



# Bodhi

# Leaves

A newsletter created by children for children

☆ Spring 2010 Issue 3



As the lotus is unstained by water, so is Nibbana unstained by all the defilements.

As cool water lays feverish heat, so also Nibbana is cool and allays the fever of all passions.

As water quenches the thirst of men and beast who are exhausted, parched and overcome by heat, So also Nibbana quenches the craving for sensuous enjoyment, further being and cessation of being.

As medicine protects from the torments of poison, So Nibbana from the torments of poisonous passions.

As medicine puts an end to sickness and nourishes like nectar Nibbana ends all suffering and nourishes by giving peace.

Ven. Nagasena



## What is Nibbana?

As you all know, the ultimate goal of Buddhist practitioners would be to achieve the serene state of Nibbana. What is Nibbana?

When the Buddha was asked what Nibbana was, the Noble One had a challenge. How could the Lord Buddha explain Nibbana to a person who didn't have a fully developed mind? Once he explained Nibbana to his Bikkhus, as follows, "There is, O Bikkhus, an unborn, unoriginated, unmade and non-conditioned state. If O Bikkhus, there were not this unborn, unoriginated, unmade and non-conditioned state, an escape for the born originated, made and conditioned would not be possible. As there is an unborn, unoriginated, unmade and non-conditioned state, an escape for the born, originated, made and, conditioned is possible."

But many of the ordinary people could not understand his statement.

The lord Buddha attempted to explain the meaning of Nibbana in a form that would be understood by ordinary persons. He said that Nibbana was the end of suffering; a state of mind a person achieves once he eliminates greed (lobha), hatred or ill-will (dosa), and delusion (moha). In order to explain Nibbana, the lord Buddha first explained the above 3 causes for suffering.

Greed is the desire to hold onto what one likes and to have more and more of the things that bring pleasure to oneself. A person may want more than what he or she already has or become very attached to what they already have and be too selfish to share or give it up. The more they get the more they want. This becomes an unsatisfiable craving. The Buddha explained this as loba.

Ill-will and anger results in the mind when people do things to you that you do

not like and it continues despite your efforts to stop them. You may develop a sense of aversion or anger toward the people who are obstructing your sense of peace and happiness. This, if not corrected, can lead to ill-will and hatred. Hatred can lead one to wish harm towards another person.

Delusion is the state of mind one experiences when one does not understand the true nature of things. All things are impermanent, suffering and not self. But people feel that all things are permanent, joyful and that there is a permanent self. We either believe that one can possess things they like forever, or we ignore the fact that all items and thoughts are impermanent. The Buddha said that nothing can be ours forever and that everything including oneself is constantly changing.

Because of delusion and not knowing we crave for being, so that one keeps on wandering from birth to birth. Nibbana is the cessation of suffering. In other words a person who attained Nibbana has eradicated loba, dosa, and moha which will terminate the cycle of rebirth.

For the benefit of the lay person the lord Buddha explained ways to eradicate suffering. According to the Buddha Dharma, by practicing generosity, virtue, and medi-

tation (Dana, Seela, Bhavana) one would be able to eliminate greed, hatred, and delusion and attain the serene state of Nibbana.

### Ashali (13)



### Dana (Generosity) for Elimination of Loba (Greed)

In the religion of Buddhism there is always the question of why Generosity isn't in the noble eight fold path. The reason I have been taught is that the noble eight fold path was initially taught to the five monks. These monks had already completed the highest act of generosity by giving up all worldly pleasures. However, the true translation of dana is letting go. Generosity is one form of letting go. Letting go in the highest sense is included in the Noble Eightfold Path. This article will explore and explain the concept of generosity for

the elimination of greed and attachment.

Firstly I will not focus especially on the benefits of Generosity. I will be mainly telling you how generosity can help you with the elimination of greed. This is because in the act of giving the giver should not have the benefits in mind, but the elimination of greed and suffering as the motivation.

