



# A CONSTITUTION FOR LIVING

BUDDHIST PRINCIPLES  
FOR A FRUITFUL  
AND HARMONIOUS LIFE

VEN. P. A. PAYUTTO

A CONSTITUTION FOR  
LIVING



INCLUDING  
FOUR DISCOURSES ON  
LAY ETHICS

## **A CONSTITUTION FOR LIVING**

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# **A CONSTITUTION FOR LIVING**

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A FRUITFUL AND HARMONIOUS LIFE**

**BY**  
**VEN. P. A. PAYUTTO**

**TRANSLATED FROM THE THAI**  
**BY**  
**BRUCE EVANS**



## PREFACE

When originally compiled and printed in 1976, this book was entitled *Koo Mue Damnern Cheewit (A Handbook for Living)*. In 1979 and again in 1980 I revised the text to make it easier to read and remember, and in that form the book went through more than a hundred impressions.

In 1995 Bruce Evans of the Buddhadhamma Foundation translated the book into English as *A Constitution for Living*. For this new revised, edition (1997), *The Buddhist's Life Standards* was incorporated as an introductory piece.

*The Buddhist's Life Standards* arose in response to a wish to stress the importance of Buddhists having some principles to adhere to and earnestly practice by. This is to be achieved through reviving and advocating the principles of practice described by the Buddha in the Sigālaka Sutta (D III 180–193) as regulations which Buddhists may hold to and practice as general standards for conducting their lives and by which they may together contribute to a good, happy and prosperous society. This would be in conformity with the original acknowledgement, recorded in the Commentary of the Sigālaka Sutta as the “layman’s code of discipline” (*gīhi-vinaya*), or the model for a householder’s conduct (D-a III 134, 151), to go alongside the “monk’s code of discipline” (*bhikkhu-vinaya*).

The whole content of *The Buddhist's Life Standards* is to be found within *A Constitution for Living*. The former can be taken as the Buddhist’s minimal standards for conducting his life, while the latter is a compilation of general Dhamma principles for leading a virtuous life and may be regarded as an extension of the former. A practicing Buddhist may use *The Buddhist's Life Standards* as preliminary standards for leading his life, and then proceed to the qualities and practices given in *A Constitution for Living* to bring his life to greater virtue, success, benefit, and eventually perfection.

As regards the translation, thanks to his zeal, effort, and skills Mr. Evans made this edition as correct and readable as possible and I here express my appreciation for his work.

Phra Dhammapiṭaka (P. A Payutto)  
December 25, 1997

# INTRODUCTION

In relation to the prosaic affairs of everyday life, religions may take two approaches: one is to ignore them completely, to concentrate wholly on the higher aim of merging with God or realizing ultimate truth; the other is to go into great detail about such matters, telling us how to organize our will, what foods to eat and what clothes to wear. These would seem to be two extremes.

Buddhism is a teaching of moderation. As in other things, the Buddhist teachings steer a middle course, in this case between the two extremes of blindly ignoring practical daily affairs and laying down a code of rigid and inflexible rules. The Buddhist teachings offer guidelines for behaviour based on timeless truths—the positive weal created by compassionate, wise relationships—and aimed at the ultimate goal of spiritual freedom: living in the world and yet above it.

The contents of this book are gleaned from the Pali Tipiṭaka and Commentaries, the texts of Theravada Buddhism, which is lived and practiced today in Thailand, Sri Lanka, Burma, Laos and Cambodia. The teachings are over 2,500 years old, but they are far from outdated. In today's egalitarian societies, in which we find all our traditional roles either torn down or under question, and in which in spite of a flood of "enlightened" ideas our lives are more confused than ever, the Buddhist teachings, dating back to a time when things were much simpler, are like a breath of fresh air in an overcrowded room. Perhaps it is time for a return to more traditional, yet more enduring, values.

When roles are based on compassion rather than exploitation, we may find that they are not the evils we thought they were, and that in fact they can simplify and harmonize our lives. Compare, for instance, the attitude of many modern people, who tend to see society as a battleground for the play of conflicting interests between the "bosses" and the "workers," with the simple teaching on "The worker and the boss".

Many people today look on life in all sectors as a struggle between conflicting interests—the "bosses" against the "workers," the "government" against the "people," the "rich" against the "poor," and even the "women" against the "men," or the

“children” against the “parents.” When the aim of life is seen as material wealth or power, society becomes a struggle between conflicting personal interests, and we are in need of an ethic to protect those interests. It is a “negative ethic”: society is based on selfish interests—“the right of each and every person to pursue happiness”—and an ethic, such as “human rights,” is needed to keep everybody from cutting each other’s throats in the process.

The Buddhist teachings are a “positive ethic”: well-being, rather than power or riches, is the aim; society is seen as a medium through which all people have equal opportunity to maximize self-development and well-being, and ethics are used to facilitate those ends.

The teachings contained in this book are based on timeless principles: compassion, goodwill, harmony, cooperation and wisdom. To the modern cynic, they may seem idealistic, but they are not impossible. They can be put into practice. Bear in mind, however, that they are 2,500 years old. There may be one or two teachings which need to be translated into a more modern context, but I feel that the message contained herein is simple enough for the reader to glean for himself. May these teachings prove as useful to you as they do to countless Buddhists the world over.

Bruce Evans

## ABBREVIATIONS

A	Aṅguttaranikāya
A-a	Aṅguttaranikāya-aṭṭhakathā
D	Dīghanikāya
D-a	Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā
Dhp	Dhammapada
It	Itivuttaka
It-a	Itivuttaka-aṭṭhakathā
M	Majjhimanikāya
M-a	Majjhimanikāya-aṭṭhakathā
S	Saṃyuttanikāya
Sn	Suttanipāta
Ud	Udāna

PART I

# THE BUDDHIST'S LIFE STANDARDS





# THE BUDDHIST'S LIFE STANDARDS

The Buddhist's life standards can be summarized according to the Buddha's words as follows:

Organizing one's life and social relationships so that they become a solid foundation with the layman's code of discipline [*gīhi-vinaya*], as follows:

## ***Law 1: Refrain from fourteen kinds of evil***

A. Refraining from the four deeds that defile (*kammakilesa*):

1. Killing, doing bodily harm or taking life (*pāṇātipāta*).
2. Stealing, violating property rights (*adinnādāna*).
3. Committing sexual misconduct (*kāmesumicchācāra*).
4. Speaking falsely, lying, deceiving (*musāvāda*).

B. Refraining from the four kinds of biased conduct (*agati*):

1. Biased conduct on account of like (*chandagati*).
2. Biased conduct on account of dislike (*dosagati*).
3. Biased conduct on account of fear (*bhayagati*).
4. Biased conduct on account of foolishness (*mohagati*).

C. Avoiding the six channels to ruin (*apāya-mukha*):

1. Being addicted to drink and drugs.
2. Always revelling in nightlife.
3. Being bent on entertainment.
4. Being addicted to gambling.
5. Consorting with evil friends.
6. Being chronically lazy.

## ***Law 2: Prepare resources for life on two fronts***

A. Choosing the people one associates with, in order to steer one's life along a path that is prosperous and constructive, by avoiding false friends and associating only with true friends, as follows:

a) Being wise to the four kinds of false friends or enemies in the guise of friends (*mitta-patirūpaka*):

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1. The out-and-out robber, who only takes from friends, has four features:
  1. He thinks only of getting.
  2. He gives little in the hope of getting much.
  3. Only when he is in danger does he help his friend out.
  4. He associates with his friend only for his own profit.
2. The smooth talker has four features:
  1. He talks only of what is done and gone.
  2. He talks only of what has not yet come.
  3. He offers help that is ineffectual.
  4. When his friend needs a hand, he makes excuses.
3. The flatterer has four features:
  1. He consents to [his friend's] doing wrong.
  2. He consents to his doing right.
  3. He sings his praises to his face.
  4. He runs him down behind his back.
4. The leader to ruin has four features:
  1. He is a companion in drinking.
  2. He is a companion in nightlife.
  3. He is a companion in frequenting shows and fairs.
  4. He is a companion in gambling.
  - b) Knowing of the four kinds of true friends or friends at heart (*suhada-mitta*):
  1. The helping friend has four features:
    1. When his friend is off guard, he guards him.
    2. When his friend is off guard, he guards his property.
    3. In times of danger, he can be a refuge.
    4. In times of need, he gives more than asked for.
  2. The friend through thick and thin has four features:
    1. He confides in his friend.
    2. He keeps his friend's secrets.
    3. He does not desert his friend in times of danger.
    4. He will give even his life for his friend's sake.
  3. The good counsellor has four features:
    1. He restrains his friend from doing evil or harm.
    2. He encourages him in goodness.

## *The Buddhist's Life Standards*

3. He makes known to his friend what he has not heard before.
4. He points out the way to prosperity and happiness.
4. The loving friend has four features:
  1. When his friend is unhappy, he commiserates.
  2. When his friend is happy, he is happy for him.
  3. When others criticize his friend, he comes to his defense.
  4. When others praise his friend, he joins in their praise.
- B. Allocating one's wealth by being diligent in earning and saving righteously so that wealth increases, as bees make their hive or termites make their mound, and by planning expenditure as follows:
  1. One portion to be used for supporting oneself, one's family and dependents, and for doing good works.
  2. Two portions to be used for investment.
  3. Another portion to be put aside for future needs.

### ***Law 3: Maintain one's relations toward the six directions***

- A. Making reverence in the directions around one by performing the duties toward the people related to one in due accordance to their six positions:

*First direction:* as a son or daughter, one should honour one's parents, who are compared to the "forward direction," in the following ways:

1. Having been raised by them, one looks after them in return.
2. One helps them in their business and work.
3. One continues the family line.
4. One conducts oneself as is proper for an heir.
5. After their death, one makes offerings, dedicating the merit to them.

Parents help their children by:

1. Cautioning and protecting them from evil.
2. Nurturing and training them in goodness.
3. Providing an education.
4. Seeing to it that they obtain suitable spouses.
5. Bequeathing the inheritance to them at the proper time.

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*Second direction:* as a student, one should show respect to one's teacher, as the "right direction," as follows:

1. One rises to greet the teacher and shows respect to the teacher.
2. One approaches the teacher to attend him, serve him, to consult, query and receive advice from, etc.
3. One hearkens well so as to gain understanding.
4. One serves the teacher and runs errands for him or her.
5. One learns the subject respectfully and earnestly, giving the task of learning its due importance.

A teacher supports his or her students by:

1. Teaching and training them to be good.
2. Guiding them to thorough understanding.
3. Teaching the subject in full.
4. Encouraging and praising the students' goodness and abilities.
5. Providing a protection for all directions; that is, teaching and training them so that they can actually use their learning to make a living and know how to conduct themselves well, having a guarantee for smoothly leading a good life and attaining happiness and prosperity.

*Third direction:* as a husband, one should honour and support one's wife, compared to the "rearward direction," as follows:

1. One honours her in accordance with her status as wife.
2. One does not disparage her.
3. One does not commit adultery.
4. One gives her control of household concerns.
5. One gives her occasional gifts of ornaments and clothing.

A wife supports her husband by:

1. Keeping the household tidy.
2. Helping the relations and friends of both sides.
3. Not committing adultery.
4. Safeguarding any wealth that has been acquired.
5. Being diligent in all her work.

*Fourth direction:* as a friend, one should conduct oneself toward one's friends, as the "left direction," as follows:

## *The Buddhist's Life Standards*

1. One shares with them.
2. One speaks kindly to them.
3. One helps them.
4. One is constant through their ups and downs.
5. One is faithful and sincere.

Friends reciprocate by:

1. Protecting their friend when one is off guard.
2. Protecting their friend's property when one is off guard.
3. Being a refuge in times of danger.
4. Not deserting their friend in times of need.
5. Respecting their friend's family and relations.

*Fifth direction:* as an employer, one should support one's servants and employees, as the "lower direction," as follows:

1. One assigns them work in accordance with their strength, sex, age, and abilities.
2. One pays them wages commensurate with their work and adequate for their livelihood.
3. One grants them fringe benefits by, for example, providing medical care in times of sickness.
4. One shares with them a portion of any special profits that may accrue.
5. One gives them appropriate holidays and time to rest.

As a servant or employee one helps one's employer by:

1. Starting work before the employer.
2. Stopping work after the employer.
3. Taking only what is given by his employer.
4. Doing one's job well and seeking ways to improve on it.
5. Spreading a good reputation about one's employer and his or her business.

*Sixth direction:* as a Buddhist, one should show respect to the monks and nuns, as the "upper direction," as follows:

1. One acts toward them with goodwill.
2. One speaks to them with goodwill.
3. One thinks of them with goodwill.
4. One receives them willingly.
5. One supports them with the four requisites [almsfood, robes, shelter and medicine].

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Monks and nuns help lay people by:

1. Enjoining them from evil actions.
  2. Encouraging them in goodness.
  3. Assisting them with kind intentions.
  4. Making known to them things not heard before.
  5. Explaining and clarifying those things they have already heard.
  6. Pointing out the way to heaven, teaching them the way to happiness and prosperity.
- B. Helping all people by joining in constructively creating social harmony and unity according to the four principles for helpful integration (*saṅgaha-vatthu*), which are:
1. *Dāna*: giving, sharing (helping through money and material goods).
  2. *Piyavāca*: amicable speech (helping through words).
  3. *Atthacariyā*: helpful action (helping through physical effort).
  4. *Samānattatā*: participation (helping through participation in constructive action and problem solving).

Conducting one's life so as to attain the three levels of *attha*, the benefits that are the objectives of life:

1. *First level*: the temporal objective or present benefit (*ditṭhadhammikattha*):
  - a) Having good health, a strong body, freedom from disease, pleasant appearance and longevity.
  - b) Having work and income, honest livelihood, and economic self-reliance.
  - c) Having good status, being of good standing in the community.
  - d) Having a happy family, making one's family worthy of respect.

All of the above should be righteously obtained and used or treated so as to produce rightful benefit and happiness both for oneself and for others.

2. *Second level*: the spiritual objective or further benefit (*samparāyikattha*):
  - a) Warmth, deep appreciation and happiness through faith; having an ideal.
  - b) Pride in having a clean life, in having done only virtuous deeds.

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- c) Gratification in a worthwhile life, in having made sacrifices and done good.
  - d) Courage and confidence in having wisdom to deal with problems and guide one's life.
  - e) Security and freedom from worry in having done good as a guarantee for the future life.
3. *Third level:* the highest objective or greatest benefit (*paramattha*):
- a) Not wavering in face of vicissitudes and changes.
  - b) Not being despondent or distressed because of attachments.
  - c) Being secure, calm, clear, cheerful and buoyant at all times.
  - d) Living and acting with wisdom, which looks at causes and conditions.

One who is able to attain from the second level of benefit upwards is known as a wise man (*pañdita*).

These three levels of objectives or benefits can be attained on three fronts:

*First front:* the objective for oneself or one's own benefit (*attattha*); i.e., the three levels of benefits explained above, which one should establish for oneself or develop one's life toward.

*Second front:* the objective for others, or other people's benefit (*parattha*); the three levels of benefits explained above, which one should help other people successively achieve by inducing and encouraging them to develop their lives.

*Third front:* the mutual objective or benefit to both parties (*ubhayattha*); the collective benefit, happiness and virtue of the community or society, including environmental conditions and factors, which we should help create and conserve in order to help both ourselves and others advance to the three levels of objectives mentioned above.



PART II

**A CONSTITUTION FOR  
LIVING**



## SECTION ONE

# HUMAN BEINGS AND BEING HUMAN

### 1. MAN, THE NOBLE BEING (A MEMBER OF THE HUMAN RACE)

Human beings are special, unlike any other kind of animal. What makes them special is *sikkhā*, or education, namely learning, training and development. Human beings who have been trained, educated or developed are called “noble beings.” They know how to conduct a good life for themselves and also help their society fare securely in peace and happiness.

To be truly involved in this education, human beings, especially children and young people, who are the new members of the human race, should acquire the seven fundamental qualities known as the **auroras of a good life, or the dawn of education**. These are the guarantees of a life moving toward full human development, to people’s becoming truly noble beings. They are:

1. *Kalyāṇamittatā* (having a “good friend” [a person or social environment that is helpful to one’s life development]), **seeking out sources of wisdom and good examples**. This is to live with or be close to good people, beginning with one’s parents as good friends in the family; to know who to associate with and to socialize with good people who will influence and encourage each other to betterment in conduct, mentality and wisdom. It is especially [that association which encourages one to] learn and develop communication and relations with fellow human beings through goodwill, to have the faith to follow good examples, and to know how to utilize external resources, be they people, books, or other communications media, for seeking knowledge and virtue for one’s life development, problem solving and constructive action.

2. *Sīla-sampadā* (perfection of morality), **having discipline as a foundation for one’s life development**. This is to know how to organize life-style, activities, work, and environment so that they provide opportunities for personal growth; at least to have a basic level of morality; that is, to have proper conduct in one’s relationship

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with the social environment by living helpfully and not exploitatively with one's fellow beings, and in one's relationship with the material environment by using the four necessities [food, clothing, shelter and medicine] as well as technological appliances and equipment in a way that supports the quality of one's life and is favourable to one's education, to constructive action and to the state of balance in nature.

