upper realm (Heavenly realm). In this way there is the production of renewed existence in the future.

It is in this way, Ānanda, that there is existence.

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(Reference: AN 3.77)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares conditions that exist that will lead to a future rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth described as “renewed existence”.

The Buddha described three categories of existences within five (5) different realms in The Cycle of Rebirth. There are sense-sphere, form, and formless existences within the realms of hell, animal, afflicted spirits, human, and heavenly realms.

The inferior realms are hell, animal, and afflicted spirits realms. In these realms, a being is unable to attain Enlightenment.

The middling realm is the human realm. In the human realm, a being is able to attain Enlightenment.

The upper realm is the heavenly realm. In the heavenly realm, a being is able to attain Enlightenment.

The animal and human realms have form existences (i.e. there is a physical body). Hell, afflicted spirits, and heavenly realms have formless existences (i.e. there is no physical body).

**There are five (5) realms of existence.**

- 1.) Heavenly realm
- 2.) Human realm
- 3.) Afflicted Spirits realm
- 4.) Animal realm
- 5.) Hell realm

The afflicted spirits, animal, and hell realms are the “lower realms of existence”. The realm of hell and the animal realm are similar to a prison. Once you are reborn into either of these two realms, it is like being trapped and it is extremely difficult for you to be reborn into another realm of existence.

A being who is an afflicted spirit has much ill-will, anger, and hate, thus, does not spend time to cultivate the mind.

A being in the animal realm does three things: eats, sleeps, and reproduces. There are some animals that also play, fight, and kill. In the animal realm there is no ability to cultivate the mind to develop a higher level of consciousness. Animals are incapable of eliminating fear and other unwholesome mental states or fully cultivate wholesome mental states like we can in the human realm to attain Enlightenment.

A being trapped in hell is in such pain and agony that hence, they are unable to cultivate their consciousness.

A being in the heavenly realm has so much pleasure from being reborn into this realm that they are not always interested or motivated to cultivate the mind. They do not experience suffering or pain so there is little interest to meditate or cultivate a content mind that

resides in the middle. Beings in the heavenly realm are often reborn back into one of the other realms but one can also attain Enlightenment from the heavenly realm.

During The Buddha's lifetime, he used analogies that the average person would understand. In this Teaching, he uses an analogy related to farming involving the planting and growing of crops. This is a subject that the ordinary person would understand during the lifetime of The Buddha as many people were involved in planting and growing crops.

There needs to be soil (i.e. field), a seed, and moisture to grow a plant. Similarly, there needs to be these same conditions to create a new existence. These are all the conditions that need to exist in order to create a plant or create a renewed existence.

A Field = Kamma

A Seed = Consciousness (the mind)

Moisture = Craving

If a being has unwholesome Kamma to eliminate, this is the field that provides the foundation for consciousness which is the seed. Craving (i.e. mental longing with a strong eagerness) provides the moisture. With unwholesome Kamma, consciousness, and craving, a being will experience renewed existence in The Cycle of Rebirth within one of the five (5) realms.

Beings are "hindered by ignorance (unknowing of true reality)". They continue to wander and roam throughout The Cycle of Rebirth being unaware that craving/desire/attachment is causing the mind to be discontent. UnEnlightened beings do not understand what they do not understand (i.e. hindered by ignorance). Beings continue creating unwholesome Kamma due to ignorance (unknowing of true reality) providing the foundation for continued existence.

It is The Eight Fold Path that will extinguish unwholesome Kamma eliminating one of the conditions that allow rebirth to continue. To practice The Eight Fold Path, one would need to develop wisdom of these Teachings, thus, eliminating ignorance (unknowing of true reality).

The primary challenge all unEnlightened beings are experiencing is that the mind is hindered by ignorance (unknowing of true reality) as explained in Dependent Origination.

Through addressing the condition of ignorance (unknowing of true reality) by acquiring wisdom of these Teachings, a being can unravel all the other conditions that lead to discontentedness of mind and continued existence in The Cycle of Rebirth. All craving will be eliminated and there will no longer be consciousness to arise in a new existence.