For the actual giving, some conditions must be thought of and applied. These conditions include the gift to be suitable for the person, the gift is clean, the gift is lawfully and rightfully earned by the giver, the gift is given

Dana or letting go in its highest form is included in the Noble Eightfold Path.

When practicing Insight Meditation one observes the mind it's thoughts and emotions and then lets them go without grasping and attachment by understanding that this too will pass.

by choice, the gift is given at the right time and the giver is happy with what he has done. Also for the elimination of greed the giver would have to give something that one is attached to. This results in the

reduction of greed.

When practicing giving, three main points have to be there to realize the full benefit of the action. You must be happy when you plan to give, you must be happy while you are giving and you must still maintain the happiness after

giving. These three essentials must be practiced to achieve higher states of Dana.

When giving you mustn't have an alternative motive other than the elimination of greed. If there is another motive, the act will not truly result in the reduction of greed and attachment.

Have you ever wondered to whom you should actually give something? I think you should give to whomever you want so long as you feel pure joy in the giving. Mainly the vital fact about giving is not what you have gained but the happiness you feel.

So to conclude, I think we should practice giving as often as we can for the pure joy of giving.

I never did tell you the benefits of generosity but I don't think it is important to tell you because that should not be the motive of your actions. To reach Nibanna you need Dana, and you should practice Dana with the elimination of greed in mind!

**Onari (12)**



**The Lasting effect of generosity**

In the time of the Buddha there was a princess named Sumana. One day princess Sumana went to the Buddha and asked him three questions regarding generosity. The questions she asked were

Monks in giving alms,  
A giver gives five things  
to the receiver,  
What five?  
He gives longevity,  
beauty, comfort,  
strength and the power  
of understanding.  
**Anguttara Nikaya**

based on a situation where two men with an equal amount of wisdom and confidence in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha practiced generosity at different levels; One was more generous than the other. Princess Sumana wanted to know the effects of their different levels of the practice of generosity.

The first question she asked was if these two men passed away and both were reborn in the heavens, would there be a difference in their lives. The Buddha said yes the man who was generous would be a higher deva with better luxuries and a longer life.

Her second question was if the two men passed away from heaven and were reborn as humans would there be a difference in their lives. The Buddha said yes the man who was generous would con-

tinue to have better luxuries and longer life.

Her third question was if they were ordained as monks would there be a difference. The Buddha said yes the one who is more generous will have a higher ranking and will get more alms and robes.

From this story about Princess Sumana and her questions, I learned that the effects of generosity last for a very long time even after this life is ended. Also, I am determined to be a generous person because the act of giving helps me and others.

**Ashan (12)**



**Effects of Gifts Given to the Buddha**

In my article I will talk about the effects of gifts given to the Buddha. When you give a gift, you should NEVER expect anything

in return. You should always give a gift with a clear mind and thoughts of pure generosity. I will tell you about Queen Mallikā and how she gave a gift to Lord Buddha.

Mallikā was a beautiful girl who was the daughter of a garland maker. She lived in Sāvatti. She would sell the garlands of flowers to villagers. One day she went with her friends for a picnic at the flower gardens. She packed some special rice for their picnic. On her way there, she saw the Buddha with his monks looking for alms. Suddenly Mallikā felt joyful. She gave her special rice to the Buddha as a gift. She did not know that he was the Lord Buddha, but felt so overjoyed that she danced around in the flower gardens singing with joy. After receiving the gift, the Buddha smiled. The Buddha's personal assistant, Ananda, wondered why the Buddha was smiling and asked the Buddha why he was smiling. The Buddha said, "The merit of this gift will lead this girl to be the Queen of Kosala the very same day."

Mallikā was a poor young girl. At this time in India a high caste person generally wouldn't marry a low caste. At the time, King Kosala was in battle with King Ajatasattu and had lost to King Ajatasattu. King Kosala was grief-stricken and happened to be

passing the flower gardens when he heard delightful and peaceful singing in the gardens. He followed the voice into the gardens and found Mallikā.