3. *Chanda-sampadā* (perfection of aspiration): **having a heart that aspires to learning and constructive action.** This is to be one who is driven by desire for knowledge, goodness, action, constructiveness, achievement and excellence, by the desire to help all the things and people one meets or is involved with to attain to a good state; not obsessively thinking only of getting what one wants and seeking pleasure through consuming, which only drags one into the whirlpool of heedlessness and contention. Instead, one knows how to use one's faculties, such as the eyes and ears, in learning, and to derive joy from learning and doing good things, by using one's brain and hands for constructive ends.

4. *Atta-sampadā* (perfection of oneself): **dedicating oneself to training for the realization of one's full human potential.** This is to always bear in mind the truth that human beings by nature are beings that can be trained, and must be trained, and that once trained are the most excellent of beings; then to resolve to train oneself so that one views difficulties, hardships, obstacles and problems as training grounds to test and develop one's intelligence and abilities; to pay heed to one's continuing improvement toward the realization of one's full potential through a comprehensive development that encompasses behaviour, mentality and wisdom.

5. *Ditṭhi-sampadā* (perfection of view): **adhering to the principle of conditionality, seeing things according to cause and effect.** This is to be established in good and reasoned principles of thought and belief; at least adhering to the principle of conditionality, a principle leading to consideration, investigation and research as the way to wisdom development, and believing that action is the most powerful determinant of one's fate; it is also having behaviour and mental states that are under the control of reason: even though one aspires to the highest achievement and excellence, one realizes what is possible within the limitations of the causes and conditions that exist and that one has created; in success, one does not forget

oneself, and in failure, one is not despondent; one maintains one's mental clarity and independence, not being impulsive, over-reactive or petty, and also not allowing oneself to drift along the stream of public hysteria and values.

6. *Appamāda-sampadā* (perfection of heedfulness): **establishing oneself in heedfulness.** This is to be aware of impermanence, to realize the instability, unendurability and insubstantiality of life and all things around one, which are constantly changing according to causes and conditions, both internal and external. Thus one sees that one cannot afford to be complacent. One sees the preciousness of time and strives to learn about, prevent and rectify the causes of decline and bring about the causes of growth and prosperity, using all one's time, night and day, to the greatest benefit.

7. *Yonisomanasikāra-sampadā* (perfection of wise reflection): **thinking wisely so as to realize benefit and see the truth.** This is to know how to think, to know how to investigate, to be able to see all things as they really are within the system of causes and conditions, by intelligently examining, investigating, tracing, analyzing and researching to see the truth of a given situation, or to see the perspective that will enable one to benefit from it. By so doing one is also able to solve problems and do things successfully through intelligent methods that allow one to be self-reliant and at the same time become a refuge to other people.

(S V 29–31)

## **2. THE IDEAL PERSON**

(AN EXEMPLARY MEMBER OF THE HUMAN RACE)

The ideal person, or perfect human being, who can be counted as a truly valuable member of the human race, and who can be called a complete person, able to lead his or her community and society to peace and well-being, is one who possesses the following seven qualities:

1. *Dhammaññūtā*: **knowing principles, knowing causes;** one knows the underlying principles and laws governing the things with which one must deal in the process of everyday life, in performing one's duties and carrying out one's tasks; one knows and understands according to reason what one must do. For example, one understands what duties and responsibilities are

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involved in one's post, one's status, one's occupation and one's work. one knows the principles involved therein and one knows how to apply them so that they become factors for the successful completion of those duties and responsibilities. At the highest level, *dhammaññūtā* means knowing fully the natural laws or truths of nature so that one can deal correctly with life and the world, with a mind that is free and not enslaved by them.

2. *Atthaññūtā*: **knowing objectives, knowing results**; one knows the meaning and objectives of the principles one abides by; one understands the objectives of the task one is doing; one knows the reason behind one's actions and one's way of life and the objective to be expected from them. [One knows] the aim behind a duty, position or occupation. One knows what may be expected in the future from the actions one is doing in the present; whether, for example, they will lead to a good or a bad result. At the highest level, *atthaññūtā* means understanding the implications of the natural course of things and the benefit that is the real purpose of life.

3. *Attaññūtā*: **knowing oneself**; one knows as they are the current extent and nature of one's status, condition, sex, strength, knowledge, aptitude, ability, virtue, etc., and then acts accordingly, does what is needed to produce results, and rectifies and improves oneself so as to grow to greater maturity.

4. *Mattaññūtā*: **knowing moderation**; one knows the right amount in such areas as consumption and spending; one knows moderation in speech, work and action, in rest and in all manner of recreation. One does all things with an understanding of their objectives and for the real benefits to be expected, by acting not merely for one's own satisfaction or to accomplish one's own ends, but rather to achieve a proper balance of supporting factors that will produce the beneficial result as revealed to one by wisdom.

5. *Kālaññūtā*: **knowing occasion**; one knows the proper occasion and the proper amount of time for actions, duties and dealings with other people; one knows, for example, when what should be done and how, and one does it punctually, regularly, in time, for the right amount of time and at the right time. *Kālaññūtā* includes knowing how to plan one's time and organize it effectively.

6. *Parisaññūtā*: **knowing company**; one knows the locale, one knows the gathering and one knows the community. One knows what should be done in a given locale or community, thus: "This

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community should be approached in this way and spoken to thus; the people here have these rules and regulations; they have this culture or tradition; they have these needs; they should thus be dealt with, helped, served and benefited in this way."

7. *Puggalaññūtā*: **knowing persons**; one knows and understands individual differences; one knows people's greater or lesser temperaments, abilities and virtues and knows how to relate to them effectively; one knows, for example, whether they should be associated with, what can be learned from them, and how they should be related to, employed, praised, criticized, advised or taught.

These seven qualities are known as the *sappurisa-dhamma*,<sup>1</sup> the qualities of a good or genuine person, one who has the qualities of a complete human being.

(A IV 113)



## SECTION TWO

# PEOPLE AND SOCIETY

### 3. THE VIRTUOUS PERSON (A MEMBER OF THE NOBLE SOCIETY)

One with the moral virtue or *manussa-dhamma* [qualities that make one human], who can be rightfully called civilized, conducts him- or herself as follows:

A. **One has the threefold *sucarita*,** the three kinds of good or proper conduct:

1. *Kāya-sucarita*: righteous bodily conduct; one does things that are virtuous and proper; one has good bodily conduct.
2. *Vaci-sucarita*: righteous speech; one says things that are virtuous and proper; one has good verbal conduct.
3. *Mano-sucarita*: righteous mentality; one thinks things that are virtuous and proper; one has good mental conduct.

(D III 215)

B. **One abides by the noble qualities (*ariya-dhamma*)** by practicing properly according to the ten courses of wholesome action (*kusala-kamma*):

Three of the body:

1. Abstaining from killing or taking life, oppression and harassment; possessing kindness, compassion and helpfulness.
2. Abstaining from filching, theft and exploitation; respecting the property rights of others.
3. Abstaining from misconduct and violation of others' loved or cherished ones; not abusing them, disgracing or dishonouring their families.

Four of speech:

4. Abstaining from false speech, lying and deception; speaking only the truth, not intentionally saying things that stray from the truth out of a desire for personal gain.

5. Abstaining from malicious speech inciting one person against another; speaking only words that are conciliatory and conducive to harmony.
6. Abstaining from coarse, vulgar or damaging speech; speaking only words that are polite and pleasant to the ear.
7. Abstaining from worthless or frivolous speech; speaking only words that are true, reasonable, useful and appropriate to the occasion.

Three of the mind:

8. Not being greedy; not focusing only on taking; thinking of giving, of sacrifice; making the mind munificent.
9. Not thinking hateful and destructive thoughts or having a destructive attitude toward others; bearing good intentions toward others, spreading goodwill and aiming for the common good.
10. Cultivating Right View (*sammā-ditṭhi*); understanding the law of kamma, that good actions bring good results and bad actions bring bad results; having a thorough grasp of the truth of life and the world; seeing the faring of things according to causes and conditions.

These ten qualities are variously known as *kusala-kammopatha* (wholesome courses of action), *dhamma-cariya* [principles for virtuous living] and *ariya-dhamma* [noble qualities]. They are a more detailed description of the threefold *sucarita* mentioned above: namely, points 1–3 cover righteous bodily conduct, 4–7 cover righteous verbal conduct, and 8–10 cover righteous mental conduct.

(M I 287)

C. **At the very least one observes the five precepts:** the ten basic principles of conduct given above are a comprehensive description of the moral conduct or noble qualities through which personal development of body, speech and mind can be made. For those who are not yet firm in these noble qualities, however, it is recommended that at least moral restraint through body and speech should first be developed by observing the five precepts, which are among the first factors of the ten principles for virtuous living (*dhamma-cariya*). The five precepts are:

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1. Abstaining from killing: not taking life or doing bodily harm.
2. Abstaining from taking what is not given: not stealing, pilfering or filching; not violating [others'] properties.
3. Abstaining from sexual misconduct; not violating the loved or cherished ones of others, thereby destroying their honour and dignity and confusing their family lines.
4. Abstaining from lying: not telling lies or using deceptive speech; not violating other people or their interests through speech.
5. Abstaining from alcohol and intoxicants: not taking wines, liquor, intoxicants or addictives, which are causes for heedlessness and drunkenness, and lead to damage and blunders such as accidents due to lack of mindfulness. An intoxicated person at least threatens the sense of security and well-being of fellow community members.

(A III 203, 275)

### **4. THE SOCIAL BENEFACTOR (A HELPFUL MEMBER OF SOCIETY)**

A constructive member of society possesses the following qualities or principles of conduct:

- A. *One has the divine abidings (brahmavihāra)*, the four mental attributes of a being who is sublime or grand-minded like a god, which are:
  1. *Mettā, loving kindness*: goodwill and amity, the wish to help all people attain benefit and happiness.
  2. *Karuṇā, compassion*: the desire to help other people escape from their sufferings; the determination to free all beings, both human and animal, of their hardships and miseries.
  3. *Muditā, appreciative gladness*: when seeing others happy, one feels glad; when seeing others do good actions or attain success and advancement, one responds with gladness and is ready to help and support them.
  4. *Upekkhā, equanimity*: seeing things as they are with a mind that is even, steady, firm and fair like a pair of scales; understanding that all beings experience good and evil in accordance with the causes they have created; ready to judge, position oneself and act in

accordance with principles, reason and equity<sup>2</sup>

(D II 196)

Having established these four mental qualities as a foundation, one may express them outwardly in the following ways:

B. **One contributes to social harmony:** one practices in accordance with the four principles for helpful integration, or qualities that bond people in unity, known as the *saṅgaha-vatthu*. These are:

5. *Dāna*: **giving**; being kind, generous; sacrificing; sharing; helping and providing assistance with the four necessities, money or material possessions—including the imparting of knowledge or understanding and learning.

6. *Piyavāca*: **amicable speech**; speaking words that are polite, pleasant to the ear, and helpful, that point the way to benefit, and that are based on reason and conducive to goodness; or words that are sympathetic and encouraging; speaking words that lead to understanding, harmony, friendship, and mutual love, respect and service.

7. *Atthacariya*: **helpful action**; helping with physical service, making an effort to lend a hand to others in their activities; performing actions that are helpful to the community; including helping to resolve problems and promote morality.

8. *Samānattatā*: **participation**; putting oneself in communion with others; behaving consistently and impartially; behaving equitably toward all people, not taking advantage of them; sharing in their happiness and suffering, acknowledging problems and participating in resolving them for the common good.

In brief, these are to help through contributions of money, material things or knowledge; to help through speech; to help through physical action; and to help through participation in facing and resolving problems.

(D III 152, 232)

## 5. THE HARMONIOUS PARTICIPANT OF THE GROUP (A GOOD COMMUNITY MEMBER)

A useful participant of a community, who contributes to the peaceful co-existence of the community, possesses the following qualities or principles of conduct:

A. **Being self-reliant:** one makes oneself a refuge unto oneself, one is ready to take responsibility for oneself and does not make oneself into a problem or burden on one's company or kin. This can be achieved by maintaining the ten protective virtues (*nāthakaranya-dhamma*):

1. **Sila: having good conduct and discipline;** one conducts one's life honestly in body and speech; one has discipline and earns one's living through right livelihood.

2. **Bāhusacca: possessing much experience and learning;** one has learned and heard much; one is well versed in one's own field of study or specific area of knowledge, understands it extensively and profoundly, knows it clearly and can really put it to use.

3. **Kalyāṇamittatā: knowing good association;** one has good friends, one knows how to choose one's companions, and approaches those people who are capable of giving good advice; one chooses to associate with and emulate beneficial external influences in society that will guide one's life to prosperity and growth.

4. **Sovacassatā: being easily spoken to;** one is not stubborn or headstrong; one is willing to listen to reason and facts, and ready to correct and improve oneself.

5. **Kiṃkarāṇyesu dakkhatā: making an effort with the group's activities;** one takes an interest in helping the business and activities of the group, one's family, friends, and the community, and uses one's wisdom to look for appropriate ways to carry them out, to organize them and bring them to fruition.

6. **Dhammakāmatā: being a lover of truth;** one is a lover of truth, one likes to learn, to research, to inquire, to acquire knowledge and seek the truth; one knows how to speak up and ask, and to listen; one has a friendly and relaxed manner that encourages others to approach one for consultation and conversation.

7. **Viriyārambha: having effort;** one is industrious in avoiding and abandoning evil actions and cultivating the good; one makes an effort and strives forward; one does not give up in despair or

neglect or forsake one's duties and responsibilities.

8. *Santutthi: being content, knowing moderation*; one is glad and contented only with gains, results and successes brought about or achieved rightfully through one's own efforts; one is not caught up in material comforts.

9. *Sati: having firm mindfulness*; one remembers and is mindful; one recollects what one has done and said and what one needs to do in the future; one is circumspect and restrained with whatever one does, not rushed, sloppy, absentminded or reckless; one does not allow oneself to slide into wrongful ways or fail to seize an opportunity to do good.

10. *Paññā: putting head over heart*; one has the wisdom to see causes and results; one knows right from wrong, benefit from harm and what is useful from what is not; one sees all things as they are; one knows how to examine and judge with a free mind; one does things with reflection and discernment.

(D III 266, 290)

B. **Living harmoniously in the group:** in regard to relations with colleagues, associates, fellow community members and siblings in the family, the principles for harmony known as the six *sārāṇīya-dhamma* (conditions leading to mutual recollection) should be observed, as follows:

11. *Mettā-kāyakamma: friendly action*; [members of the community] each show friendliness and goodwill to their colleagues, associates, and fellow community members by willingly helping them in their duties, and bearing a courteous and respectful manner, both in their presence and in their absence.

12. *Mettā-vacikamma: friendly speech*; they each inform the others what is of benefit; they teach or advise them with a heart of goodwill; they say only polite and respectful words to them, both in their presence and in their absence.

13. *Mettā-manokamma: friendly thoughts*; they establish their minds in goodwill, thinking of ways to be of service to each other; looking at each other in a good light, having a pleasant and congenial attitude toward each other.

14. *Sādhāraṇa-bhogī: sharing of gains*; they share with each other whatever gains have been rightfully acquired, seeing to it that even small things are distributed equally to all.

15. *Sīla-samaññāta*: **moral harmony**; they maintain virtuous conduct, abide by community rules and regulations, and do not conduct themselves in ways that are objectionable or damaging to the community.

16. *Ditṭhi-samaññāta*: **harmony of views**; they respect and honour each other's views; they have reached consensus or agreed upon the main principles; they adhere to the same ideals, principles of virtue or ultimate aims.

(D III 245)

## **6. THE CONTRIBUTOR TO GOOD GOVERNMENT (A RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF STATE)**

Citizens who contribute to bringing about good administration, especially in a democracy, should know and abide by the following principles:

A. **Understanding the three kinds of supremacy (*adhipateyya*)<sup>3</sup>** as follows:

1. *Attādhipateyya*: **supremacy of oneself**; putting the prime importance on one's own self, position, reputation, or status; acting in view of one's self and what relates to oneself; on the wholesome side, it means abandoning evil actions and cultivating the good out of a sense of self-respect.

2. *Lokādhipateyya*: **supremacy of the world**; putting the prime importance on worldly values; wavering in face of criticism and praise; operating on the basis of what pleases the group, seeking popularity or fearing censure; on the wholesome side, it refers to avoiding evil actions and cultivating the good in deference to the opinions of the community.

3. *Dhammādhipateyya*: **supremacy of Dhamma**; putting the prime importance on principles, truth, righteousness, virtue and reason; operating on the basis of what has been learned and verified against the facts; acting on views that have been extensively and clearly investigated and considered to the best of one's wisdom and integrity to be righteous and for the sake of goodness; on a general level, it means acting out of respect for established principles, laws, rules and regulations.