You have this rare human existence to cultivate the mind while in the human state, develop a pure mind, and escape The Cycle of Rebirth. The human realm is a perfect place for the mind to experience a pleasant feeling, a painful feeling, and feelings that are neither painful-nor-pleasant. In the human realm, we experience all types of discontentedness of mind and, thus, have an interest to overcome it by cultivating the mind and escaping The Cycle of Rebirth. To accomplish this goal, one will need to acquire wisdom to eradicate ignorance (unknowing of true reality).

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

# Chapter 44

## The Conduit to Existence

*‘Venerable Sir, it is said, ‘the conduit to existence, the conduit to existence.’ What, Venerable Sir, is the conduit to existence, and what is the elimination of the conduit to existence?’*

Rādha, **the craving, desire, excitement, lust, engagement and clinging**, mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies regarding **form**; this is called the conduit to existence. Their elimination is the elimination of the conduit to existence.

**The craving, desire, excitement, lust, engagement and clinging**, mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies regarding **feeling**; this is called the conduit to existence. Their elimination is the elimination of the conduit to existence.

**The craving, desire, excitement, lust, engagement and clinging**, mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies regarding **perception**; this is called the conduit to existence. Their elimination is the elimination of the conduit to existence.

**The craving, desire, excitement, lust, engagement and clinging**, mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies regarding **volitional formations (choices/decisions)**; this is called the conduit to existence. Their elimination is the elimination of the conduit to existence.

**The craving, desire, excitement, lust, engagement and clinging**, mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies regarding **consciousness**; this is called the conduit to existence. Their elimination is the elimination of the conduit to existence.

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(Reference: SN 23.3)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares “the conduit to existence”.

The Buddha is explaining that the mind clinging to The Five Aggregates is “the conduit to existence”. “The conduit to existence” is a means for it to continue. As long as the mind is clinging to The Five Aggregates, there will be continued rebirth. Training the mind to let go of The Five Aggregates, the mind is liberated from discontentedness and existence in The Cycle of Rebirth.

The Buddha shares clinging to The Five Aggregates as discontentedness in The Four Noble Truths as The First Noble Truth.

— — — — —

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

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

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

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

### **The Five Aggregates**

Form: the physical body.

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

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

Volitional Formations: choices or decisions that are made.

Consciousness: the mind.

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

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

All unEnlightened beings will experience discontentedness.

Discontentedness: Gotama Buddha describes three feelings as discontent. The goal of these Teachings is to eliminate discontentedness of mind providing the mind a permanent place to reside in Enlightenment.

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

## Chapter 45

### Dependent Origination As the Highest Law of Nature

...Monks, I will teach you Dependent Origination and dependently arisen phenomena (things).

Listen and attend closely, I will speak.

...And what, Monks, is Dependent Origination?

(1) With birth as condition, aging-and-death [comes to be]: whether there is an arising of Tathāgatas or no arising of Tathāgatas, that element still persists, the stableness of The Teachings, the fixed course of The Teachings, specific conditionality.

A Tathāgata awakens to this and breaks through to it. Having done so, he explains it, teaches it, proclaims it, establishes it, discloses it, analyzes it, illuminates it.

And he says: See! With birth as condition, Monks, aging-and-death.

(2) With existence as condition, birth...

(3) With clinging as condition, existence...

(4) With craving as condition, clinging...

(5) With feeling as condition, craving...

(6) With contact as condition, feeling...

(7) With the six sense bases as condition, contact...

(8) With name-and-form as condition, the six sense bases...

(9) With consciousness as condition, name-and-form...

(10) With volitional formations (choices/decisions) as condition, consciousness...

(11) With ignorance (unknowing of true reality) as condition, volitional formations (choices/decisions): whether there is an arising of Tathāgatas or no arising of Tathāgatas, that element still persists, the stableness of The Teachings, the fixed course of The Teachings, specific conditionality.

A Tathāgata awakens to this and breaks through to it. Having done so, he explains it, teaches it, proclaims it, establishes it, discloses it, analyzes it, illuminates it.

And he says: See! With ignorance (unknowing of true reality) as condition, Monks, volitional formations (choices/decisions).

Thus, Monks, the reality in this, the lack of error, the conciseness, specific conditionality: this is called Dependent Origination.