Mallikā was still dancing happily. King Kosala was enchanted by Mallikā's beauty. King Kosala asked Mallikā if she was married and Mallikā replied she was not married. King Kosala asked Mallikā if she would become his Queen and Mallikā happily agreed.

If you give a gift with a joyful mind to a pure being, the merits will be greater. Gifts given to the Buddha and other pure spiritual persons have great results.

### **-Kanchini (11)**



### **The Practice of generosity in our daily Life.**

My mom donated her long hair to Eva and Company Wigs Inc. This company makes wigs from donated hair and donates them to BC Children's Hospital and the Canadian Cancer Society.

In Radhika aunty's book *Practicing the Dhamma with a view to Nibbana* it talks about-

the Buddha's advice to be generous to end pain and suffering. The gift has to be earned lawfully and righteously. It has to be clean, and something that the person is attached to, also the gift should be something suitable, given at the proper time. A person should give frequently with compassion and loving kindness toward others needs.

After giving it will calm his/her mind and will become happy. My mom says she was happy before, during and after as she loved her long curly hair. I hope her aspiration to one day be a close disciple of the Buddha and attain Nibbana will be fulfilled.

I think this is a good example of generosity. The Buddha fulfilled his last perfection of generosity out of the 10 perfections by letting go his attachments to his beloved family. My mother practiced generosity by cutting her beautiful long curly hair that she liked so that sick children who have lost their hair can feel beautiful.

### **Nilusha (12)**



Anyone interested in donating their hair can contact this address. Please make sure that hair is at least 8 inches long and that it has been cleaned, dried and tied up in a ponytail.

**Eva and Co. Wigs Inc.**

Unit 107- 950 West Broadway Vancouver, BC

V5Z 1K7

Phone: 1 800 839 2917



**The practice of virtue for reducing ill will, anger and hatred (dosa)**

Buddhists observe either the five precepts, or the eight precepts. Both of these observations are permanent and are supposed to be renewed each day for successful observation. The eight precepts are a more detailed version of the five precepts and

complete the section of virtue as laid out in the Noble Eightfold path. If you plan to observe the precepts, you should do it mindfully and try your hardest not to break them.

The first precept is *Panathipatha Vermani Sikkhapadam Samadiyami*. It means refraining to kill any living being. Only a few people have enough anger and hatred in them to kill living beings without a good reason. When someone takes this precept, they must refrain from killing anything, including insects and other really tiny creatures. Many people kill many insects and other small animals that may be bothering them. Some other people enjoy killing animals as a sport. All life is precious and every living being fears death, even animals. They may not be able to say that they fear death, but they show it in many other ways. Most mother animals would protect their young against danger as to the best of their ability. Even little insects have a right to live. This is why the Buddha asked us not to kill any living being.

Abandon wrong, it can be done.  
 If it were impossible to do I would not urge you to do so.  
 But since it can be done  
 I say abandon wrong.  
**Anguttara Nikaya**

The second precept is *Adinadana Vermani Sikkhapadam Samadiyami*. It is refraining from stealing. This precept not only includes stealing, but other bad deeds that are indirect forms of stealing. These bad deeds include borrowing with no intention of returning, fraud, not paying taxes, and illegal business dealings. If you want to observe this precept fully, you should not commit acts of stealing, even small things like taking a pen from your workplace for private use. You should respect others' belongings, including big companies and even the government.

The third precept is *Kamesu-micchacara Vermani Sikkhapadam Samadiyami*. This precept is often considered as refraining from adultery or rape. This precept refers to more than that. It includes misconduct with a child, religious

celibates, and people who are betrothed to others. People should consider not only the feelings of themselves,

but the feelings of the family. You should make sure that what you're doing isn't wrong, so you should set high moral standards for yourself.