Bearing these three kinds of supremacy in mind, a responsible member of a democratic state should adhere to the last of the three, namely the supremacy of Dhamma.

(D III 220)

B. **Participating in government** by practicing in accordance with the principles for collective responsibility which help prevent decline and lead only to prosperity, known as the seven *aparihāniya-dhamma*:

4. Meeting often and regularly; regularly conferring on community affairs and projects (which are to be shouldered by each person according to his or her level).

5. Meeting together, dispersing together and doing together what needs to be done together.

6. Neither instituting laws and regulations not communally agreed upon simply out of convenience or personal preference, nor denigrating or abolishing things already instituted; upholding the main provisions established as the constitution.

7. Honouring and respecting the elders long in experience, giving weight to their words.

8. Honouring and respecting the womenfolk, protecting them from abuse and ill-treatment.

9. Honouring and revering the shrines, holy places and national monuments, which are memorials arousing virtue and centres of community spirit; not neglecting to honour the ceremonies required for those places as dictated by tradition.

10. Organizing rightful protection, support and sanctuary to monks and priests who maintain pure moral conduct and who serve as spiritual refuges and moral examples for the people; gladly receiving them and wishing for their comfort.

(D II 73)

In addition to these principles, it is also advisable to maintain the principles outlined in Chapter 12 on the ideal householder, particularly point E: conducting oneself as a good citizen.

## 7. THE STATE LEADER (A KING OR ADMINISTRATOR)

For the lord of the land, the state leader or ruler—be he or she an emperor, king or administrator in general—there are the following qualities and principles of conduct:

A. **Being endowed with the ten regal qualities:** to have the ten qualities of a righteous ruler or king (*rāja-dhamma*):

11. *Dāna: sharing with the populace;* one is a benefactor in that one rules or works to give, not to take; one devotes oneself to administering services and providing welfare and aid for the people to ensure their well-being, convenience and safety; one renders assistance to those in distress and difficulty and supports those who have done well.

12. *Sila: maintaining good conduct;* one is impeccable in conduct and restrained in actions and speech; one does only good actions and upholds one's honour; one sets an example for the people, commands their respect and is free from any cause for contempt.

13. *Pariccaṅga: working selflessly;* one is capable of sacrificing personal comfort, even one's own life, for the benefit of the people and the peace and stability of the country.

14. *Ajjava: working honestly;* one is honest and upholds the truth; one is free of deceit and upright in one's dealings; one is sincere and does not deceive the people.

15. *Maddava: deporting oneself with gentleness and congeniality;* one's bearing is not arrogant, rude, harsh or conceited; one has nobility and dignity that are based on a polite and gentle manner, inspiring devotion and loyalty but not without awe.

16. *Tapa: rejecting indulgence through austerity;* one destroys defilements and cravings and does not allow them to control one's mind; one can restrain one's mind and does not allow it to become lost in sensual pleasure and debauchery; one is simple and regular in life-style, and dedicated to the fulfilment of duty.

17. *Akkodha: adhering to reason, not anger;* one is not given to fiery outbursts and does not make judgments or act out of anger, but has a heart of goodwill, suppressing anger; one judges and acts righteously with a mind that is subtle and calm.

18. *Avihimsa* **bringing tranquillity through non-violence**; one does not let one's power go to one's head or use it to repress one's subjects; one is kind; one does not find a pretext for punishing a subject out of vindictiveness and hatred.

19. *Khanti*: **overcoming difficulties with patience**; one endures a heavy work load and perseveres in the face of tiredness; no matter how difficult or depressing the work may be, one does not give in; no matter how much one is provoked or ridiculed, or with whatever harsh and abrasive words, one does not despair; one refuses to abandon a task that is rightfully done.

20. *Avirodhana*: **not doing that which strays from righteousness**; one does not transgress the principles of public administration that are based on the welfare, happiness and righteousness of the people and the country; one does not oppose what the people rightfully desire; one does not stand in the way of those activities which are for the common good; one establishes oneself firmly in righteousness, steadfast and unwavering in the face of pleasant and unpleasant words, gain and loss, desirable and undesirable conditions; one is firmly established in righteous principles and does not deviate from or subvert them—both in judicial terms, namely [the administration of] justice, and in regulatory terms, namely [the observation of] regulations, formalities and administrative principles, including good customs and traditions.

(J V 378)

B. **Performing the duties of a universal emperor**: one performs the five duties of a supreme ruler, called the *cakkavatti-vatta*<sup>4</sup>:

21. *Dhammādhipateyya*: **holding the Dhamma supreme**; one adheres to truth, righteousness, goodness, reason, principle and rightful rules and regulations as standards; one respects, upholds, favors and establishes oneself in righteousness and practices accordingly.

22. *Dhammikārakkhā*: **providing righteous protection**; one provides fair protection to all groups of people in the land, i.e., the royal household, the military, administrative officials, civil servants, academics and people of various occupations such as merchants and farmers, country people and inhabitants of the border provinces, monks and priests who uphold moral conduct, and even beasts and birds requiring conservation.

23. *Mā adhammakāra*: **prohibiting unrighteous actions**; one arranges preventive and remedial measures, not allowing unrighteous actions, exploitation, oppression, corruption, or unrest to arise in the country; one encourages the people to establish themselves firmly in honesty and virtue and also establishes a system that excludes bad people and promotes good ones.

24. *Dhanānuppadāna*: **distributing resources to the poor**; one ensures that there are no poverty-stricken people in the land by, for example, arranging that all people have a chance to make an honest living.

25. *Paripucchā*: **not failing to seek counsel**; one seeks advancement in wisdom and virtue by having advisors who are learned and virtuous, who are morally upright and not heedless or self-indulgent, and who can help one to cultivate one's wisdom and wholesome qualities; one approaches monastics and wise persons and queries them to seek knowledge, goodness and truth; one discusses various problems with them at regular and appropriate times so that one may examine and improve oneself and carry out one's duties rightfully, properly and so as to bring about true welfare and happiness.

(D III 61)

C. **Effecting the royal benefactions**: one supports the people, allowing them to live in unity and harmony with the four *rāja-saṅgaha-vatthu* (principles by which a king supports his people):

26. *Sassamedha*: **shrewdness in promoting agriculture**; one is skilled in agronomic policies and promotes agricultural activity which brings about bountiful crop yields.

27. *Purisamedha*: **shrewdness in promoting government officials**; one is clever at making policies for supporting government officials by, for example, encouraging honest and capable officials and providing them with adequate social benefits.

28. *Sammāpāsa*: **bonding the people together**; one assists the people with policies that support their livelihood by, for example, providing funds from which the poor may borrow to set themselves up in commerce or start business operations, thereby eliminating an economic disparity that is so wide as to cause rifts among the people.

29. *Vājapeyya*: **impressive speech**; one knows how to speak, clarify and advise; one takes an interest in greeting people of all levels and inquiring about their welfare; one's speech is pleasant to the ear, worth listening to, reasoned, well-founded and useful; it leads the way to constructive action, to solution of problems, to increased harmony, and to mutual understanding, trust and respect.

(S I 76)

D. **Avoiding the biases**: when as an administrator one is carrying out one's functions, one should not allow the four biases, or deviations from righteousness, to interfere:

1. *Chandagati*: biased conduct on account of like,
2. *Dosagati*: biased conduct on account of dislike,
3. *Mohagati*: biased conduct on account of delusion or foolishness,
4. *Bhayagati*: biased conduct on account of timidity and fear.

(D III 182, 288)



## SECTION THREE

# PEOPLE AND LIFE

### 8. THE CONFIDENT ONE (A LIFE THAT IS PERFECT)

Through conducting one's life impeccably and reaping the most benefit out of birth into this world, one can attain such confidence in one's life that one fears nothing, not even death. This is living victoriously, making a success of life. Such a one is one who has attained the objective of living and leads one's life according to the following principles:

A. **Steering one's life to its objectives:** one conducts one's life toward the realization of the three benefits which are the objectives of life known as the three *attha*:

1. *Ditṭhadhammikattha*: **the temporal objective or present benefit**, the important kinds being:

- a) Having good health, a strong body, freedom from disease, pleasant appearance and longevity.
- b) Having work and income, wealth derived from honest livelihood; being economically self-reliant.
- c) Having good status, having rank, honour, friendship and social acceptance.
- d) Having a happy family making one's family worthy of respect.

All of the above should be righteously obtained and used or treated so as to produce rightful benefit and happiness both for oneself and for others.

2. *Samparāyikattha*: **the spiritual objective or further benefit** that gives value and meaning to life, and which leads to the profound inner happiness, especially:

- a) Warmth, deep appreciation and happiness through faith; having an ideal.
- b) Pride in having a clean life, in having done only good and virtuous actions.
- c) Gratification in a worthwhile life, in having made sacrifices and performed beneficial actions.

- d) Courage and confidence in having wisdom to deal with problems and guide one's life.
- e) Security and freedom from worry in having performed good kamma, having a guarantee for the future life.

3. ***Paramattha, the highest objective or greatest benefit;*** having insight into the truth, having penetrated to the nature of life and the world, thereby rendering the mind free, [as a result of which]:

- a) One is not shaken or overwhelmed by vicissitudes and changes.
- b) One is not disappointed, downhearted or distressed on account of attachment to things.
- c) One is secure, calm, clear, cheerful and buoyant at all times.
- d) One lives and acts with wisdom, which looks at causes and conditions.

These three levels of *attha* can be attained on three fronts, as follows:

1. ***Attattha: the objective for oneself or one's own benefit;*** i.e., the three levels of benefit explained above, which one should establish within oneself, or develop one's life toward.

2. ***Parattha: the objective for others, or other people's benefit;*** i.e., the three levels of benefit explained above, which one should help other people successively achieve by inducing and encouraging them to develop their lives.

3. ***Ubhayattha: the mutual objective or benefit to both parties;*** i.e., the collective benefit, happiness and virtue of the community or society, including environmental conditions and factors, both concrete, such as forests, rivers and roads, and abstract, such as morality and culture. We should contribute to the creation and conservation of these in order to help both ourselves and others advance to the three levels of objectives mentioned above, at the very least not allowing our own pursuit of benefit to adversely affect the benefit and well-being of the community. For example, in keeping the discipline a monk helps foster the harmony of the monastic community, which is an atmosphere that helps the monks living together all live in comfort and grow in their practice toward attaining the highest benefit (*paramattha*).

(Nidd II 26)

B. **Maintaining inner strength:** one has the strength that arises from the moral qualities or practices that are life's assurances—known as the four powers (*bala*)—which instil such self-confidence into one that one fears no peril, namely:

1. *Paññā-bala*: **the power of wisdom**; one is learned; one has proper and clear knowledge and understanding of all matters and tasks one must deal with, and ultimately the true nature of life and the world; one does things with understanding of their reasons and their real nature.

2. *Viriya-bala*: **the power of effort**; one always applies oneself to one's tasks and duties with effort and perseverance; one does not give up, slacken or become discouraged.

3. *Anavajja-bala*: **the power of integrity** or the power of purity; one's conduct and work are honest, faultless, clean, pure and uncensurable.

4. *Saṅgaha-bala*: **the power of benefaction**; one helps and supports others and makes oneself useful to one's fellow men; one is a benefactor of the community.

A government official, for example, might bear in mind these four brief injunctions: "Know your work well, perform your duty faultlessly, be honest and do not neglect human relations."

(A IV 363)

C. **Establishing oneself on a firm foundation** from which to grasp the highest success aspired to without causing self-delusion, creating opportunities for error and blemish or leading to the accumulation of defilements. This can be achieved by practicing according to the principles known as the four inner strongholds (*adhitṭhāna*):

1. *Paññā*: **using wisdom**; one lives one's life with wisdom and acts with reason; one does not react impulsively or emotionally to the incidents one encounters or get carried away by temptation; one studies things to know them clearly and penetrate to their *raison d'être*; one understands things as they really are, ultimately attaining the truth.

2. *Sacca*: **upholding truth**; one establishes and maintains oneself firmly in the truth that one has clearly known and seen with wisdom. *Sacca* ranges from being truthful in speech, being

true to principles and having integrity in deeds, to [realizing] the highest truth.

3. *Cāga*: **fostering relinquishment**; one fosters or increases one's relinquishment to ever greater heights to prevent or restrain oneself from becoming enslaved by any fame, fortune or success, for example, that one may acquire, which keep luring one into attachment, pride and delusion; one can relinquish whatever one has previously been attached to—ranging from material possessions to mental defilements—that is mistaken, false or wrong.

4. *Upasama*: **calming the mind**; one knows how to find peace in one's mind; one trains to be able to overcome mental defilements and remove the frustration and confusion resulting from them; one makes one's mind calm and clear so that it can experience the taste of peace; having known the taste of happiness that arises from the calmed mind, one is not easily infatuated with material possessions, status, or fame.

(M III 243)

## **9. THE SUCCESSFUL ONE**

(A LIFE THAT ADVANCES AND SUCCEEDS)

One who desires progress and success in life, be it in the field of education, occupation or livelihood, is advised to abide by the following principles:

A. **The principles of growth**: to practice according to the teachings that guide life to prosperity and eminence known as the four *cakka* (the conditions likened to the four wheels that carry a vehicle to its destination):

1. *Patirūpadesāvāsa*: **choosing a suitable environment**; to choose a suitable location in which to live, study or work, where there are people and an environment conducive to learning and betterment in life, to the pursuit of the truth, virtue and knowledge, and the generation of goodness and prosperity.

2. *Sappurisūpāssaya*: **associating with good people**; to seek association or alliance with people who are learned and virtuous and who will support one's pursuit of the truth, virtue and knowledge, and one's advancement and growth in a rightful way.

3. *Attasammāpaṇidhi*: **establishing oneself rightly**; to establish oneself firmly in virtue and a right way of life; to establish

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a clear and virtuous goal for one's life and work, and set oneself resolutely and firmly on the right path to that goal, not wavering or being negligent.

4. *Pubbekatapuññatā*: **having a good “capital foundation”**; one portion of this capital foundation comprises innate qualities such as intelligence, aptitude and a healthy body; the other is, on the basis of that foundation, knowing how to rectify or improve oneself, to seek further knowledge, to strengthen good qualities and to train oneself in preparation for when these qualities are needed, to be ready to welcome success, to bring about welfare and happiness and to advance to even greater heights.

(A II 32/Sn 259–260)

B. **The principles of success**: practicing according to the four conditions that lead to the success of any undertaking, known as the *iddhipāda* (pathways to success):

1. *Chanda*: **having a heart of zeal**; to be keen to do something, and to do it for the love of it; to wish to bring an activity or task to its optimum fruition, not simply doing it to get it out of the way or merely for reward or material gain.

2. *Viriya*: **doing with effort**; to be diligent and apply oneself to a task with effort, fortitude, patience and perseverance, not abandoning it or becoming discouraged, but striving ever onward until success is attained.

3. *Citta*: **committing oneself to the task**; to establish one's attention on the task in hand and do it thoughtfully, not allowing the mind to wander; to apply one's thought to the matter regularly and consistently and do the task or action devotedly.

4. *Vimāṇsa*: **using wise investigation**; to diligently apply wise reflection to examine cause and effect within what one is doing and to reflect on, for example, its pros and cons, gains and shortcomings or obstructions. This can be achieved by experimenting, planning and evaluating results, and devising solutions and improvements in order to manage and carry out the activity in hand so as to achieve better results.

When applied to the work situation, for example, these four conditions may, in short, be remembered as **love of work, tenacity, dedication and circumspection**.

(D III 221)

C. **The conditions effectuating enlightenment:** to follow the Buddha's example by conducting oneself in accordance with the two qualities that enabled the Buddha to attain his own enlightenment (*sambodhi*), known as the virtues which the Buddha himself practiced and saw the benefit of (*upaññātadhamma*):

1. *Asantuṭṭhitā kusalesu dhammesu*: **non-contentment with wholesome qualities**; knowing no satiation, never having enough, of generating virtue and performing good works.
2. *Appaṭivāṇītā ca padhānasmin*: **unrelenting effort**; striving forward constantly, not retreating; refusing to give in or become discouraged in the face of obstacles, weariness and difficulties.

(D III 214)

## 10. THE SHREWD BREADWINNER (A LIFE THAT IS WELL FOUNDED)

Through abiding by the following principles, one can be said to know how to acquire and use wealth (i.e., to be money wise), to be a good breadwinner, and to have established oneself and used one's wealth beneficially—such a person is one who performs one's economic duties properly:

A. **On the level of seeking and safeguarding wealth:** practicing according to the principles that lead to immediate benefit, or that aid in the attainment of basic benefit, known as the four *dīṭṭhadhammikattha-saṃvattaṇika-dhamma*<sup>5</sup>:

1. *Uṭṭhāna-sampadā*: **endowment of industry**; one is energetic and applies oneself to one's duties and making an honest living; one trains so that one acquires skills and true knowledge; one wisely scrutinizes [his undertakings] and seeks skilful means to manage and conduct one's work for good results.