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(Reference: SN 12.20)

In this Teaching from Gotama Buddha, he shares how Dependent Origination exists and continues whether a Buddha (i.e. a Tathāgata) arises in the world or not. A Buddha awakens to the wisdom of Dependent Origination and having acquired this wisdom they will “explain it, teach it, proclaim it, establish it, disclose it, analyze it, illuminate it” so that others can learn, reflect, and practice awakening to Enlightenment.

A Buddha’s Teachings will guide countless beings to the attainment of Enlightenment during their life and after their death. Those Teachings will include, among other things, Dependent Origination because without this wisdom, the mind will be unable to fully understand the arising of discontentedness and continued rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth.

Any Practitioner interested to awaken to Enlightenment will need to understand Dependent Origination. Dependent Origination is the ultimate or highest law of nature as it explains the “cause and effect” relationship that leads to discontentedness and continued rebirth in The Cycle of Rebirth.

A Buddha (i.e. a Tathāgata) will understand and explain Dependent Origination as part of their Teachings and ensure their Students understand this important Teaching as part of The Natural Laws of Existence. With the wisdom and a practice of The Natural Laws of Existence, a being can awaken to Enlightenment.

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

## Learning Resources for Further Exploration

### ***Youtube Video(s)***

***(Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 41-45)***

<https://youtu.be/uUXip1K65i0>

### ***Podcast(s)***

***Ep. 286 - (Pali Canon Study Group) - The Natural Law of Kamma - Volume 6 - (Chapter 41-45)***

<https://anchor.fm/buddhadailywisdom/episodes/Ep--286---Pali-Canon-Study-Group---The-Natural-Law-of-Kamma---Volume-6---Chapter-41-45-e1fbo7e/a-a7hhh9g>



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Now that you have completed reading (Volume 6) of this book series and may decide to read this book multiple times, I would like to take a moment to personally “thank you” for your determination, dedication, and diligence to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings of The Buddha on The Path to Enlightenment.

The time, effort, energy, and resources that you devote to this path are serving to help you and countless other beings. As you choose to learn and practice these Teachings, you will significantly reduce then eliminate any harm that you are putting into the world through your unknowing of true reality. The unEnlightened mind does not understand what it does not understand.

You are now applying time, effort, energy, and resources to improving the condition of the mind, the condition of your life, and, thus, the condition of the world through investigating The Teachings to acquire wisdom. The world becomes a better place when we each individually choose to improve our own life practice taking responsibility for our own intentions, speech, actions, and livelihood while improving our wisdom and mental discipline.

I admire individuals who choose to walk towards harmlessness. I admire individuals who choose to realize there is a better way of life and create that better way of life for themselves through seeking guidance. And, I admire individuals who do not shrink back from the struggle to move the mind towards Enlightenment when the natural tendency might be to remain complacent.

### **Why have I chosen to share these Teachings with you?**

“That it may be for the benefit and peacefulness of the multitude (many people), out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and peacefulness of heavenly beings and humans”. (Gotama Buddha)

“Because if they understand even a single sentence, that will lead to their welfare and peacefulness for a long time”. (Gotama Buddha)

**May you discover the freedom associated with a mind that is peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy permanently - the Enlightened mind.**

**As you need help to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings, you are welcome to seek guidance which is available openly and freely to “all beings”.**

# Author



David Roylance is a dedicated Practitioner and Teacher of Gotama Buddha's Teachings who has been part of the Thai community since 2001. He visited Thailand for the first time in 2002 and brought the Traditional Thai Healing Arts back to the United States of America to share with people in the Western World.

His Traditional Thai Healing Arts centers, located in the Washington DC area, provided traditional Thai healing arts to clients and educational opportunities to Students to explore the Thai healing arts, Thai culture, and The Teachings of Gotama Buddha. David is a published author with books on the topics of Traditional Thai Healing Arts and The Path That Leads to Enlightenment.

David has taught Gotama Buddha's Teachings since 2005 in the United States of America. In 2015, he closed his businesses and relocated to Chiang Mai, Thailand to be closer to the Thai culture and the Thai Community of Buddhist Practitioners.

David shares Gotama Buddha's Teachings with Household Practitioners and Ordained Practitioners in Chiang Mai, Thailand and around the world through courses, retreats, and special events providing guidance to help people attain Enlightenment - a peaceful, calm, serene, and content mind with joy.