The fourth precept is *Musavadha Vermani Sikkhapadam Samadiyami*. It is refraining from telling lies. The Buddha said refraining from lying was the most important precept. Most people who lie have a better chance of performing bad deeds because they would use lying to cover up their bad deeds. It is also the easiest precept to break, because controlling actions is easier than controlling speech.

The fifth precept is *Pisunavaca Vermani Sikkhapadam Samadiyami*, which is abstaining from slander and malicious speech. It is refraining from speech that causes discord and division amongst people. It is a waste of time, and it hurts everyone. It hurts you more than it hurts others. Even if your friends gossip with the intention of causing disharmony and discord among people, you should try to change the subject, and turn the conversation to something more positive. You should try to speak words that will create joy, happiness or confidence.

The sixth precept is *pharusavaca Vermani Sikkhapadam Samadiyami*, abstaining from using harsh speech. Refraining from Harsh speech is a hard thing to do, because when you use harsh speech, you are usually really angry. Most people regret using harsh

speech later on in their life. You should observe yourself and be mindful of what you are saying. You should practice not using harsh speech so it will not become a habit.

The seventh precept is *Samphapalapa Vermani Sikkhapadam Samadiyami*, refraining from using useless speech. Useless speech is not useful to you, or to others. You should not speak of something you are uncertain of, because if you are wrong, it would be the same as lying. You should also refrain from talking about others when they are not present.

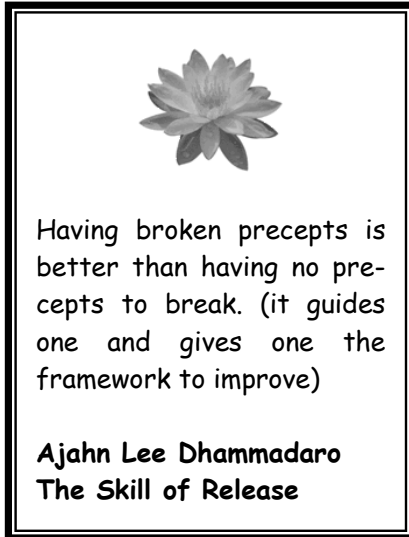
The last precept is *Micchajeva Vermani Sikkhapadam Samadiyami*, refraining from wrong livelihood. The Buddha has asked us to stay away from certain types of work that cause suffering to others. The selling of weapons and other means of destruction, the sale of drugs and intoxicant, slavery and the misuse of women such as prostitution, and the killing of animals such as the job of a fisherman or butcher were con-

sidered by the Buddha to be inappropriate means of livelihood. One must also make sure that whatever type of work one undertakes that it is performed with integrity.

Even though the precept of refraining from taking alcohol or other substances that alter the mind is not included in these eight it is required for the observation of each and every one of the precepts. It is a prerequisite to the practice of virtue. This precept is slowly becoming less important in

western society and among Buddhists, because lots of adults take this precept and drink alcohol anyways. This precept includes refraining from taking any amount of alcohol. This is an important precept because; this precept can lead to heedlessness and the breaking of any or all of the other precepts.

The eight precepts help eliminate dosa, which is anger and hatred. Observing the eight precepts leads to the eradication of the craving that leads to anger, ill-will and hatred. Craving and desire lead to greed (lobha) and hatred (do-



sa). The practice of the precepts which encourages restraint leads to morality, which helps destroy anger and hatred. The precepts are the first step to eradicate anger and hatred.

**Yasas (14)**



**Reflecting on the first precept - I undertake the precept of abstaining from killing animals**

The Five Precepts (Panca Sila) are forms of discipline that the Buddha asked us to observe in order to achieve spiritual development. But, they are not commandments; if you choose to undertake these principles, you should try your best to observe them mindfully. Out of the five precepts, observing the first precept is an essential step in our path to Nibbana. When we say, 'I undertake the precept of abstaining from killing all living beings', this includes all animals and insects; every living being enjoys life. Every living being is afraid of pain and death.