2. *Ārakkha-sampadā*: **endowment of protection**; one knows how to protect from risk and loss the wealth and fruits of one's labour, gained through one's own honest efforts.

3. *Kalyāṇamittatā*: **association with good friends**; one discerns which people are worth associating with and which not, and does not associate with or emulate those who would lead one downward, but associates with, studies and emulates people who are learned, worthy, capable, honourable and endowed with qualities

that are helpful to one's livelihood.

4. *Samajīvitā: balanced life-style*; one keeps track of one's income and expenditure and lives within one's means so that one is neither deprived nor extravagant, and has income left over for saving.  
(A IV 281)

B. **On the level of allotting wealth:** having acquired wealth, one knows how to allot it into four portions, according to the principles for dividing wealth known as the four *bhoga-vibhāga*:

*Ekena bhoge bhuñjeyya*: one portion to be used for supporting oneself and one's dependents and for good causes.

*Dvīhi kammanā payojaye*: two portions to be used for investment.

*Catutthañca nidhāpeyya*: another portion to be put aside for future needs.

(D III 188)

C. **On the level of using wealth:** it should always be borne in mind that the acquisition, protection and possession of wealth are for the purpose of creating benefit for both oneself and others. If wealth is not used to create benefit, its acquisition and possession are of no value or meaning. Thus, when one owns or acquires wealth, one should use the first portion as given in B. above in accordance with the five benefits to be derived from wealth, or reasons a noble disciple should hold to for acquiring and possessing wealth (*bhogādiya*), as described in the Buddha's words:

Having acquired wealth through the sweat of one's own brow and the strength of one's own arms, honestly and rightfully as a noble disciple one:

1. Supports oneself, one's parents, children, wife and dependents and sees to their comfort.
2. Supports one's friends and associates and sees to their comfort.
3. Uses it to safeguard one's well-being and to make oneself secure and free from dangers.
4. Makes sacrifice; that is, one gives offerings as support and oblations, in the following ways:
  - (1) *Nāti-bali*: supporting relatives.

- (2) *Atithi-bali*: receiving guests.
  - (3) *Pubbapeta-bali*: making merit or offerings in dedication to the departed.
  - (4) *Rāja-bali*: supporting the government through taxes, etc.
  - (5) *Devatā-bali*: making offerings to the deities; that is, contributions made in accordance with his faith.
5. Supports those monastics who are virtuous and free of heedlessness and indulgence.

Having used wealth in this way, even if it has been exhausted one can still rest assured that the wealth has been rightfully used for beneficial purposes, while if it increases one can also feel at ease; thus one is free of remorse in either case.

(A III 45)

The use of wealth through these five channels is mentioned with a view to enumerating the ways in which wealth should be spent so that one learns how to use it. It is not implied that an equal portion of wealth should be assigned to each. Moreover, this teaching points specifically to expenditure on a regular basis; those who are able should create further benefit in accordance, for example, with the principles for helpful integration (*saṅgaha-vatthu*) given in Chapter 4.

## **11. THE IDEAL HOUSEHOLDER** (A PERFECT HOME LIFE)

A person who can be said to have achieved success in domestic life as a good householder, who is worthy of respect and emulation, can be measured by the following gauges:

A. **Possessing the four kinds of happiness**: these are the four kinds of happiness that are fitting for a householder, or that lay people should always make efforts to attain. They are briefly known as the four kinds of happiness for a householder (*kāmabhogī-sukha*):

1. ***Atthi-sukha*: the happiness of possessing wealth**; the pride, satisfaction and security of having wealth, rightfully acquired through the sweat of one's own brow and the strength of one's own arms.

2. ***Bhoga-sukha*: the happiness of spending wealth**; the pride and satisfaction of knowing that one has used one's wealth,

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rightfully gained, for the support of oneself, one's family and one's dependents and for good causes.

3. *Ananya-sukha*: **the happiness of freedom from debt**; the pride and satisfaction of knowing that one is free, not indebted to anybody.

4. *Anavajja-sukha*: **the happiness of blameless conduct**; the pride and satisfaction of knowing that one has acted honestly, faultlessly and blamelessly in body, speech and mind.<sup>6</sup>

Of these four kinds of happiness, the last is the most valuable.

(A II 69)

B. **Being a model householder**: people who live the household life can be divided into several groups and classified into various levels. There are both bad and good, and the good can in turn be divided into several levels. The ideal householder, who is truly worthy of respect, is the tenth of the following ten kinds of householders (*kāmabhogī*):

First group: acquiring wealth through wrongful means [a minus]:

1. Having acquired wealth, they do not use it to support themselves in comfort [a minus], and they do not share it with others or use it for good causes [a minus] (bad on all three counts).

2. Having acquired wealth, they use it to support themselves in comfort [a plus], but they do not share it with others or use it for good causes [a minus] (bad on two counts, good on one).

3. Having acquired wealth, they use it to support themselves in comfort [a plus], and they share it with others and use it for good causes [a plus] (bad on one count, good on two).

Second group: acquiring wealth both rightfully [a plus] and wrongfully [a minus]:

4. Having acquired wealth, they deal with it as in point 1 (bad on three counts, good on one).

5. Having acquired wealth, they deal with it as in point 2 (bad on two counts, good on two).

6. Having acquired wealth, they deal with it as in point 3 (bad on one count, good on three).

Third group: acquiring wealth rightfully [a plus]:

7. Having acquired wealth, they deal with it as in point 1 (bad on two counts, good on one).

8. Having acquired wealth, they deal with it as in point 2

(bad on one count, good on two).

9. Having acquired wealth, they deal with it as in point 3. However, they are still attached to, infatuated and obsessed with wealth, using it without full awareness of its drawbacks, and they lack the wisdom that leads to independence from and mastery over wealth [a minus] (bad on one count, good on three).

Special group: one who acquires wealth rightfully and uses it mindfully and comprehendingly, with a mind that is detached, has the following characteristics:

10. Having acquired wealth rightfully [a plus], one supports oneself comfortably [a plus], shares it with others and uses it for good causes [a plus]. Moreover, one is not obsessed or infatuated with wealth, but uses it with full knowledge and awareness of its benefits and faults, its merits and demerits; one has the wisdom that frees one, making one master of one's wealth [a plus].

This tenth kind of householder was commended by the Buddha as the most excellent kind of person, praiseworthy on all four counts, a model householder.

(A V 176)

C. **Governing life with four qualities:** one practices according to the four qualities for leading the household life, known as the *gharāvāsadhamma*<sup>7</sup>:

1. *Sacca*: **truthfulness**; one adheres to truth, integrity, honesty, sincerity; one is as good as one's word; one ensures that one's actions are trustworthy and reliable.

2. *Dama*: **training**; one disciplines and restrains oneself; one adjusts oneself to conditions and corrects and improves oneself so as to be constantly progressing.

3. *Khanti*: **endurance**; one applies oneself to doing one's work with diligence and effort; one is tenacious and endures without wavering; one is firm in one's aim and does not become discouraged.

4. *Cāga*: **sacrifice**; one is thoughtful and generous; one helps others and performs good works; one relinquishes greed and pride and is able to work with others without being narrow-minded, selfish, or insisting on having things one's own way.

(Sn 189)

D **Accepting responsibility for one's dependents:** one has good and harmonious relations within the family, among relatives, friends, work associates and all of one's dependents, by not only seeing to their material needs but also bringing mental benefit into their lives, by being an example to them and encouraging them in growth with the virtues known as the five qualities leading to noble growth (*ariya-vaddhi*):

1. **Growth in faith:** encouraging them to have firm belief and faith in the Triple Gem [Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha; the Teacher, the Teaching and the Community of Noble Disciples] and in performing good deeds, to have a solid object of faith in their hearts.

2. **Growth in morality:** encouraging them to have good conduct, to be honest and maintain good livelihood and to be disciplined and well-mannered.

3. **Growth in learning:** encouraging them to acquire knowledge through learning and hearing, by advising them or encouraging them to learn those things that will revive and improve their lives and minds.

4. **Growth in giving:** encouraging them to be generous, to be thoughtful to one another and to derive satisfaction in helping their fellow man.

5. **Growth in wisdom:** encouraging them to be reflective, to understand reason, to know good from evil, benefit from harm, what is useful from what is not; to see things as they really are; to be judicious, and to use their wisdom to investigate causes and conditions, solve problems and perform and carry out their tasks effectively.

(A III 80)

E. **Conducting oneself as a good citizen:** leading oneself and one's family to prosperity and happiness, and being a constructive member of the society, by practicing the following:

1. *Na sādhāraṇadārassa:* not being promiscuous or preoccupied with sex.

2. *Na bhuñje sādhumekako:* not selfishly taking all the tasty morsels for oneself.

3. *Na seve lokāyatikam:* not wasting time arguing about worthless things.

4. *Sīlavā*: having good conduct and discipline; being established in the five precepts.
5. *Vattasampanno*: performing one's duties regularly and completely.
6. *Appamatto*: not being heedless, but energetic at all times.
7. *Vicakkhaṇo*: being judicious, doing things with wisdom.
8. *Nivātavutti atthaddho*: being polite, not stubborn or arrogant; being open to the opinions of others.
9. *Surato*: being modest; possessing a love of refinement, cleanliness and orderliness.
10. *Sakhilo mudu*: having pleasant speech; being gentle in both deeds and thoughts.
11. *Saṅgahetū ca mittānañ*: being kind and generous to one's friends.
12. *Saṃvibhāgī*: sharing with and helping people in general.
13. *Vidhānavā*: managing one's duties efficiently and effectively.
14. *Tappeyya*: supporting the learned and virtuous monks.
15. *Dhammakāmo*: loving truth; esteeming virtue.
16. *Sutādharo*: having read and heard much; thoroughly knowing one's field.
17. *Paripucchako*: possessing an inquiring mind, seeking ever more knowledge.

(J-a VI 28)

## **12. THE UNBEGUILED ONE (A LIFE THAT DOES NOT ERR)**

A person who is not heedless or so enraptured by life and the world that one is enslaved by them—"deceived by the world, drunk on life," as it were—is one who is mindful, who knows how to look and investigate, and knows the right attitude to adopt to the truths that exist inherently in life and this world as the natural course of things, as follows:

- A. **Knowing the ways of the world**: one reflects on, understands and establishes mindfulness properly in relation to the ever-changing conditions in life within the world known as the eight *loka-dhamma* (norms of the world, or normal conditions which repeatedly visit worldly beings, and by which worldly beings are constantly being spun around):

<b>Sweet</b>	<b>Bitter</b>
1. Gain	2. Loss
3. Repute	4. Disrepute
5. Praise	6. Blame
7. Happiness	8. Suffering

These eight worldly conditions are divided into two sides, those that are pleasant, desirable and generally aspired to, known as *iṭṭhārammaṇa*, and those that are distressing, undesirable, and generally abhorred, known as *anīṭṭhārammaṇa*. Regardless of whether they are liked or not, these eight worldly conditions can arise for everyone, be they unlearned and unenlightened or learned and enlightened, the only difference lying in the way each person responds to and acts on them. That is to say:

1. Unlearned, unenlightened beings do not know or understand the true nature of worldly conditions and so they mindlessly rejoice and lament over them: whenever they win they become indulgent and vainglorious, and whenever they lose they become sad and despondent, or even deranged. They let worldly conditions control their lives and overwhelm their minds, so that they are forever experiencing ups and downs and do not transcend sorrow.

2. Learned noble disciples know how to reflect on worldly conditions and see their true nature: that all things that arise, whatever they may be, are without exception unstable, impermanent, imperfect and naturally subject to change. Thus they do not mindlessly indulge in pleasant experiences (*iṭṭhārammaṇa*) or become saddened or depressed on account of unpleasant experiences (*anīṭṭhārammaṇa*); they abide with mindfulness and equilibrium, neither indulging in happiness nor being overwhelmed by suffering.

Moreover, the noble disciple may make use of worldly conditions. For example, one may use undesirable experiences as lessons, tests or exercises for training in one's own self-development, or use desirable experiences as opportunities or tools for constructive action and the furtherance of beneficial activities.

(A IV 157)

**B. Ignoring no divine messengers:** one reflects on the states that always arise among humankind, which are reminders of the natural course of life, something not to be heedlessly indulged

in. These states are known as the five *deva-dūta* (the harbingers or heralds of the Lord of Death):

1. **A newborn baby:** [reminds us] that when we are born this is all we are.
2. **An old person:** [reminds us] that all people, if they live long enough, will have to experience this.
3. **A sick or injured person:** [reminds us] that this condition may arise for any of us.
4. **A prisoner:** [reminds us] that bad deeds cause misery and suffering even in this very life, let alone after death.
5. **A dead person:** [reminds us] that death awaits all of us; no one can escape it, and no one knows for certain where and when it will happen.

Whenever we see these phenomena—as when we enter a cemetery, a prison or a hospital—we should not become depressed over or afraid of them, but establish mindfulness, and reflect on them with wisdom so that we are roused to bring forth wholesome actions and lead lives that are free of intoxication and heedlessness.

(M III 179)

C. **Reflecting on the formula of life:** even when one does not see the “divine messengers,” one should constantly reflect according to the five subjects that all people, male or female, lay followers or monastics, should constantly bear in mind (*abhiñha-paccavekkhana*):

1. *Jaradhammatā*: we are subject to aging and cannot escape it.
2. *Byādhidhammatā*: we are subject to pain and illness and cannot escape them.
3. *Maraṇadhammatā*: we are subject to death and cannot escape it.
4. *Piyavinābhāvatā*: we must inevitably be separated from all people and things that we love.
5. *Kammaṣṭakatā*: we have kamma as our own; whatever deeds we do, be they good or evil, of those we will surely be the heirs.

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Regularly reflecting in this way helps to prevent infatuation with youth, possessions and life, alleviating heedlessness and attachment, preventing evil actions and inspiring us to quickly work for goodness and benefit.

(A III 71)



# SECTION FOUR

## PEOPLE AND PEOPLE

### 13. THE PARTNER (A GOOD SPOUSE)

To be partners in life, good spouses should not only have pleasant sensual attributes, but also possess the qualities and observe the principles of conduct listed below:

A. **The compatible couple:** there are principles for partners in life to ensure their compatibility, providing a firm foundation for a long married life, called the four qualities for a good match (*samajivi-dhamma*):

1. *Sama-saddhā*: **having compatible faith**; they uphold the same religion, revere the same objects of worship, concepts, beliefs or principles, and share the same lines of interest—they are equally firm in all these or can reach agreement on them.
2. *Sama-sīla*: **having compatible morality**; they have conduct, morality, ethics, manners and upbringing which are harmonious or compatible.
3. *Sama-cāga*: **having compatible generosity**; they are in accord, not conflict, with each other in their generosity, hospitality, munificence, sacrifice, and readiness to help others.
4. *Sama-paññā*: **having compatible intelligence**; they are sensible and can understand each other; they can at least reason with each other.

(A II 60)

B. **Sweet couples and bitter couples:** or “blessed couples and doomed couples,” are partners who have qualities, tendencies, conduct and responses to each other that make their lives either, on the positive side, mutually supportive or compatible, or, on the negative side, barely endurable or downright miserable. In this regard, there is the teaching on the seven kinds of wives, as follows:

5. *Vadhakā-bhariyā*: **the murderous wife**; a wife who does not live happily with her husband, who disparages him and thinks

of destroying him.

6. *Corī-bhariyā*: **the thieving wife**; a wife who squanders all her husband's wealth.

7. *Ayyā-bhariyā*: **the domineering wife**; a wife who is lazy and doesn't attend to her duties; she is foul-mouthed and vulgar, and likes to dominate her husband.

8. *Mātā-bhariyā*: **the motherly wife**; a wife who looks to her husband's well-being and attends to his needs, taking care of the money that one acquires and seeing that it is not squandered.

9. *Bhagini-bhariyā*: **the sisterly wife**; a wife who respects and loves her husband as a younger sister loves her brother; she is gentle and deferential, and tends to agree with her husband.

10. *Sakhī-bhariyā*: **the comradely wife**; a wife who is like a friend, loyal to her husband; when she greets her husband she is happy; she deports and conducts herself well; she has fine manners and is a friend who readily shares her husband's thoughts and feelings.

11. *Dāsī-bhariyā*: **the servile wife**; a wife who lives under her husband's thumb, and who passively endures his beatings and abuse.

(A IV 91)

According to the teachings, a wife should look at herself and ask herself what kind of wife she is now and what kind of wife she should be. For a man, this teaching might be used as a principle for exploring his own character to see which kind of wife one is most suited to, and to examine a potential partner to see whether or not she is suited to him.

There are also many different kinds of husbands, in regard to which a parallel can be drawn to the seven kinds of wives.

C. **The couple sharing in goodness**: the four principles for leading the household life (*gharāvāsa-dhamma*) can be used by a couple in the following ways:

12. *Sacca*: **truthfulness**; being truthful and faithful to each other in thoughts, speech and deeds.