For more information on participating in courses, retreats, special events or to invite these Teachings to your learning venue, use the contact information below:

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# **Restoration of The Buddha's Teachings**

## **The Path to Enlightenment**

The Buddha taught over 2,500 years ago. He taught The Path to Enlightenment guiding countless beings to a mental state that is peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy that is permanent, where the mind has eliminated 100% of all discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc.

Immediately following the death of The Buddha (i.e. Gotama Buddha), The Teachings were shining in the world continuing to guide countless people to Enlightenment. But, over the course of many generations, just as Gotama Buddha predicted, people's understanding of his Teachings gradually diminished due to modifications and adjustments made by people after him. The modifications made to his Teachings, handed down through oral transmission, have made it increasingly difficult for human beings to attain Enlightenment.

**The goal of David's Teachings is to root the learning and practice he shares in "The Words of The Buddha" based on The Teachings that existed during the lifetime of Gotama Buddha, so that countless beings can now attain Enlightenment based on the original Path to Enlightenment discovered and declared by Gotama Buddha.**

David does this through connecting what he teaches to the largest most complete source of Teachings from Gotama Buddha - The Pāli Canon. The Pāli Canon is the original source text of The Teachings from Gotama Buddha as spoken by him during his lifetime.

David has spent countless hours dedicated to restoring The Words of The Buddha by updating a significant portion of the translations of Gotama Buddha's Teachings from The Pāli Canon. He now offers several resources for Students to learn, reflect, and practice The Path to Enlightenment to experience the results of an Enlightened mind.

David offers books, audiobooks, videos, podcasts, online learning programs, personal guidance, and retreats without any requirement for financial support. All the work that is being done is offered openly and freely for all beings without any requirement to provide any financial support. David accepts donations but Students are not required to provide donations for any work that he does in supporting them on The Path to Enlightenment.

David does not request donations and instead, just accepts whatever is offered to him, if anything at all.

His dedication to sharing these Teachings is not motivated by finances. He shares openly and freely with everyone who has a sincere interest in learning and practicing The Path to Enlightenment.

Ultimately, David plans to preserve The Teachings of The Buddha in a format that is easily, readily, and openly accessible to anyone in the world while offering support to learn, reflect, and practice to experience the results of the Enlightened mind.

His plan is to guide countless people to Enlightenment during his lifetime and leave a Community of Enlightened beings who can continue to share The Teachings long after his death. Through developing a Community of Enlightened beings and preserving The Path to Enlightenment in resources that are easily, readily, and openly accessible to anyone in the world, David is revealing the hidden Teachings of Gotama Buddha and doing the best he can to remove any obstacles one might have to learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings, allowing countless people to experience the results of an Enlightened mind.

Upon his death, David predicts that his closest Student, his son and a continued lineage of Teachers, will share these same Teachings continuing to support and grow The Community of Enlightened beings long into the future - for the next 1,000 years.

These efforts will culminate into restoring The Path to Enlightenment back into the world so that all of humanity can experience Enlightenment evolving the human species to one where every being has the opportunity to attain Enlightenment creating "heaven on earth".

# **The Goal**

## **An Entire Species of Enlightened Beings**

Having experienced Enlightenment and knowing the peace, calm, serenity, and contentedness with joy that comes with having attained Enlightenment, a Buddha's goal is to share his Teachings worldwide so that "all beings" can experience Enlightenment.

The Enlightened mind no longer experiences any discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, anxiety, stress, etc.

All discontent feelings have been eliminated 100% from the Enlightened mind (i.e. all suffering is eliminated).

An Enlightened mind will have loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, equanimity, and generosity among many other wholesome qualities.

**Can you imagine an entire world where all human beings have liberated their mind to no longer experience these discontent feelings and are practicing wholesome qualities of mind at all times?**

With "The Buddha" (Gotama Buddha) having attained this permanent mental state of Enlightenment on his own as The Perfectly Enlightened Buddha, he would have known that through his dedicated and persistent pursuit to Enlightenment, he had acquired the wisdom needed to guide "all beings" to this same mental state.