For this precept to be broken, five aspects must be


present. Clearly, it must be a living being. The next feature would be that one must know it is a living being. The major factor would be the intention to kill followed by your effort to slaughter (plan and kill). The final aspect would be the death of the victim. When all these factors are present, you have effectively broken the precept and performed an unwholesome act. When this precept is broken, effects such as sickness and short life appear and hinder your wellbeing. When you perform this unwholesome deed with all the five factors completed, this could affect your place of rebirth (Janaka Kamma). Intention or kamma is the most important aspect in this appalling act. Without intention, this deed would not comprise as unskillful deed (akusala kamma-).

Some people could be vegetarians while others choose to consume meat. Most people have the false belief that "eating meat is an akusala kamma". There is a simple explanation; if consuming meat is an unwholesome deed, Buddha would have included it in the five precepts and ten unskillful deeds. Furthermore, it is

clear that none of the five elements of completing an unskillful act are present when eating meat. As such, it is clear that eating meat is not an unskillful deed. However, if the animal is killed by someone just for the meal you are about to partake and you are aware of it and condoned it then, this would be considered as an unwholesome deed. Whether you kill the animal or someone else kills it for you, if you know about the butchery and you approve it, you have done an unskillful action.

The Buddha told his monks that, meat can be consumed without resulting an akusala kamma if you have not witnessed the killing (Adittha), if you have not heard that it was killed for your meal (Asuta) and if you have without any doubt no knowledge that the killing was performed just for your own consumption (Apari-

samkita). When Devadatta requested a discipline rule (Vinaya) that all monks and nuns should be vegetarian, the Buddha refused saying it would cause unnecessary hardship to the Sangha. Instead he gave permission for those who wished to be vegetarian to do so.



A bee takes the essence of the flower without harming its beauty and perfume.  
So let the wise man wander in this life (without harming others)  
**Dhammapada 49**

However, if you choose to be a vegetarian, to help reduce your strong attachment to the taste of well prepared meat it would be easier for you to reduce greed and craving (tanha) which leads to suffering. So, feel compassionate towards animals and use this compassion to eat in moderation and reduce greed. It will assist in your path to Nibbana.

### Malshi (14)



#### Ascetic Gotama's Compassion to Animals

This event took place shortly before Ascetic Gotama became the Buddha. One day Ascetic Gotama was walking when he saw a Sheppard taking 500 goats to King Bimbisara for an animal sacrifice. Out of 500 goats was a baby goat who was limping. Ascetic Gotama saw this baby goat struggling to keep up with the others. With kindness he carefully picked him up and carried him to the king.

When Ascetic Gotama reached the king he asked him why he was bringing

all of the goats and killing them. King Bimbisara told him that he was using them as a sacrifice to the gods. The king informed him that the gods were angry and causing hardship to the people of his kingdom. Ascetic Gotama said this to him in reply. "If you can make the gods happy with an animal sacrifice, how much more would they like a human sacrifice? So offer me to the gods instead of these innocent goats." The Ascetic Gotama then taught the king to be compassionate to all beings. King Bimbisara, hearing this was so inspired that he never again did animal sacrifices to the gods. Realizing that this ascetic was a very wise being the king offered him a position in his royal cabinet. When Ascetic Gotama informed him that he was a prince who had given up his kingdom, wealth and family in search of



As sweet as honey is an evil deed,  
So thinks the fool as long as it does not ripen.  
But when the evil deed comes to fruition he comes to grief.

Truth he invited Ascetic Gotama to come back and teach him when he became the Buddha.

Later, King Bimbisara became one of the greatest supporters of the Buddha. He followed the Buddha's teach-

ings and ruled his kingdom with generosity and compassion. The moral of this story is: You should be kind, generous and loving to all beings.

### Navi (11)

When those who do not understand the Dhamma act improperly,  
They look around to make sure no one is watching.  
But our kamma is always watching.  
We never really get away with anything  
**Ajahn Chah**

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