13. *Dama*: **training**; exercising restraint, training themselves to correct faults, resolve differences, adapt to each other and improve themselves.

14. *Khanti*: **patience**; being firm, stable and patient; not reacting impulsively to each other's affronts; enduring difficulties and hardships and overcoming obstacles together.

15. *Cāga*: **sacrifice**; being thoughtful, able to give up personal comfort for the sake of one's partner by, for example, foregoing sleep in order to nurse him or her in sickness; also being kind and generous, not uncharitable, to the relatives and friends of one's partner.

(S I 215)

D. **The couple sharing responsibility** help and serve each other according to the teachings given on the rearward of the six directions<sup>8</sup> as follows:

**A husband serves his wife by:**

1. Honouring her in accordance with her status as his wife.
2. Not disparaging her.
3. Not committing adultery.
4. Giving her control of household concerns.
5. Giving her occasional gifts of ornaments and clothing.

**A wife honours her husband by:**

1. Keeping the household tidy.
2. Being helpful to the relations and friends of both sides of the family.
3. Not committing adultery.
4. Safeguarding any wealth that has been acquired.
5. Being diligent in all her work.

(D III 192)

E. **A sympathetic husband:** There are a number of conditions peculiar to a woman about which a husband should be considerate and to which one should respond with care and sympathy. They are:

1. She must be parted from her kin despite her young age to live with her husband's family: the husband should make her feel at home.

2. She has a monthly period, which sometimes causes vacillations in her physical and mental states: the husband needs to understand this.

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3. She may be with child, at which times she needs special care and attention, both physical and mental.

4. She may give birth, which is an extremely painful and even life-threatening time: the husband should look after his wife as if her suffering were his own.

5. She must submit to the wants of her husband: the husband should not do just as one pleases, but appreciate her attention and respond to it thoughtfully.

(S IV 239)

### **14. THE KEEPER OF THE LINEAGE**

(A GOOD HEAD OF FAMILY)

As the head of family in addition to practicing in accordance with the qualities and principles already mentioned, for example by knowing how to make a living, one should also abide by certain principles concerning responsibility for one's family in the following ways:

A. **Ensuring the stability of the family line** by practicing according to the principles for sustaining family prosperity, or causes for a family's prosperity and longevity, known as the four *kula-ciratthiti-dhamma*:

1. *Nattha-gavesanā*: when things are lost or used up, one replenishes them.
2. *Jinna-patisaṅkhārana*: when things are old and damaged, one restores and repairs them.
3. *Parimita-pānabhojanā*: one knows moderation in eating and using.
4. *Adhipacca-sīlavanta-thāpanā*: one places a moral and virtuous woman or man in charge of the household.

(A II 249)

B. **Honouring the people who are like fire**: the following people are like fire—if one behaves toward them properly, great benefit can arise, but if one relates to them wrongly great harm can result, like burning oneself with fire. Thus one should act [toward them] as the ancient fire worshippers who took pains to tend the fires they worshipped caringly, cautiously, attentively and properly, out of respect and awe. These people are called *aggi-paricariya* (fires to be tended: people who must be

worshipped by giving them attentive care and the respect proper to their position, like the fire of a fire worshipper):

1. *Āhuneyyaggi* “**the fire deserving of offerings**”: father and mother.
2. *Gahapataggi* “the fire of the householder”: wife, children and dependents.
3. *Dakkhineyyaggi* “**the fire worthy of gifts**”: virtuous monks or priests, who teach and uphold righteousness, who practice rightly, and who are not heedless or deluded.

(D III 217)

C. **Attending to one’s children:** as a parent, one should be aware of the three kinds of children, and arrange education and training for them in order to ensure that they develop in the best way. They are:

1. *Abhijāta-putta*: the child who excels the parents, and is superior to them.
2. *Anujāta-putta*: the child who follows the parents, and is equal to them.
3. *Avajāta-putta*: the child who falls short of the parents, who drags the family down into ruin.

(It 62)

D. **Maintaining the duties of a parent:** helping children according to the principles of conduct for parents, who are described as the “forward direction,” by:

1. Cautioning and protecting them from evil.
2. Nurturing and training them in goodness.
3. Providing an education.
4. Seeing to it that they obtain suitable spouses.
5. Providing allowances and bequeathing the inheritance to them at the proper time.

(D III 191)

E. **Being a good citizen:** the family is the basic social unit and is a factor for social and national prosperity and security. Thus, a good head of family should also be a good citizen by conducting him- or herself according to the principles outlined in Chapter 12, point E.

## 15. THE FAMILY SUCCESSOR (A WORTHY HEIR)

A family's successor, in addition to inheriting the wealth and family name, must also take over various duties and adopt certain virtuous qualities which are related to preserving the family lineage. In the first place, as a good heir, one should abide by the following principles:

A. **Opening the doorway to growth and progress:** practicing according to the six conditions that are a doorway to benefit and happiness or the practices that are like a gateway of victory opening onto advancement in life (*vaddhana-mukha*)<sup>9</sup>, as follows:

1. *Ārogya*: **maintaining good health;** having the greatest wealth, which is the absence of illness in both mind and body.
2. *Sila*: **being possessed of discipline;** conducting oneself well and properly, creating no trouble in the community.
3. *Buddhānumata*: **having a good example;** studying and emulating great, enlightened beings.
4. *Suta*: **learning to be really learned;** learning and seeking knowledge so as to be truly versed in one's subject; taking an interest in keeping updated.
5. *Dhammānuvatti*: **doing only what is right and good;** firmly establishing oneself in righteousness; conducting both one's personal life and work with rectitude.
6. *Alinatā*: **being energetic and diligent;** being ardent, not given to discouragement or sluggishness; constantly striving forward.

(J I 366)

B. **Shutting off the channels of ruin:** steering clear of the practices that are channels to ruin and destruction, and which lead to the dissipation of wealth, known as the six pathways to ruin (*apāya-mukha*):

1. **To be addicted to drink and drugs**, which has six hazards:
  - 1) Wealth visibly dissipates.
  - 2) Brawls are caused.
  - 3) Health is impaired.
  - 4) Reputation is harmed.
  - 5) Indecent exposure and shamelessness result.
  - 6) Intelligence is reduced.

2. **To be always revelling in nightlife**, which has six hazards:
    - 1) One's self is not protected.
    - 2) Wife and children are not protected.
    - 3) Wealth is not protected.
    - 4) One is susceptible to suspicion and doubt.
    - 5) One is exposed to slander and rumour.
    - 6) It leads to trouble of many a kind.
  3. **To be bent on entertainment**, which has a harmful effect on work because one is always preoccupied with forms of entertainment and wasting time frequenting them: where there is dancing, singing or music, there one goes.
  4. **To be addicted to gambling**, which has six hazards:
    - 1) When one wins, one gains enemies.
    - 2) When one loses, one bemoans one's lost wealth.
    - 3) Wealth visibly dissipates.
    - 4) One's word is not respected in meetings.
    - 5) One is an object of contempt for one's friends
    - 6) One is not favoured as a potential partner in life because one could not be trusted to raise a family
  5. **To consort with evil people**, which has the harmful effect of turning one into an evil person just like any of the six kinds of evil persons one associates with: that is, having friends that lead one into becoming a gambler, a womanizer, a drunkard, a forger, a trickster or a hood.
  6. **To be chronically lazy**, which has the harmful effect of causing one to give all kinds of excuses for putting off the work that should be done; new wealth does not arise, and old wealth dissipates. The six excuses for not working are "too cold," "too hot," "too late," "too early," "too hungry," and "too full."
- (D III 182)

C. **Cementing relationships with one's parents:** as a son or daughter, one should honour one's parents, who are compared to the "forward direction," in the following ways:

1. Having been raised by them, one looks after them in return.
2. One helps them in their work.
3. One continues the family line and tradition.
4. One behaves as is proper for an heir.

5. When they have passed away, one performs meritorious acts and dedicates the merits to them.

(D III 191)

- D. **Having the guarantee of a life that will progress:** The Buddha stated that children are the foundations of the human race. The sons and daughters of a family are the children of a society. They should be given training which provides them with a basic capital for preparing them to advance in their education and life development to become valuable members of society. This can be achieved by instilling in them the qualities known as the **auroras of a good life**, or the **dawn of education**, of which there are seven, as follows:

1. Seeking out sources of wisdom and good examples.
2. Having discipline as a foundation for life development.
3. Having a heart that aspires to learning and constructive action.
4. Dedicating oneself to training for the realization of one's full human potential.
5. Adhering to the principle of conditionality; seeing things according to cause and effect.
6. Establishing oneself in heedfulness.
7. Thinking wisely so as to realize benefit and see the truth.

For explanations, see Introductory Section: Human Beings and Being Human, 1. Man, the Noble Being.

## **16. THE COMPANY ONE KEEPS**

(TRUE FRIENDS AND FALSE FRIENDS)

Our association with friends is important, having a great influence on our advancement and regression in life. Thus we should be aware of the main teachings on friends. Listed here are the teachings on those who should be associated with and those who should not, and the principles through which friends should relate to each other:

- A. **False friends:** one should know the four kinds of false friends, or enemies in the guise of friends (*mitta-patirūpaka*), as follows:
1. **The out-and-out robber**, he who only takes from friends (*harajana*)<sup>10</sup>, has four main features:

- 1) He thinks only of getting.
  - 2) He gives little in the hope of getting much.
  - 3) Only when he is in danger does he helps his friend.
  - 4) He is a friend only for his own profit.
2. **The smooth talker** (*vaciparama*) has four main features:
    - 1) He is only good at talking about that which is done and gone.
    - 2) He is only good at talking about that which has not yet come.
    - 3) He offers help that is ineffectual.
    - 4) When his friend needs help, he makes excuses.
  3. **The flatterer** (*anupiyabhāṇī*) has four main features:
    - 1) He consents to [his friend's] doing wrong.
    - 2) He consents to his doing right.
    - 3) He sings his praises to his face.
    - 4) He runs him down behind his back.
  4. **The leader to ruin** (*apāyasyahāya*) has four main features:
    - 1) He is a companion in drinking.
    - 2) He is a companion in night life.
    - 3) He is a companion in frequenting shows and fairs.
    - 4) He is a companion in gambling.
- B. **True friends:** one should know the four kinds of true friends, or friends at heart (*suhada-mitta*)<sup>11</sup>, as follows:
1. **The helping friend** (*upakāraka*) has four main features:
    - 1) When his friend is off guard, he guards him.
    - 2) When his friend is off guard, he guards his property.
    - 3) In times of danger, he can be a refuge.
    - 4) In times of need, he gives more than asked for.
  2. **The friend through thick and thin** (*samānasukhadukkha*) has four main features:
    - 1) He confides in his friend.
    - 2) He keeps his friend's secrets.
    - 3) He does not desert his friend in times of danger.
    - 4) He will give even his life for his friend's sake.

3. **The good counselor** (*atthakkhāyī*) has four main features:
  - 1) He restrains his friend from doing evil or harm.
  - 2) He encourages his friend in goodness.
  - 3) He makes known to his friend what he has not heard before.
  - 4) He points out the way to prosperity and happiness.
4. **The loving friend** (*anukampī*) has four main features:
  - 1) When his friend is unhappy, he commiserates.
  - 2) When his friend is happy, he is happy for him.
  - 3) When others criticize his friend, he comes to his defence.
  - 4) When others praise his friend, he joins in their praise.

(D III 185)

- C. **Reciprocal friendship:** friends should support each other according to the practices in the teachings on the “left direction” listed below:

One should treat friends as follows:

1. Share with them.
2. Speak kindly to them.
3. Help them.
4. Be constant through their ups and downs.
5. Be faithful and sincere.

Friends reciprocate as follows:

1. When their friend is off guard, they protect the friend.
2. When their friend is off guard, they protect the friend’s property.
3. In times of danger, they can be a refuge.
4. They do not desert their friend in times of need.
5. They respect their friend’s family and relations.

(D III 189)

## **17. THE WORKER AND THE BOSS** (EMPLOYEE AND EMPLOYER)

People who work together in the capacity of employee and employer should relate to each other properly in accordance with their duties, so that good relations are maintained and the work proceeds

*People and people*

smoothly by abiding by the principles of conduct outlined in the teachings on the “lower of the six directions” as follows:

**A. As an employer one should support one's servants and employees by:**

1. Assigning them work in accordance with their strength, sex, age, and abilities.
2. Paying them wages commensurate with their work and adequate for their livelihood.
3. Granting them fringe benefits by, for example, providing medical care in times of sickness.
4. Sharing with them a portion of any special profits that may accrue.
5. Giving them appropriate holidays and time to rest.

**B. As an employee one helps one's employer by:**

1. Starting work before the employer.
2. Stopping work after the employer.
3. Taking only what is given by the employer.
4. Doing his job well and seeking ways to improve on it.
5. Spreading a good reputation about one's employer and his or her business.

(D III 189)



# SECTION FIVE

## PEOPLE AND THE WAY

### 18. THE EDUCATOR

(A TEACHER, MENTOR OR PREACHER)

One whose duty it is to teach and provide others with learning, especially a teacher, should possess the qualities and observe the principles of conduct outlined below:

A. **One is a good friend:** [a teacher] should be endowed with the seven qualities of the good friend (*kalyāṇamitta-dhamma*), as follows:

1. *Piyo: endearing*; one is endowed with kindness and compassion, taking an interest in one's students and their well-being; one has rapport; one creates a familiar and casual atmosphere, encouraging students to approach one with queries and doubts.

2. *Garu: worthy of respect*; one is firm, adhering to principle; one has conduct that befits one's position, inspiring feelings of reassurance, refuge and safety.

3. *Bhāvanīyo: inspiring*; one is truly learned and wise, and is one who constantly trains and improves oneself; one is praiseworthy and exemplary, so that one's students speak and think of one appreciatively, confidently and proudly.

4. *Vatta: capable of speaking effectively*; one knows how to explain things clearly, and knows when to speak what and how; one gives counsel and caution and is an able advisor.

5. *Vacanakkhamo: patient with words*; one willingly listens to questions and queries, no matter how petty, and can bear even improprieties, admonishments and criticisms without becoming dejected or offended<sup>12</sup>.

6. *Gambhirāñca katham kattā: capable of expounding on the profound*; one can explain difficult and profound subjects clearly and can teach one's students even profounder subjects.

7. *Na catthāne niyojaye: not leading in wrongful ways*; one does not lead one's students in ways that are detrimental or in matters that are worthless or improper.

(A IV 31)

B. **One is dedicated to giving knowledge** by establishing oneself in the five qualities of one who gives teachings, known as the *dhammadesaka-dhamma*<sup>13</sup>:

1. *Anupubbikathā*: **teaching step-by-step, in proper sequence**; one teaches the principles or subject matter in order, from easy to abstruse, shallow to profound, in logical progression.

2. *Pariyāya-dassāvī*: **expanding on and clarifying the main points**; one explains; one brings forth reasons to clarify the meaning of each aspect and point; one varies one's explanations to enable one's listeners to clearly see one's points in the light of reason.

3. *Anudayatā*: **teaching with a heart of goodwill**; one teaches with a mind imbued with goodwill and a sincere desire for one's listeners' benefit.

4. *Anāmisantara*: **aiming not for material gain**; one does not teach out of a desire for any material reward, payment or personal benefit.

5. *Anupahacca*: **speaking impartially and unabrasively**; one teaches according to the principles, according to the content, with the intention of revealing the truth and the meaning, neither exalting oneself nor satirizing or belittling others.

(A III 184)

C. **One maintains the fourfold grace of a teacher**: a capable teacher has the following techniques of teaching:

1. *Sandassanā*: **making clear**; no matter what one teaches, one explains the reasons behind it and analyzes it so that one's listeners understand it clearly, as if leading them by the hand to see it for themselves.

2. *Samādapana*: **inviting practice**; one teaches in such a way that [his listeners] see the importance of doing what needs to be done, appreciate its value, become convinced, accept it and are motivated to implement it or put it into practice.

3. *Samuttejanā*: **arousing courage**; one rouses one's listeners to zeal, interest, fortitude and firm resolve to consummate the practice, to fear no difficulty or hardship.

4. *Sampahamsanā*: **inspiring joy**; one creates an atmosphere of fun, cheerfulness, joyousness and delight; one inspires one's listeners with hope and vision of a good result and the way to success.

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In brief, this can be summarized as: teaching to clarify, motivate, rouse and delight.

(As in DI 126)

D. **One uses the three gauges:** briefly speaking, a teacher may examine oneself with the three kinds of manner that characterized how the Buddha taught:

1. One teaches with true knowledge: having first oneself acquired true knowledge and accomplished one's goal, one teaches others.
2. One teaches logically, so that one's listeners can clearly see the meaning with their own wisdom.
3. One teaches pragmatically, accomplishing the objective of the teaching by, for example, guiding one's listeners to truly understand, to see the truth, to actualize the practice and to attain the results of the practice.