However, his teaching career of 45 years would not be enough time to share his Teachings worldwide. He knew, that it would require many centuries for his Teachings to reach all parts of the world. During his lifetime, travel of people and information was limited based on several constraints.

Today, we are in a unique time in history where these same constraints have been eliminated. A time when people and information are able to travel around the world in an instant.

Not only can information travel quickly but all of humanity is slowly coming to the point where there is a common language spoken around the world - the English language.

Criteria exist today that did not exist during Gotama Buddha's lifetime that make now the perfect time for all of humanity to gradually attain Enlightenment realizing a better existence.

- People can travel worldwide.
- Information can be shared worldwide in an instant.
- Commonly spoken language among a large percentage of the worldwide population and this is only growing.

These criteria did not exist during the lifetime of Gotama Buddha and it is only now that the world has come into an age where his original goal is realistically possible.

But, during Gotama Buddha's lifetime it seems they had something that we may not have....

The people during Gotama Buddha's lifetime had perseverance and dedication to learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings to realize the results of experiencing the Enlightened mind. They were not afraid of hard work.

With our modern day conveniences, I am unsure how many people are willing to apply their determination, dedication, and diligence with time, effort, energy, and resources towards The Path to Enlightenment with the goal to experience the Enlightened mind.

When a being decides they are finished with the sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fear, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, etc., that is the time when one can turn towards The Teachings and goal of experiencing Enlightenment.

Through each individual deciding to learn and practice The Teachings of Gotama Buddha, as a collective world, our species will gradually evolve. We evolve to a higher consciousness where we train the mind to not harm others through our intentions, speech, nor actions.

Through each individual deciding to learn, reflect, and practice The Teachings of Gotama Buddha, each person benefits and we all benefit as there will be less and less harm in the world.

Through individuals deciding to focus on developing a comprehensive approach to learning and practicing The Teachings of Gotama Buddha with guidance from a Teacher, your life drastically improves and the entire world improves essentially creating "heaven on earth".

We do not need to "fix" the world. That is not the problem. The problem is the unEnlightened mind does not understand The Natural Laws of Existence and it is quite a struggle to live in a world that one does not understand.

Through learning and practicing The Teachings of Gotama Buddha, a Practitioner comes to deeply understand The Natural Laws of Existence to acquire wisdom that will end the struggles and misery one may face on a regular basis.

Are you ready to apply determination, dedication, and diligence with time, effort, energy, and resources towards The Path to Enlightenment with the goal to experience Enlightenment?

If one enjoys anger, sadness, boredom, loneliness, resentment, etc., there is nothing to do.

But, if you are interested to eliminate these unwelcomed feelings from the mind, then I suggest you turn towards The Path to Enlightenment and apply your dedication and diligence to learning, reflecting, and practicing The Teachings of Gotama Buddha.

And then, as all of humanity gradually experiences Enlightenment we will have accomplished “the goal”.

**“An entire species of Enlightened beings”.**

# Why Have I Decided to Teach The Path to Enlightenment as Taught by Gotama Buddha?

I have chosen to share these Teachings out of compassion for the world.

**Compassion** (Pāli: karuṇā) is concern for the misfortunes of others.

And due to this compassion, it is important to share Teachings that are based in wisdom, not belief.

There are countless traditions and ways of sharing those traditions throughout the world. All of these, in one form or another, are essentially sharing to cultivate and practice 1.) Universal Love for All Beings 2.) Do No Harm and 3.) Be a Good Moral Person.

However, the way each tradition is shared and the clarity of those teachings is unique to each tradition.

The Path to Enlightenment as taught by Gotama Buddha (“The Buddha”) over 2,500 years ago as documented in The Pāli Canon, is the most clear, concise, and precise Teachings I have ever encountered that leads exactly where he said they do, to Enlightenment.

The Enlightened mind is peaceful, calm, serene, and content with joy - permanently. The Enlightened mind will no longer experience any discontent feelings such as sadness, anger, frustration, irritation, annoyance, guilt, shame, fears, boredom, loneliness, shyness, jealousy, resentment, stress, anxiety, etc.