(A I 276)

E. **One performs the duties of a teacher to a student:** one conducts oneself toward one's students by helping them according to the teachings compared to the "right direction," as follows:

1. One trains them to be good.
2. One guides them to thorough understanding.
3. One teaches the subject in full.
4. One encourages and praises one's students' goodness and abilities and allows their full expression.
5. One provides a protection for all directions<sup>14</sup>; that is, teaching and training them so that they can actually use their learning to make a living and know how to conduct themselves well, having a guarantee for smoothly leading a good life and attaining happiness and prosperity.

(D III 189)

## **19. THE LEARNER**

(A PUPIL, STUDENT OR RESEARCHER)

For one who is learning, whether a pupil, a student or a researcher, the teachings for one who is to be successful, namely the four

wheels (*cakka*) and the four pathways to success (*iddhipāda*) are not the only thing to bear in mind. There are also the following principles to learn and practices to observe:

A. **Knowing the heralds of learning:** one understands the two factors for Right View, which are:

1. **Good external factor:** having good friends, which refers to associating with teachers, advisors, friends, and [other vehicles of learning such as] books. It also includes having general social conditions that are wholesome and helpful. All of these will encourage or arouse the arising of wisdom, through the processes of listening, discussing, seeking advice, querying, reading, and researching. This also entails being selective about the use of mass media.

2. **Good internal factor:** *yonisomanasikāra*, which is the proper use of thinking, knowing how to think, or being skilled in thinking; that is, seeing things with critical reflection, tracing their causes and effects; analyzing an object or problem in order to see it as it is and in terms of its causal conditions until one sees its true nature and can solve the problem or bring about benefit.

In short:

1. Knowing how to rely beneficially on the people and things around one.
2. Knowing how to be self-reliant and also make oneself a refuge to others.

(M I 294)

B. **Having the guarantee of a life that is progressing:** Having learned of the two heralds of learning, one must put them into practice in one's own life and also develop another five qualities, bringing the total to seven, which are known as the **auroras of a good life**, or the **dawn of education**. The Buddha compared them to the light of the dawn, which always precedes sunrise, because these qualities are the capital foundation which guarantees that learning will advance and life will progress to virtue and success that are exalted and noble. They are as follows:

1. Seeking out sources of wisdom and good examples.
2. Having discipline as a foundation for one's life development.

3. Having a heart that aspires to learning and constructive action.
4. Dedicating oneself to training for the realization of one's full human potential.
5. Adhering to the principle of conditionality; seeing things according to cause and effect.
6. Establishing oneself in heedfulness.
7. Thinking wisely so as to realize benefit and see the truth.

For explanations, see *Introductory Section: Human Beings and Being Human, 1. Man, The Noble Being*.

**C. Practicing according to the principles for encouraging wisdom:** in practice, one may bring about the two conditions for Right View mentioned above by following the principles known as the four *vuddhi-dhamma* (conditions conducive to the development of wisdom)<sup>15</sup>:

1. *Sappurisasaṃseva: associating with the wise*; one knows how to select sources of knowledge, and associates with learned people who are virtuous, wise and worthy of respect.
2. *Saddhammasavana: harkening to the teaching*; one listens attentively to teachings and advice; one searches for knowledge from people and from books or mass media; one applies oneself to learning and researching, seeks advice and makes queries so that one attains real knowledge.
3. *Yonisomanasikāra: thinking wisely*; having learned, seen, read or heard about something, one reflects on it for oneself, analyzes it to see its true nature and looks into it to see the what, when, where, why and how of it; one sees its merits and demerits, benefit and harm, etc.
4. *Dhammānudhammapatipatti: practicing in accordance with principles*; the things one has learned, heard and thoroughly considered one puts into practice correctly in accordance with the principles and their objectives, so that the minor principles accord with the major ones and the minor practices are harmonious with the overall objective; one practices the teaching with its objective in mind; for example, contentment as a support for effort, but not leading to laziness.

(A II 245)

D. **Learning to be learned:** whatever one learns or studies, one makes oneself well versed in that field by increasing and clarifying one's knowledge and understanding until one is endowed with the five qualities of a learned one (*bahussuta*):

1. *Bahussuta:* **hearing much**; one learns, hears, sees, experiences, reads and amasses a large and extensive amount of knowledge in one's field.

2. *Dhata:* **retaining**; one grasps the gist or essence and remembers the subject matter accurately.

3. *Vacasa paricita:* **becoming fluent**; one recites or speaks about the subject often so that one is fluent in and clear about it, and can answer any queries about it.

4. *Manasānupekkhitā:* **becoming thoroughly familiarized**; one thinks about the subject so often that one is thoroughly familiar with it; whenever one calls it to mind the content is vivid to one, and one perceives it clearly and thoroughly.

5. *Ditṭhiyā suppaṭividdhā:* **having penetrated**; one clearly understands the overall meaning and rationale of the subject; one thoroughly and penetratingly knows its source, its logic and the relationship of the content and details within the subject itself and in relation to other subjects within that field or theory.

(A III 112)

E. **Honouring the “lighter of the lamp”:** in terms of their relations with the teacher, students should show respect to the teacher as the “right direction” according to the teachings on the six directions:

1. Rising to greet the teacher and showing respect to the teacher.

2. Approaching the teacher to care for and attend to, to consult, query and receive advice from.

3. Hearkening well so as to gain wisdom.

4. Serving the teacher and running errands for the teacher.

5. Learning the subject respectfully and earnestly; giving the task of learning its due importance.

(D III 189)

## 20. THE DEVOTEE (A LAY FOLLOWER)

Buddhists express their relationship to their religion through the following principles of conduct:

A. **Supporting monastics:** treating monastics as the “upper direction,” by:

1. Acting toward them with goodwill.
2. Speaking to them with goodwill.
3. Thinking of them with goodwill.
4. Receiving them willingly.
5. Supporting them with the four requisites [almsfood, robes, shelter and medicine].

(D III 192)

B. **Making merit:** performing good deeds through the various means known as the three *puññakiriyā-vatthu* (bases of meritorious action):

1. *Dāna-maya:* making merit through sharing out material things.
2. *Sīla-maya:* making merit through virtuous conduct or moral behaviour.
3. *Bhāvanā-maya:* making merit through mind training, i.e., developing mental qualities and wisdom.

Buddhists should also make an effort to perform these seven more specific kinds of merit, bringing the total to ten:

4. *Apacāyana-maya:* making merit through polite and modest conduct.
5. *Veyyāvacca-maya:* making merit through efforts to give practical help, offer service or do the common good.
6. *Pattidāna-maya:* making merit through involving others in doing good deeds.
7. *Pattanumodanā-maya:* making merit through rejoicing in the good deeds of others.
8. *Dhammassavana-maya:* making merit through listening to the teachings and acquiring knowledge that is free of harm.
9. *Dhammadesanā-maya:* making merit through explaining the teachings and imparting knowledge that is beneficial.

10. *Ditṭhujukamma*: making merit through correcting one's views, learning to see all things as they really are so that one attains Right View.

(D III 218; D-a III 999)

C. **Familiarizing oneself with the religion**: if one wishes to practice more strictly, to be a male lay follower (*upāsaka*) or female lay follower (*upāsikā*), one should establish oneself in the conditions leading to prosperity for a lay follower known as the seven *upāsaka-dhamma*, as follows:

1. Not failing to visit or meet with the monastics.
2. Not neglecting to hear the teachings.
3. Training oneself to progress in higher levels of morality.
4. Being imbued with faith in the monastics, be they elders, newly ordained or of intermediate status<sup>16</sup>.
5. Listening to the teaching not for finding fault or flaws to criticize.
6. Not seeking the gift-worthy, or a field of merit, outside Buddhist principles.
7. Giving first service to this religion; that is, applying oneself to supporting Buddhist activities<sup>17</sup>.

(A IV 25, 26)

D. **Being a leading lay follower**: good Buddhist lay followers (*upāsaka, upāsikā*) should be endowed with the qualities known as the five *upāsaka-dhamma*:

1. They have faith, rational belief and confidence in the attributes of the Triple Gem.
2. They have morality, at least maintaining themselves in the five precepts.
3. They reject superstition; they believe in deeds, not in luck; they aspire to results through their own actions, not through lucky charms or things wildly rumored to be magical.
4. They do not seek the gift-worthy outside of this teaching.
5. They apply themselves to supporting and helping with Buddhist activities.

(A III 206)

E. **Regularly monitoring one's progress:** this is in brief to uphold the qualities for measuring progress in the Buddha's teachings known as the five *ariya-vuddhi*:

1. *Saddhā*: having belief that accords with the principles of Buddhism, not being credulous or easily led astray.
2. *Sila*: having honest and exemplary conduct and livelihood.
3. *Suta*: having sufficient knowledge of the principles of Buddhism to be able to practice them and teach them to others.
4. *Cāga*: sharing and giving, being ready to help those deserving of help.
5. *Paññā*: understanding the true nature of life and the world so that one's mind is not bound by them.

(A III 80)

## **21. THE PERPETUATOR OF THE RELIGION** (A BUDDHIST MONASTIC)

The Order of Monastics (Saṅgha), who are the ordained members of the Buddhist religion, have the responsibility of studying, practicing and teaching the Dhamma, thereby perpetuating the religion. Monastics have many rules of conduct to observe. Here only some of their duties in relation to lay people and some of the admonishments for practice will be given:

A. **Helping householders:** a monastic helps lay people through the principles of practice for the "upper direction" as follows:

1. Enjoining them from evil actions.
2. Encouraging them in goodness.
3. Assisting them with kind intentions.
4. Making known to them things not heard before.
5. Explaining and clarifying those things they have already heard.
6. Pointing out the way to heaven, teaching them the way to happiness and prosperity.

(D III 192)

B. **Regularly examining oneself:** a monastic must be constantly cautioning oneself in accordance with the ten themes to be frequently reflected on by a monastic (*pabbajita-abhiñha-paccavekkhana*)<sup>18</sup>.

1. My standing is not the same as that of a layman. I have renounced all statuses; I should live simply, and not try to get things my own way.

2. My livelihood depends on others as I rely on them for my sustenance; I should make myself easily looked after and use the four requisites reflectively, not out of craving.

3. The manner expected of me differs from that of a lay person; whatever is the manner of a monastic I must adopt; I must also constantly improve myself.

4. In regard to moral conduct, am I still beyond self-reproach?

5. In regard to moral conduct, am I still beyond the reproach of my friends in the higher life (*brahmacariya*) who are wise?

6. I will have to be separated from all that is loved and dear.

7. My kamma is my own; whatever kamma I do, whether good or evil, of that I will surely be the heir.

8. The days and nights are passing: how am I using my time?

9. Am I content with a secluded dwelling?

10. Are there any of those supernormal attainments within me that will save me from embarrassment when later questioned by my fellow monastics?

(A V 87)

## **22. THE ATTAINER OF THE DHAMMA**

(A LIBERATED ONE)

Just as a drop of water does not cleave to the lotus leaf, or water to the lotus flower, a sage does not cleave to sights seen, sounds heard or experiences cognized.

(Sn 812)

Attainers of the Dhamma do not pine over things done and gone or dream about things not yet come. They attend to the present; thus are they radiant.

Those who are still weak in wisdom spend their time day-dreaming about things not yet come and pining over things done and gone, so they become haggard, like fresh reeds uprooted and left in the sun.

(S I 5)

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One without the defilements which cause the concern of “mine” and “theirs” does not have to contend with the notion of “mine” and is thus without the sorrow of not having. One is not agitated by longing, one has no obsessions, one is not perturbed; one is constant in all situations. Since one is unperturbed, one’s insight is clear and one is free from all kinds of mental concoctions; one has abandoned brooding and bemoaning and sees only ease in all places.

(Sn 951–953)

One who has attained the Dhamma and extinguished the defilements is always at ease; one who is not attached to sensuality is cool and at peace; within him no foothold for the defilements can be found.

When all attachments are cut off, all anxiety driven from the heart, and the heart is at rest, peace and happiness are attained.

(A I 138)

*Question:* Monk, don’t you have any suffering, don’t you have any fun, aren’t you bored sitting by yourself?

*Answer:* Great One, I do not have any suffering and neither do I have fun; even though I sit all alone, I am not bored.

*Question:* Monk, how is it that you do not have any suffering, how is it that you do not have any fun, and how is it that you are not bored sitting on your own?

*Answer:* Only those who suffer have fun, and only those who have fun suffer. The monk is free of both fun and suffering. This is how it is; understand it thus.

(S I 54)

Irritation does not exist in the mind of the noble one who has transcended [the concern with] being or not being this or that; he is free of fear and has only happiness, no sorrow. Even the devas cannot perceive his mind.

(Ud 20)

One who has attained the Dhamma has no task to do, as his task has been accomplished. As long as he has not obtained a foothold, the swimmer must strive to his utmost, but when he has found a

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place to rest his feet and gone up to dry land, his striving is over because he has crossed to the further shore.

(S I 48)

While alive he is untroubled, and when he dies he is not sorrowful; a sage who has seen the goal lives unsorrowfully even in a sorrowful world.

(Ud 46)

Wherever I go I am unafraid; wherever I sleep, I am unalarmed. The nights and days do not burn me. I see nothing in this world that is to be lost; therefore my heart dwells in goodwill and kindness to all beings until I fall to sleep.

(S I 110)

Be it a village or forest,  
in lands low or high,  
wherever enlightened ones dwell,  
that is a place of delight.

(Dhp 98)



## NOTES

In this book only one source has been given at the end of each group of teachings just for reference purposes. The meanings and explanations have been occasionally expanded on, occasionally condensed, as appropriate, and have been checked against other sources, both in the Tipiṭaka and in the Commentaries. To mention all the sources would make the book too textbookish; however, there are a number of points which should be noted, as follows:

1. In the seven qualities of a good person (*sappurisa-dhamma*), *dhammaññūtā* may also mean: when hearing or seeing anything, one can grasp the essence of it. *Atthaññūtā* may mean: having seen or heard anything, one understands its meaning, purpose and objective and how to elaborate on it. These two conditions are the core of all the *sappurisa-dhamma*.
2. In the Adhipateyya Sutta (A III 33) the Buddha explains the meaning of the three supremacies specifically in reference to monastic practice, but it may be taken that this teaching was given for a specific situation, or as an example, since it can be seen that *dhammādhipateyya* is one of the conditions listed in the qualities of a universal ruler (see Chapter 7) and is a quality of an administrator just as much as it is a quality of the Buddha (A I 109; AIII 149). In the *Visuddhimagga* (Vism 14) morality (*sīla*) is divided into three levels in accordance with the three levels of supremacy. Moreover, the Commentators tend to use the words *attādhipateyya* and *lokādhipateyya* in explaining the meaning of *hiri* (shame) and *ottappa* (moral conscience) (D-a III 215; M-a II 422; It-a 205). In this book, I have adapted these meanings to a governmental perspective, as it ties in well with the matter in hand and also gives another perspective on the teaching that might be useful.
3. In the *Tipiṭaka* only four main factors are given for the *cakkavatti-vatta*, but in this book five are given for the sake of clarity (the first divided into two). The more familiar twelve *cakkavatti-vatta* are from the Commentaries (D-a III 46).
4. An important instance of the use of equanimity is when, seeing people within one's charge in safety, performing their own duties well, one knows how to simply look on with detachment and not boss them around or interfere. It is compared to a carriage-driver

## *End Notes*

who, when the horses are running smoothly and on course, sits quietly and watchful [in the driver's seat]. (Vism 467) In this sense, an alternative definition of *upekkhā* might be "passively watching when others are able to take responsibility for themselves, or when they should receive the results of the actions for which they are responsible."

5. The word *ditṭhadhammikattha-saṃvataṇika-dhamma* is coined in accordance with the Pali sources. The term made familiar to the layman in Thailand, and also easier to remember, is "*ditṭhadhammikattha-prayojana*". The term *prajoyana*, "benefit," is appended merely for ease of utterance, as it is synonymous with the already existing term *attha*.
6. Of the four kinds of happiness of the householder, the fourth, usually translated as "the happiness that arises from blameless work," gives the rather narrow impression that it deals specifically with livelihood, but in the Tipiṭaka it is said to mean all kinds of good kamma through the three doors [bodily, verbal, and mental]. Here the definition has been adapted to accord more closely with the original Pali (the happiness arising from honest labour is already included in the first point).
7. In the fullest sense of the term, the *gharāvāsa-dhamma* are used [to guide] the conduct of the householder's life in general, and in the Pali they are referred to as the *gharamesi-dhamma* ("teachings for those who seek a home"). Here, *dama* is meant to refer to wisdom, and *khanti* to effort.
8. In the original Pali it is called *attha-dvāra* (the doorway to benefit). The Commentaries explain that *attha* is the same as "*vuddhi*," while *dvāra* is glossed as "*pamukha*" or "*mukha*." Thus, it can also be referred to as *vuddhi-mukha*. However, Thai people are more familiar with the term *vaddhana*, which is a synonym for "*vuddhi*." Thus, here I have used the term *vaddhana-mukha* (the gateway to advancement).
9. The Buddha compared the people in the society surrounding us, to whom we must relate properly in various ways according to their status of relationship with us, to six directions, in the sense that they are like different directions in the space around us, as follows:
  1. The forward direction: those who come before, i.e., parents
  2. The right direction: those worthy of respect, i.e., teachers

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3. The rearward direction: those who come after, i.e., spouse and children
  4. The left direction: those who are alongside, i.e., friends and associates
  5. The lower direction: those who support, i.e., employees and workers
  6. The upper direction: those who are high in virtue, i.e., monastics
10. *Harajana* is a clipping of the original *aññadatthuhara*.
11. *Anukampi*: the original term is *anukampaka*.
12. In the seven qualities of a good friend, the fifth, *vacanakkhamo*, is meant in the source texts to refer to resilience in the face of others' words, or the ability to listen to criticisms and be ready to correct any faults that may be pointed out (see definition at A-a III 200 and example at (S-a I 45).
  13. The five Pali words used here are newly coined. The original terms are 1. *ānupubbikathā*, 2. *pariyāyadassāvī* 3. *anudayatām paṭicca*, 4. *na āmisantaro*, 5. *attānañca parañca anupahacca*.
  14. The fifth duty of a teacher to a student, "providing a protection for all directions," means, according to the Commentaries, teaching students so that they can use their knowledge to make a living and fare well in the world. It also means that, if the student goes to live in a different locality, the teacher recommends him to others so that they become convinced of the teacher's abilities and approach him [for his services, etc.]. (D-a III 183)
  15. According to the monastic discipline, a monk who has been ordained for less than 5 years is regarded as a new monk (*navaka*), one who has been between 5 and 10 years is a middler (*majjhima*), and one who has been ordained for 10 years or more is an elder (*thera*).
  16. The four *vuddhi* are known in the original Pali as the *paññāvuddhi-dhamma*, the conditions that encourage the growth of wisdom; they do not refer to progress in a general sense. This is why they have been included in the section on learning and education.
  17. Literally, the term means "giving priority to serving this religion." Thus it may also be translated as "taking the lead in supporting and helping out in activities for the Buddhist cause."
  18. The explanations given are according to the Commentary (A-a III 395) and differ somewhat from what is usually taught.

# Four Discourses on Lay Ethics



Adapted by Ven. Nyanaponika Thera and Bhikkhu Nyanatusita  
from the translations and notes in *The Light of the Dhamma* by the  
Venerable Nārada Thera.

The introductory notes to the last three texts have been supplied  
by the editor of this series, Ven. Nyanaponika Thera.

# SIGĀLOVĀDA SUTTA

## THE DISCOURSE ON THE INSTRUCTION TO SIGĀLA

### *Introduction*

Sigāla<sup>1</sup> was the son of a Buddhist family residing at Rājagaha. His parents were devout followers of the Buddha, but the son was indifferent to religion. The pious father and mother could not by any means persuade their son to accompany them to visit the Buddha or his disciples and hear the noble Doctrine. The son thought it practically useless to pay visits to the Saṅgha, as such visits may entail material loss. One was only concerned with material prosperity; to him spiritual progress was of no avail. Constantly he would say to his father: "I will have nothing to do with monks. Paying homage to them would make my back ache, and my knees stiff. I should have to sit on the ground and soil and wear out my clothes. And when, at the conversations with them, after so sitting, one gets to know them, one has to invite them and give them offerings, and so one only loses by it."

Finally, as the father was about to die, he called his son to his deathbed, and enquired whether he would at least listen to his parting advice. "Most assuredly, dear father, I shall carry out any order you may be pleased to enjoin on me," he replied. "Well then, dear son, after your morning bath worship the six quarters." The father asked him to do so hoping that one day or other, while the son was so engaged, the Buddha or his disciples would see him, and make it an occasion to preach an appropriate discourse to him. And since deathbed wishes are to be remembered, Sigāla carried out his father's wish, not, however, knowing its true significance.

Now, it was the custom of the Buddha to rise from his sleep at four o'clock and after experiencing Nibbānic bliss for an hour to pervade the whole world with his boundless thoughts of loving-kindness. It is at this hour that he surveys the world with his great compassion to find out to what fellow being he could be of service on that day. One morning Sigāla was caught in the net of the Buddha's compassion; and with his vision the Buddha, seeing that Sigāla could be shown a better channel for his acts of worship,

decided: "This day will I discourse to Sigāla on the layman's Vinaya (code of discipline). That discourse will be of benefit to many folk. There must I go." The Buddha thereon came up to him on his way for alms to Rājagaha; and seeing him engaged in his worship of the six quarters, delivered this great discourse which contains in brief, the whole domestic and social duty of the layman.

Commenting on this sutta, the Venerable Buddhaghosa says, "Nothing in the duties of a householder is left unmentioned. This sutta is called the Vinaya of the householder (*gihivinaya*). Hence in one who practices what he has been taught in it, growth is to be looked for, not decay." And Mrs. Rhys Davids adds: "The Buddha's doctrine of love and goodwill between man and man is here set forth in a domestic and social ethics with more comprehensive detail than elsewhere. And truly we may say even now of this Vinaya or code of discipline, so fundamental are the human interests involved, so sane and wide is the wisdom that envisages them, that the utterances are as fresh and practically as binding today and here as they were then at Rājagaha. 'Happy would have been the village or the clan on the banks of the Ganges where the people were full of the kindly spirit of fellow-feeling, the noble spirit of justice which breathes through these naive and simple sayings.' Not less happy would be the village, or the family on the banks of the Thames today, of which this could be said."

### *Discourse*

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Exalted One was dwelling in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Sanctuary, near Rājagaha.

Now at the time, young Sigāla, a householder's son, rising early in the morning, departing from Rājagaha, with wet clothes and wet hair, worshipped with joined hands the various quarters—the East, the South, the West, the North, the Nadir, and the Zenith.

Then the Exalted One, having robed himself in the forenoon took bowl and robe, and entered Rājagaha for alms. Now he saw young Sigāla worshipping thus and spoke to him as follows:

"Wherefore do you, young householder, rising early in the morning, departing from Rājagaha, with wet clothes and wet hair, worship, with joined hands these various quarters—the East, the South, the West, the North, the Nadir, and the Zenith?"

"My father, Lord, while dying, said to me: The six quarters,

dear son, you shall worship. And I, Lord, respecting, revering, reverencing and honouring my father's word, rise early in the morning, and leaving Rājagaha, with wet clothes and wet hair, worship with joined hands, these six quarters."

"It is not thus, young householder, the six quarters should be worshipped in the discipline of the noble."

"How then, Lord, should the six quarters be worshipped in the discipline of the noble? It is well, Lord, if the Exalted One would teach the doctrine to me showing how the six quarters should be worshipped in the discipline of the noble."

"Well, young householder, listen and bear it well in mind; I shall speak."—"Very good, Lord," responded young Sigāla.

And the Exalted One spoke as follows:

"Inasmuch, young householder, as the noble disciple (1) has eradicated the four vices in conduct,<sup>1</sup> (2) inasmuch as he commits no evil action in four ways, (3) inasmuch as he pursues not the six channels for dissipating wealth, he thus, avoiding these fourteen evil things, covers the six quarters, and enters the path leading to victory in both worlds: he is favoured in this world and in the world beyond. Upon the dissolution of the body, after death, he is born in a happy heavenly realm.

(1) "What are the four vices in conduct that he has eradicated? The destruction of life, householder, is a vice and so are stealing, sexual misconduct, and lying. These are the four vices that he has eradicated."

Thus spoke the Exalted One. And when the Master had thus spoken, he spoke yet again:

"Killing, stealing, lying and adultery,  
These four evils the wise never praise.

(2) "In which four ways does one commit no evil action? Led by desire does one commit evil. Led by anger does one commit evil. Led by ignorance does one commit evil. Led by fear does one commit evil.<sup>2</sup>

"But inasmuch as the noble disciple is not led by desire, anger, ignorance, and fear, he commits no evil."

Thus spoke the Exalted One. And when the Master had thus spoken, he spoke yet again:

“Whoever through desire, hate or fear,  
Or ignorance should transgress the Dhamma,  
All his glory fades away  
Like the moon during the waning half.

Whoever through desire, hate or fear,  
Or ignorance never transgresses the Dhamma,  
All his glory ever increases  
Like the moon during the waxing half.

- (3) “What are the six channels for dissipating wealth which he does not pursue?

Indulgence in:

- 1) liquor, wine and intoxicants that cause heedlessness;<sup>11</sup>
- 2) roaming the streets at unseemly hours;
- 3) frequenting fairs;
- 4) gambling which causes heedlessness;<sup>12</sup>
- 5) association with evil companions; and
- 6) laziness.

(a) “There are, young householder, these six evil consequences in indulging in liquor, wine and intoxicants that cause heedlessness:

- 1) loss of wealth,
- 2) increase of quarrels,
- 3) susceptibility to disease,
- 4) earning an evil reputation,
- 5) shameless exposure of one’s private parts,
- 6) weakening of intellect.

(b) “There are, young householder, these six evil consequences in roaming the streets at unseemly hours:

- 1) he himself is unprotected and unguarded,
- 2) his wife and children are unprotected and unguarded,
- 3) his property is unprotected and unguarded,
- 4) he is suspected of evil deeds,<sup>3</sup>
- 5) he is subject to false rumours,
- 6) he meets with many troubles.

(c) “There are, young householder, these six evil consequences in frequenting fairs. One is ever thinking:

- 1) where is the dancing?
- 2) where is the singing?
- 3) where is the music?
- 4) where is the recitation?
- 5) where is the playing with cymbals?
- 6) where is the pot-blowing?<sup>4</sup>

(d) “There are, young householder, these six evil consequences in indulging in gambling which causes heedlessness:

- 1) the winner begets hate,
- 2) the loser grieves for lost wealth,
- 3) loss of wealth,
- 4) his word is not relied upon in a court of law,
- 5) he is despised by his friends and associates,
- 6) he is not sought after for marriage; for people would say that he is a gambler and is not able to look after a wife.

(e) “There are, young householder, these six evil consequences in associating with evil companions, namely:

any gambler, any libertine, any drunkard, any swindler, any cheat, any rowdy is his friend and companion.

(f) “There are, young householder, these six evil consequences in indulging in laziness:

One does no work, saying:

- 1) ‘It is too cold,’
- 2) ‘It is too hot,’
- 3) ‘It is too late,’
- 4) ‘It is too early,’
- 5) ‘I am too hungry,
- 6) ‘I am too full.’

“Living in this way, he leaves many duties undone, new wealth he does not get, and wealth he has acquired dwindles away.”

Thus spoke the Exalted One. And when the Master had thus spoken, he spoke yet again:

“One is a bottle friend; one says, ‘friend, friend’ only to one’s face; one is a friend and an associate only when it is advantageous.

Sleeping till sunrise, adultery, irascibility, malevolence, evil companions, avarice—these six causes ruin a man.

The man who has evil comrades and friends is given to evil ways, to ruin does he fall in both worlds—here and the next.

Dice, women, liquor, dancing, singing, sleeping by day, roaming at unseemly hours, evil companions, avarice—these nine<sup>5</sup> causes ruin a man.

Who plays with dice and drinks liquor, goes to women who are dear unto others as their own lives, associates with the mean and not with elders—he declines just as the moon during the waning half.

Who is drunk, poor, destitute, still thirsty whilst drinking, frequents the bars, sinks in debt as a stone in water, swiftly brings disrepute to his family.

Who by habit sleeps by day, and keeps late hours, is ever intoxicated and addicted, he isn't able to lead a household life.

Who says it is too hot, too cold, too late, and leaves things undone, the opportunities for good go past such men.

But he who does not regard cold or heat any more than a blade of grass and who does his duties manfully does not fall away from happiness.”

\* \* \*

“These four, young householder, should be understood as foes in the guise of friends:

- (1) he who appropriates a friend's possessions,
- (2) he who renders lip-service,
- (3) he who flatters,
- (4) he who brings ruin.

(1) “In four ways, young householder, should one who appropriates be understood as a foe in the guise of a friend:

- a) he appropriates his friend's wealth,
- b) he gives little and asks much,
- c) he does his duty out of fear,
- d) he associates for his own advantage.

(2) “In four ways, young householder, should one who renders lip-service be understood as a foe in the guise of a friend:

- a) he talks of doing favours with regards the past,
- b) he talks of doing favours with regards the future,
- c) he tries to gain one’s favour by empty words,
- d) when opportunity for service has arisen, he expresses his inability.

(3) “In four ways, young householder, should one who flatters be understood as a foe in the guise of a friend:

- a) he approves of his friend’s evil deeds,
- b) he disapproves his friend’s good deeds,
- c) he praises him in his presence,
- d) he speaks ill of him in his absence.

(4) “In four ways, young householder, should one who brings ruin be understood as a foe in the guise of a friend:

- a) he is a companion in indulging in liquor, wine and intoxicants that cause heedlessness,
- b) he is a companion in roaming the streets at unseemly hours,
- c) he is a companion in frequenting fairs,
- d) he is a companion in indulging in gambling which causes heedlessness.”

Thus spoke the Exalted One. And when the Master had thus spoken, he spoke yet again:

“The friend who appropriates,  
the friend who renders lip-service,  
the friend that flatters,  
the friend who brings ruin—  
these four as enemies the wise behold,  
avoid them from afar as paths of peril.

“These four, young householder, should be understood as warm-hearted friends:

- (1) he who is a helper,
- (2) he who is the same in happiness and sorrow,
- (3) he who gives good counsel,
- (4) he who sympathises.

(1) "In four ways, young householder, should a helpmate be understood as a warm-hearted friend:

- a) he guards the heedless,
- b) he protects the wealth of the heedless,
- c) he becomes a refuge when one is in danger,
- d) when there are commitments he provides one with double the supply needed.

(2) "In four ways, young householder, should one who is the same in happiness and sorrow be understood as a warm-hearted friend:

- a) he reveals his secrets,
- b) he conceals one's own secrets,
- c) in misfortune he does not forsake one,
- d) his life even he sacrifices for one's sake.

(3) "In four ways, young householder, should one who gives good counsel be understood as a warm-hearted friend:

- a) he restrains one from doing evil,
- b) he encourages one to do good,
- c) he informs one of what is unknown to oneself,
- d) he points out the path to heaven.

(4) "In four ways, young householder, should one who sympathises be understood as a warm-hearted friend:

- a) he does not rejoice in one's misfortune,
- b) he rejoices in one's prosperity,
- c) he restrains others speaking ill of oneself,
- d) he praises those who speak well of oneself."

Thus spoke the Exalted One. And when the Master had thus spoken, he spoke yet again:

"The friend who is a helpmate,  
the friend in happiness and woe,  
the friend who gives good counsel,  
the friend who sympathises too—  
these four as friends the wise behold  
and cherish them devotedly  
as does a mother her own child.

The wise and virtuous shine like blazing fire.  
He who acquires his wealth in harmless ways  
like to a bee that honey gathers,<sup>6</sup>  
riches mount up for him  
like ant hill's rapid growth.

With wealth acquired this way,  
a layman fit for household life,  
in portions four divides his wealth:  
thus will he friendship win.

One portion for his wants he uses,<sup>7</sup>  
two portions on his business spends,  
the fourth for times of need he keeps."

\* \* \*

"And how, young householder, does a noble disciple cover the six quarters?

"The following should be looked upon as the six quarters. The parents should be looked upon as the East, teachers as the South, wife and children as the West, friends and associates as the North, servants and employees as the Nadir, ascetics and brahmins as the Zenith.<sup>8</sup>

"In five ways, young householder, a child should minister to his parents as the *East* :

- 1) Having supported me I shall support them,
- 2) I shall do their duties,
- 3) I shall keep the family tradition,
- 4) I shall make myself worthy of my inheritance,
- 5) furthermore I shall offer alms in honour of my departed relatives.<sup>9</sup>

"In five ways, young householder, the parents thus ministered to as the *East* by their children, show their compassion:

- 1) they restrain them from evil,
- 2) they establish them in doing good,
- 3) they make them train in a craft,
- 4) they arrange a suitable marriage-partner,
- 5) at the proper time they hand over their inheritance.

"In these five ways do children minister to their parents as the East and the parents show their compassion to their children. Thus is the East covered by them and made safe and secure.

"In these five ways, young householder, a pupil should minister to a teacher as the *South*:

- 1) by rising from the seat in salutation,
- 2) by attending on him,
- 3) by eagerness to learn,
- 4) by personal service,
- 5) by respectful attention while receiving instructions about the craft.

"In five ways, young householder, do teachers thus ministered to as the *South* by their pupils, show their compassion:

- 1) they train them well in discipline,
- 2) they see that they grasp their lessons well,
- 3) they instruct them in the craft and lore,
- 4) they introduce them to their friends and associates,
- 5) they provide for their safety in every quarter.