This is accomplished through not believing The Teachings of The Buddha but instead, through learning, reflecting, and practicing to discover the truth. The mind can be trained to eliminate all the conditions that are causing it to be stuck in the unEnlightened state. Through eliminating the pollution of mind by training the mind, one can experience liberation of mind, freedom from strong feelings, peace, Enlightenment.

The Buddha’s Teachings are the only Teachings that I have encountered that do not rely on belief. With belief, one does not know what is true or false because they are just believing. Instead, Gotama Buddha’s Teachings are shared in such a way that, a Practitioner can investigate and examine them to determine the truth which leads to wisdom and thus, Enlightenment. If one was to only believe The Teachings of The Buddha, they could not acquire wisdom nor attain Enlightenment.



These Teachings are perfectly suited for today's society where there is a proliferation of misinformation and untruths. These Teachings, with guidance from a Teacher, guide a Practitioner to independently discover the truth through deeply investigating The Natural Laws of Existence (i.e. The Teachings of The Buddha). Through doing this inner work on The Path to Enlightenment, one can discover that these Teachings are the solution to the challenges we experience in the world and the solutions of how to heal from what hurt us so that we never need to hurt again. The mind can completely and entirely eliminate 100% of all discontent feelings once it is Enlightened.

This cannot be accomplished through belief.

Instead, a Practitioner needs to be determined, dedicated, and diligent to doing the inner work to develop the mind and progress towards the Enlightened mental state by acquiring wisdom.

As far as I have discovered, there are no other teachings on the planet that can guide an individual to the complete elimination of discontent feelings through independently verifying the teachings to acquire wisdom. The Buddha did something very unique during his lifetime that no other person or Teacher has accomplished.

He independently attained Enlightenment, dedicated the rest of his life to sharing his independently discovered Teachings guiding countless people to Enlightenment, and he left his Teachings in such a condition that countless more people have attained Enlightenment after his death. He meets all the criteria of a true Buddha. Gotama Buddha was a true Buddha.

My work during this life has been to rediscover these Teachings, in such a way, that they can now be shared worldwide in the international language of English so that countless people all throughout the world can attain Enlightenment during this lifetime and after my death.

The only way to accomplish this goal is to share Teachings that are not based in belief but instead, are based in independently verifiable truth so that a Practitioner can acquire wisdom.

These Teachings are clear, concise, and precise. They invite investigation and examination. Through doing this work, one can gradually train the mind to gradually practice these Teachings and gradually progress to Enlightenment. As discontentedness is gradually diminished and then eliminated from the mind, one can see the truth for themselves that these Teachings work to guide one to Enlightenment.

These Teachings lead exactly where Gotama Buddha said they do, to Enlightenment, and through each individual choosing to attain Enlightenment, humanity will evolve the human species and at the same time create “heaven on earth”.

# **Why Have I Decided to Reside and Teach in Thailand in Order to Restore The Teachings of The Buddha Back into Humanity and Create “Heaven on Earth”?**

**1.) Largest Population of Theravada Buddhist Practitioners Anywhere in the World:** Thailand is the largest population of Theravada Buddhist Practitioners and Teachers anywhere in the world. Theravada Buddhism considers The Pāli Canon to be the original source Teachings of The Buddha in The Words of The Buddha. Theravada Buddhism teaches the importance of not changing The Teachings of The Buddha and practicing The Path to Enlightenment as a Buddha has taught, without any modifications.

The Pāli Canon is an important text that should not be believed to be the true Teachings of The Buddha but instead, one can learn, reflect, and practice to independently verify The Teachings to acquire wisdom observing the truth in The Teachings as the mind awakens and discontent feelings are gradually diminished and ultimately eliminated.

Once I dedicate the remaining time of this life sharing these Teachings to restore them back into the world, the Thai people and all other diligent Students who choose to learn with me will not ever allow these Teachings to be changed, modified, degraded, or lost over time. The Thai people and diligent Students are well aware that since the lifetime of Gotama Buddha, that is what has occurred and, through having these Teachings restored during the remaining time of this life, the Thai people and diligent Students will not allow this to occur again.

The Thai people will support these Teachings and ensure they continue to be offered in the world for the benefit of “all beings” while being hosted in Thailand and supported by dedicated Students from many international locations.