"The teachers thus ministered to as the *South* by their pupils, show their compassion towards them in these five ways. Thus is the *South* covered by them and made safe and secure.

"In five ways, young householder, should a wife as the *West* be ministered to by a husband:

- 1) by being courteous to her,
- 2) by not despising her,
- 3) by being faithful to her,
- 4) by handing over authority to her,
- 5) by providing her with adornments.

"The wife thus ministered to as the *West* by her husband shows her compassion to her husband in five ways:

- 1) she performs her duties well,
- 2) she is kind to relations and attendants<sup>10</sup>
- 3) she is faithful to him,
- 4) she protects what has been saved and stored,
- 5) she is skilled and industrious in all her duties.

"In these five ways does the wife show her compassion to her husband who ministers to her as the *West*. Thus is the *West* covered

by him and made safe and secure.

"In five ways, young householder, should a clansman minister to his friends and associates as the *North*:

- 1) by liberality,
- 2) by courteous speech,
- 3) by being helpful,
- 4) by being impartial,
- 5) by sincerity.

"The friends and associates thus ministered to as the North by a clansman show compassion to him in five ways:

- 1) they protect him when he is heedless,
- 2) they protect his property when he is heedless,
- 3) they become a refuge when he is in danger,
- 4) they do not forsake him in his troubles,
- 5) they honour his offspring.

"The friends and associates thus ministered to as the North by a clansman show their compassion towards him in these five ways. Thus is the North covered by him and made safe and secure.

"In five ways should a master minister to his servants and employees as the *Nadir*:

- 1) by assigning them work according to their ability,
- 2) by supplying them with food and wages,
- 3) by tending them in sickness,
- 4) by sharing delicacies with them,
- 5) by granting them leave at the proper times.

"The servants and employees thus ministered to as the Nadir by their master show their compassion to him in five ways:

- 1) they rise before him,
- 2) they go to sleep after him,
- 3) they take only what is given,
- 4) they perform their work well,
- 5) they uphold his good name and fame.

"The servants and employees thus ministered to as the Nadir show their compassion towards him in these five ways. Thus is the Nadir covered by him and made safe and secure.

"In five ways, young householder, should a householder minister to ascetics and brahmins as the *Zenith*:

- 1) by lovable deeds,
- 2) by lovable words,
- 3) by lovable thoughts,
- 4) by keeping open house to them,
- 5) by supplying their material needs.

"The ascetics and brahmins thus ministered to as the Zenith by a householder show their compassion towards him in six ways:

- 1) they restrain him from evil,
- 2) they establish him in doing good,
- 3) they have compassion for him with a kind heart,
- 4) they make him hear what he has not heard,
- 5) they clarify what he has already heard,
- 6) they point out the path to heaven.

"In these six ways do ascetics and brahmins show their compassion towards a householder who ministers to them as the Zenith. Thus is the Zenith covered by him and made safe and secure."

Thus spoke the Exalted One. And when the Master had thus spoken, he spoke yet again:

The mother and father are the East,  
The Teachers are the South,  
Wife and children are the West,  
The friends and associates are the North.

Servants and employees are the Nadir,  
The ascetics and brahmins are the Zenith;  
Who is fit to lead the household life,  
These six quarters he should salute.

Who is wise and virtuous,  
Gentle and keen-witted,  
Humble and amenable,  
Such a one to honour may attain.

Who is energetic and not indolent,  
In misfortune unshaken,  
Flawless in manner and intelligent,  
Such a one to honour may attain.

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Who is hospitable, and friendly,  
Liberal and unselfish,  
A guide, an instructor, a leader,  
Such a one to honour may attain.

Generosity, sweet speech,  
Helpfulness to others,  
Impartiality to all,  
As the case demands.

These four winning ways make the world go round,  
As the linchpin in a moving car.  
If these in the world exist not,  
Neither mother nor father will receive,  
Respect and honour from their children.

Since these four winning ways  
The wise appraise in every way,  
To eminence they attain,  
And praise they rightly gain."

When the Exalted One had spoken thus, Sigāla, the young householder, said as follows:

"Excellent, Lord, excellent! It is as if, Lord, a man were to set upright that which was overturned, or were to reveal that which was hidden, or were to point out the way to one who had gone astray, or were to hold a lamp amidst the darkness, so that those who have eyes may see. Even so, has the doctrine been explained in various ways by the Exalted One.

"I take refuge, Lord, in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. May the Exalted One receive me as a follower; as one who has taken refuge from this very day to life's end."

(Dīgha Nikāya, No. 31)



# MAHĀMĀNGALA SUTTA

## GREAT BLESSINGS DISCOURSE

### *Introduction*

This famous text, cherished highly in all Buddhist lands, is a terse but comprehensive summary of Buddhist ethics, individual and social. The thirty-eight blessings enumerated in it are an unfailing guide on life's journey. Rightly starting with "avoidance of bad company" which is essential to all moral and spiritual progress, the Blessings culminate in the achievement of a passion-free mind, unshakeable in its serenity. To follow the ideals put forth in these verses is the sure way to harmony and progress for the individual as well as for society, country and mankind.

"The Mahāmāngala Sutta shows that Buddha's instructions do not always take negative forms, that they are not always a series of classifications and analysis, or concerned exclusively with monastic morality. In this sutta we find family morality expressed in most elegant verses. We can imagine the happy blissful state of household life attained as a result of following these injunctions." (From *The Ethics of Buddhism* by S. Tachibana, Colombo 1943, Baudha Sahitya Sabha).

### *Discourse*

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Exalted One was dwelling at Anāthapindika's monastery, in Jeta's Grove,<sup>2</sup> near Sāvatthi.<sup>3</sup> Now when the night was far spent, a certain deity whose surpassing splendour illuminated the entire Jeta Grove, came to the presence of the Exalted One and, drawing near, respectfully saluted him and stood at one side. Standing thus, he addressed the Exalted One in verse:

Many deities and men, yearning after well-being, have pondered on blessings.<sup>4</sup> Please tell me the greatest blessing!

Not to associate with the foolish,<sup>5</sup> but to associate with the wise; and to honour those who are worthy of honour—this is the greatest blessing.

To reside in a suitable locality<sup>6</sup> to have done meritorious actions in the past and to set oneself in the right course<sup>7</sup>—this is the greatest blessing.

To have great learning and skill in craft,<sup>8</sup> to be well-trained in discipline,<sup>9</sup> and of good speech<sup>10</sup>—this is the greatest blessing.

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

To be generous in giving, to be righteous in conduct<sup>11</sup> to help one's relatives, and to be blameless in action—this is the greatest blessing.

To loathe evil and abstain from it, to refrain from intoxicants,<sup>12</sup> and to be diligent in virtuous things—this is the greatest blessing.

To be respectful,<sup>13</sup> humble, contented and grateful; and to listen to the Dhamma on due occasions<sup>14</sup>—this is the greatest blessing.

To be patient and easily admonishable, to associate with monastics and to have discussions about the Dhamma on due occasions—this is the greatest blessing.

Ardour,<sup>15</sup> a holy and chaste life, the seeing of the Noble Truths and the realisation of Nibbāna—this is the greatest blessing.

A mind unruffled by worldly conditions,<sup>16</sup> sorrowless, stainless, secure<sup>17</sup>—this is the greatest blessing.

Those who have done such things, ever remain invincible, everywhere they go safely—that is their greatest blessing.”

(Sutta Nipāta, vv. 258–269)



# PARĀBHAVA SUTTA

## THE DISCOURSE ON DOWNFALL

### *Introduction*

While the Maṅgala Sutta deals with the way of life conducive to progress and happiness, the Parābhava Sutta supplements it by pointing out the causes of downfall. One who allows himself to become tarnished by these blemishes of conduct blocks his own road to worldly, moral and spiritual progress and lowers all that is truly noble and human in man. But he who is heedful of these dangers keeps open the road to all those thirty-eight blessings of which human nature is capable.

### *Discourse*

Thus have I heard. Once the Exalted One was dwelling at Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery, in the Jeta Grove, near Sāvatthī.

Now when the night was far spent, a certain deity whose surpassing splendour illuminated the entire Jeta Grove, came to the presence of the Exalted One and, drawing near, respectfully saluted him and stood at one side. Standing thus, he addressed the Exalted One in verse:

(*Deity*) Having come here with our questions to the Exalted One, we ask you, O Gotama, about man's decline. Please tell us the source of downfall!

(*Buddha*) Easily known is progress, easily known is decline. Loving Dhamma there is progress; being averse to it there is downfall.

(*Deity*) We see that this is so indeed: the first source of one's downfall. Please tell us the second source.<sup>1</sup>

(*Buddha*) The wicked are dear to him, with the virtuous he finds no delight, he prefers the creed of the wicked—this is a source of downfall.

Being fond of sleep, fond of company, indolent, lazy and irritable—this is a source of downfall.

Though being well-to-do, not to support father and mother who

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are old and past their youth—this is a source of downfall.

To deceive by falsehood a Brahmin or ascetic or any other mendicant—this is a source of downfall.

To have much wealth and ample gold and food, but to enjoy one's luxuries alone—this is a source of downfall.

If a man being proud of birth, of wealth or clan, despises his own kinsmen—this is a source of downfall.

If a man, being a womanizer, a drunkard, a gambler, squanders all his earns—this is a source of downfall.

Not being contented with his own wives, he is seen with harlots and the wives of others—this is a source of downfall.

Being past his youth, a man brings home a young voluptuous wife<sup>2</sup> and is unable to sleep for jealousy of her—this is a source of downfall.

To place in authority a woman given to drink and squandering, or a man of a like behaviour—this is a source of downfall.

With vast ambition but slender means, being of noble birth, one craves for kingship—this is a source of downfall.

The wise one, noble and endowed with insight, considering these downfalls in the world, resorts to a happy realm.

(Sutta Nipāta, vv. 91–115)



# VYAGGHAPAJJA SUTTA

## THE DISCOURSE TO VYAGGHAPAJJA

### *Introduction*

In this sutta, the Buddha instructs rich householders how to preserve and increase their prosperity and how to avoid loss of wealth. Wealth alone, however, does not make a complete man nor a harmonious society. Possession of wealth all too often multiplies man's desires, and he is ever in the pursuit of amassing more wealth and power. This unrestrained craving, however, leaves him dissatisfied and stifles his inner growth. It creates conflict and disharmony in society through the resentment of the underprivileged who feel themselves exploited by the effects of unrestrained craving.

Therefore the Buddha follows up on his advice on material welfare with four essential conditions for spiritual welfare: confidence (in the Master's enlightenment), virtue, liberality and wisdom. These four will instil in man a sense of higher values. One will, then, not only pursue his own material concern, but also be aware of his duty towards society. To mention only one of the implications: a wisely and generously employed liberality will reduce tensions and conflicts in society. Thus the observing of these conditions of material and spiritual welfare will make for an ideal citizen in an ideal society.

### *Discourse*

Thus have I heard. Once the Exalted One was dwelling amongst the Koliyans,<sup>1</sup> in their market town named Kakkapattā. Then Dīghanjanu,<sup>2</sup> a Koliyan, approached the Exalted One, respectfully saluted him and sat on one side. Thus seated, he addressed the Exalted One as follows:

"We, Lord, are laymen who enjoy worldly pleasure. We lead a life encumbered by wife and children. We use sandalwood of Kāsi. We deck ourselves with garlands, perfume and unguents. We use gold and silver. To those like us, O Lord, let the Exalted One preach the Dhamma, teach those things that lead to weal and happiness in this life and to weal and happiness in future life."

### *Conditions of Worldly Welfare*

“Four conditions, Vyagghapajja,<sup>3</sup> conduce to a householder’s weal and happiness in this very life. Which four?

“The accomplishment of persistent effort (*utthāna-sampadā*), the accomplishment of watchfulness (*ārakkha-sampadā*), good friendship (*kalyāṇamittatā*), and balanced livelihood (*sama-jīvitā*).

“What is the accomplishment of persistent effort?

“Herein, Vyagghapajja, by whatsoever activity a householder (*kulaputta*) earns his living, whether by farming, by trading, by rearing cattle, by archery, by service under the king, or by any other kind of craft—at that he becomes skilful and is not lazy. One is endowed with the power of discernment as to the proper ways and means; he is able to carry out and allocate (duties). This is called the accomplishment of persistent effort.

“What is the accomplishment of watchfulness?

“Herein, Vyagghapajja, whatsoever wealth a householder is in possession of, obtained by dint of effort, collected by strength of arm, by the sweat of his brow, justly acquired by right means—such he conserves well by guarding and watching so that kings would not seize it, thieves would not steal it, fire would not burn it, water would not carry it away, nor ill-disposed heirs remove it. This is the accomplishment of watchfulness.

“What is good friendship?

“Herein, Vyagghapajja, in whatsoever village or market town a householder dwells, he associates, converses, engages in discussions with householders or householders’ sons, whether young and highly cultured or old and highly cultured, full of faith (*saddhā*),<sup>4</sup> full of virtue (*sīla*), full of charity (*cāga*), full of wisdom (*pañña*). One acts in accordance with the faith of the faithful, with the virtue of the virtuous, with the charity of the charitable, with the wisdom of the wise. This is called good friendship.

“What is balanced livelihood?

“Herein, Vyagghapajja, a householder knowing his income and expenses leads a balanced life, neither extravagant nor miserly, knowing that thus his income will stand in excess of his expenses, but not his expenses in excess of his income.

"Just as the goldsmith,<sup>5</sup> or an apprentice of his, knows, on holding up a balance, that by so much it has dipped down, by so much it has tilted up; even so a householder, knowing his income and expenses leads a balanced life, neither extravagant nor miserly, knowing that thus his income will stand in excess of his expenses, but not his expenses in excess of his income.

"If, Vyagghapajja, a householder with little income were to lead an extravagant life, there would be those who say—'This person enjoys his property like one who eats udumbara figs.'<sup>6</sup> If, Vyagghapajja, a householder with a large income were to lead a wretched life, there would be those who say—'This householder will die like a starveling.'

"The wealth thus amassed, Vyagghapajja, has four sources of destruction: one is a womanizer, a drunkard, a gambler, and one has friendship, companionship and intimacy with evil-doers.

"Just as in the case of a great tank with four inlets and outlets, if a man should close the inlets and open the outlets and there should be no adequate rainfall, decrease of water is to be expected in that tank, and not an increase; even so there are four sources for the destruction of amassed wealth—one is a womanizer, a drunkard, a gambler, and has friendship, companionship and intimacy with evil-doers.

"There are four sources for the increase of amassed wealth: one isn't a womanizer, a drunkard, a gambler and one has friendship, companionship and intimacy with the good.

"Just as in the case of a great tank with four inlets and four outlets, if a person were to open the inlets and close the outlets, and there should also be adequate rainfall, an increase in water is certainly to be expected in that tank and not a decrease, even so these four conditions are the sources of increase of amassed wealth.

"These four conditions, Vyagghapajja, are conducive to a householder's weal and happiness in this very life.

### *Conditions of Spiritual Welfare*

“Four conditions, Vyagghapajja, conduce to a householder’s weal and happiness in his future life. Which four?

“The accomplishment of faith (*saddhā-sampadā*),  
the accomplishment of virtue (*sīla-sampadā*),  
the accomplishment of generosity (*cāga-sampadā*), and  
the accomplishment of wisdom (*pañña-sampadā*).

“What is the accomplishment of faith?

“Herein a householder is possessed of faith, he believes in the Enlightenment of the Perfect One (*Tathāgata*): ‘Thus, indeed, is that Blessed One: he is the pure one, fully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, well-gone, the knower of worlds, the incomparable leader of men to be tamed, the teacher of gods and men, all-knowing and blessed.’ This is called the accomplishment of faith.

“What is the accomplishment of virtue?

“Herein a householder abstains from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and from liquor, wine and intoxicants that cause heedlessness. This is called the accomplishment of virtue.

“What is the accomplishment of generosity?

“Herein a householder dwells at home with heart free from the stain of avarice, devoted to charity, open-handed, delighting in giving away, attending to the needy, delighting in the distribution of alms. This is called the accomplishment of generosity.

“What is the accomplishment of wisdom?

“Herein a householder is wise: he is endowed with wisdom that understands the arising and cessation (of the five aggregates of existence); he is possessed of the noble penetrating insight that leads to the destruction of suffering. This is called the accomplishment of wisdom.

“These four conditions, Vyagghapajja, conduce to a householder’s weal and happiness in his future life.

Energetic and heedful in his tasks,  
Wisely administering his wealth,  
He lives a balanced life,  
Protecting what he has amassed.

*Four Discourses on Lay Ethics*

Endowed with faith and virtue too,  
Generous he is and free from avarice;  
He ever works to clear the path  
That leads to weal in future life.

Thus to the householder full of faith,  
By him, so truly named ‘Enlightened,’  
These eight conditions have been told  
Which now and after lead to happiness,  
To well-being in this world and in the next,  
Thus for a householder,  
generosity increases merit.”

(Aṅguttara Nikāya, Aṭṭhaka-nipāta, No. 54)