These Teachings have existed in Thailand for 800-1200 years and they have received significant support from countless people over many generations. The Thai people understand just how impactful The Teachings of The Buddha are to their society and for all of humanity. The Thai people can observe my dedication and commitment to sharing these Teachings, and where possible, they will support me in sharing these Teachings throughout Thailand and throughout the world.

Due to these Teachings existing in Thailand for approximately 800-1200 years, there is a significant amount of infrastructure already created through over 30,000-40,000 Temples where local Thai people and visitors to Thailand can actively learn, reflect, and practice these Teachings to acquire wisdom and then integrate them into their lives. The Temple and Ordained Practitioner infrastructure is not isolated to only Thailand but extends throughout the world and is readily accessible to the benefit of “all beings”. The Thai people have laid the groundwork for these Teachings to now be shared worldwide through the Temple and Ordained Practitioner foundation and infrastructure that has been created over multiple generations.

Thailand is a favorite destination for international travelers with many people visiting Thailand to gain exposure and understanding of these Teachings allowing them to be learned and then practiced “worldwide”. There is an international audience that regularly visits Thailand who can learn these Teachings to then return back to their home country where these Teachings will be able to take root within all international societies. As these Teachings flourish around the world, Thailand has the knowledge and resources to support all of humanity to develop a Temple and Ordained Practitioner infrastructure that can be created within each individual country based on the interest of each country to more deeply integrate these Teachings into their local communities.

**2.) Students Have the Ability to Learn and Practice Among Millions of Practitioners:** One aspect of learning and practicing The Teachings of The Buddha that will aid one’s development and progress towards the attainment of Enlightenment is, to be part of a Community of Practitioners and Teachers that can provide guidance for gradual training and gradual practice to experience gradual progress on The Path to Enlightenment.

Through me residing and teaching in Thailand, Students have the opportunity to live in a Community of Practitioners and Teachers who are deeply committed to these Teachings and can serve as a role model for Students to gain deeper understanding of how to practice these Teachings in everyday life - even if on a semi-temporary basis during short visits to learn.

Through Students traveling to Thailand to learn while being surrounded by millions of Practitioners, they can more readily absorb how one might choose to integrate these Teachings into their daily life through observing how the people of Thailand live with countless nationalities residing peacefully and harmoniously with each other throughout the Kingdom of Thailand. Students will not only be able to learn these Teachings in a classroom setting at a Temple but, they will also experience day-to-day interactions with people who are choosing to deeply practice these Teachings creating “real life lessons” in a “classroom without walls”.

The entire Kingdom of Thailand can serve as a real life classroom environment where these Teachings are readily practiced and observable by those who choose to visit this Kingdom. I often refer to Thailand as “heaven on earth”.

**3.) Can Live With Minimal Expenses:** To be able to offer these Teachings at “no cost” I needed to find a location where I could reside with minimal expenses. This allows me to live based on donations rather than charging Students a price for the time, effort, energy, and resources that I expend to share these Teachings worldwide. This allows me to serve the widest audience possible without a need to require payment for my services and The Teachings that are shared.

The basic necessities to live life are readily available and are offered at a minimal cost in Thailand. This provides me the ability to live a basic lifestyle from donations shared by Students. I am able to purchase food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical care at a relatively nominal cost. And, services that I might need to support the development of learning resources are also readily available at a nominal cost.

Whether it be an audio studio to record an audiobook, printing services, technology, classroom supplies, or a full range of other needs to support the continued sharing of these Teachings, Thailand offers these at a nominal price so that there is the best utilization of any and all donations received.

As a result, I am able to help any and all beings regardless of their financial situation through creating a lifestyle where I only need basic necessities to survive and those are provided at a nominal cost while being supported by donations that are fully utilized by purchasing goods and services that are made available at a reasonable price.

**4.) Healthy Environment to Live Life and Work:** A wise choice for a place to live and teach would need to include a healthy food supply, weather, environment, and lifestyle. All of these are readily available in Thailand which is able to support me in leading as healthy of a lifestyle as possible.

The food in Thailand is healthy and readily available. There are many fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, nuts, seeds, and other foods that are a regular part of the Thai food offerings and readily accessible among countless fresh food markets. This allows me to ingest quality food that is supportive to a long and healthy life, thus, being able to support the learning of many Students for as long as possible due to an elongated duration of life.

Thailand's weather and environment provides the least impact to the physical body without significant weather changes or weather events that can be taxing to one's physical health.

The Thai economy is conducive to living a balanced lifestyle that supports a significant amount of time with family and friends. A work-life balance is highly understood, appreciated, supported, and straight forward to create while living in Thailand. I am able to remain dedicated and determined in my work life while also being dedicated to quality time within our immediate family. This creates the very best environment to ensure consistent health and longevity of life while enjoying a fulfilling life.

**5.) Can Share Teachings Within Thailand Throughout the Day and Can Share Teachings with the Rest of The World in the Mornings and Evenings:**

Through living and sharing these Teachings from Thailand and needing minimal sleep, I am able to help countless people throughout the day based on the Thai timezone, while helping countless people in other timezones during the early morning hours and evenings. This allows me to be effective at sharing these Teachings around the clock and throughout the world without any limitations based on restrictive timezones.

The timezone in Thailand is favorable to allowing me to share these Teachings worldwide without limitations based on the time of day. I can be helpful from morning, afternoon, and evening where there are Students who are readily interested to learn - whether in-person or online.

**6.) Students Have Easy Access to Visas to Gain Access to Classes, Courses, and Retreats:** To be successful at sharing these Teachings worldwide, in-person learning is ideal. While there is much that can be learned online and that is one way to be able to share these Teachings, there is no better way to develop your life practice than to learn through in-person access to a Teacher.

Through residing and teaching in Thailand, Students from all over the world have easy access to classes, courses, and retreats from within Thailand due to easy access to visas and as a result, me as their Teacher. Thailand does not have restrictive visa requirements that would bar people from certain countries which would inhibit "all beings" from gaining access to these Teachings.

Instead, Thailand is open and accessible to a wide majority of the world and where needed, I am able to travel.

I live in Chiang Mai, Thailand which is an international destination for countless people around the world. I live within a 4000 km distance to fifty percent (50%) of the world's population. This means that half of the world's population is a short drive or plane ride away. This creates the ability for a large majority of humanity to more easily gain access to these Teachings. And, where needed, I am able to easily travel to all other parts of the world and teach online.

People often travel to Thailand for the sole purpose of learning The Teachings of The Buddha on The Path to Enlightenment. So, by sharing these Teachings from within Thailand, there are countless people who are coming here specifically to learn and practice in the exact location where I reside and teach.

In conclusion, through residing and teaching in Thailand as a “home-base”, I am able to readily share these Teachings worldwide and work towards the restoration of The Teachings of The Buddha back into humanity so that countless people can attain Enlightenment during this lifetime and after my death.

Thailand is the perfect location for these Teachings to be shared and to serve as a “home-base” or “headquarters” for the international community to be invited and welcomed with “open arms”. There is no other location on earth that could provide for a better location to share these important Teachings and to then be preserved for future generations.

The Kingdom is here in Thailand and ready to support you in the development of your life practice towards the attainment of Enlightenment so that we can all create “heaven on earth”.

The Teachings are hosted in the east and visible in the west.

They are readily available to you and there will be a period of 1,000 years that they will “shine in the world” for all those who choose to learn, reflect, and practice to experience the peace and joy of the Enlightened mind. Then, with all of us doing the work towards developing our own individual practice of these Teachings, they will never again diminish, be degraded, or lost. Once restored, these Teachings can continue to support humanity for the rest of time.

May you discover the peace and joy of the Enlightened mind in this lifetime.

May you be peaceful, may you be safe, may you be well, and may you be free of all discontentedness and the suffering it causes.

## **Invitation to Learn**

I would like to invite you to a kind, compassionate and loving community of Practitioners to learn and grow with these Teachings.

I would like to invite you to join this online group.

You will find it to be an online learning center for these Teachings and there is a Teacher there to help provide guidance as you have questions.

### **Daily Wisdom - Walking The Path with The Buddha**

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

## **Additional Learning**

Visit [BuddhaDailyWisdom.com](http://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**

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# THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHA

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## 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**

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### **Volume 9**

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### **Volume 11**

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### **Volume 13**

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