



# Bodhi

# Leaves

A newsletter created by children for children

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A devotee approached the Buddha and indicated his virtue by explaining his practice of the precepts. He informed the Buddha that he kept the five precepts to perfection and as such he felt that he was a virtuous person. The Buddha then encouraged the young man in the practice of the sublime states by saying, "If restraint from wrong doing alone was sufficient to say a person was virtuous then, a new born infant lying on his back would be the most virtuous person." One must start one's practice of virtue with restraint by practicing the precepts but then one should move to the practice of the sublime states and the practice of meditation on loving kindness.



## The practice of the sublime states for perfecting virtue

At the time of Lord Buddha, Brahmanism was one of the most dominant religions in India. Brahmins called their creator God Maha Brahma and believed he possessed the sublime states also called Brahma Vihara. The ultimate attainment of those who followed Brahmanism was to be reborn in the realms of Brahma. However Brahmins also feared their creator God and believed that he had qualities of cruelty and a desire to punish people who did wrong. As a result they often made various types of animal sacrifices to pacify the God. They were also engaged in constant prayers, vows and rituals to keep the God happy and to receive his mercy and blessing.

Understanding the Brahmins misconception of the Sublime States the Lord Bud-

dha explained and taught the practice of the four sublime states - Loving Kindness (Metta), Compassion (Karuna), Sympathetic Joy (Muditha) and Equanimity (Upeksha) - to his devotees as follows:

The Lord Buddha's said that Loving kindness is unconditional and boundless kindness towards all living being at large. It does not simply mean the love towards a specific person or persons we are close to and move with in our day to day life. The Lord Buddha taught us that we should express loving kindness to the people even who hate us or make troubles for us.

Compassion is directed unconditionally to those who are suffering from sickness, hunger, loneliness or fear. You should be compassionate to your immediate family members as well as other people including those who live in distant counties and desperately need food and shelter.

The third sublime state; "Sympathetic Joy" is explained as not being jealous of others success, happiness or

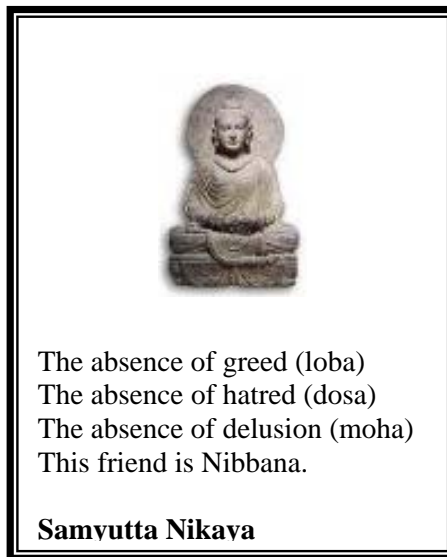
achievements. The Lord Buddha taught his followers to be happy in the success of others starting with your own family, friends, relatives, neighbours and others.

The forth sublime state, which is known as Equanimity is explained as maintaining one's mind in a balanced condition. One should not be upset or overjoyed whenever he or she faces different situations in the life such as gain & loss, rise & fall, praise & blame, and success & failure.

The Lord Buddha explained that one should develop these four sublime states in addition to practising the Buddhist code of disciplines (five, eight, ten precepts etc) to perfect virtue. He also encouraged the practice of meditations such as Loving Kindness, Compassion and Sympathetic joy meditation to develop the mind.

The Buddha also corrected the mis-conception of the Brahmins by saying that it is through the practice of the sublime states (not animal sacrifices) that one is reborn in the Brahma realms.

### Charmi (12)



### Practice of the Sublime states for eliminating anger & hatred

The four sublime states are good qualities that we should all strive to acquire. The four sublime states originated from Brahmanism which was the main religion at the time of the Lord Buddha. The people at that time, believed in a creator god called Maha Brahma. They believed that their god shared some really incredible qualities which were loving kindness (metta), compassion (karuna), sympathetic joy (mudita) and equanimity (upekkha). In Buddhism everyone is encouraged to acquire these traits as it leads to the elimination of anger and hatred (dosa).

Intense craving leads to attachment and greed, but intense craving also leads to

ill-will, anger and hatred. Everyone wants to be happy everyone does not like painful or unhappy situations. When we feel unpleasant sensations we tend to push it away or try to get rid of it, but sometimes it is hard to do this so we feel ill-will, and anger.

Anger makes us act in unskillful ways as many people cannot deal with their anger. Anger is a natural emotion and is present within us from birth. Many people express anger in unskillful ways. Some may release their anger through yelling, throwing a temper tantrum, or hitting & battering others. We must learn how to manage anger if not we might hurt someone that is very dear to us. Anger hurts us more than the one who it is directed to.

A long-term solution to eliminating anger and hatred is the practice of the four sublime states. When one practices these four states thoroughly there is no room for anger and hatred. A good way to practice the four sublime states is to practice infinite compassion to all beings in your daily life and to practice meditation. You can especially reach your goal by doing meditation on the sublime states. Practicing meditation on the sublime states helps us attain the good qualities; loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic

joy and equanimity which reduces anger and negative feelings in us. This also helps us to reach the ultimate goal in Buddhism, Nibbana, by eliminating anger and hatred (do-sa).

**Nadith (14)**



**Ven Sariputta's advice for eliminating sustained anger & hatred**

Venerable Sariputta said there are five kinds of persons who we get angry with. He then advised us on reducing this anger as follows:


The first are people with impure bodily behaviour and pure verbal behaviour. In this situation you should not think of his impure bodily behaviour but think about the pure verbal behaviour. Ven. Sariputta then used this example to make it easier to reduce our anger. He said, a rag robe bhikkhu seeing a worn out cloth in the street would carefully tear out only the usable part and use it to patch his torn robe. Similarly think of their pure verbal behaviour and reduce your anger.

The second are people with impure verbal behaviour

and pure bodily behaviour, you should not think about their impure verbal behaviour instead you should think about their pure bodily behaviour and manage your anger. He then used this example to assist us. It is like a pond covered with moss and water plants, a man comes to it in thirst. He bends down and pushes away the moss and the water plants with his hands, drinks the water and goes away his thirst satisfied.

The third are people with impure bodily behaviour and impure verbal behaviour, then you should not think about the impure bodily behaviour or their impure verbal

behaviour, instead you should think about their rare good deeds and merits that they do from time to time. He then gave us this



Anger is not appeased by Anger  
 Anger is appeased by loving kindness  
 This is an eternal Truth  
 Dhammapada 5

example to assist us in managing our anger. It is like the rut made by the hoof of cattle, on a parched lake bed with a little water in the crevice of the hoof. A man who is tired and thirsty comes and thinks what if I drink this little water in

the cattle rut with my hands, or with a cup it will shake or disturb the water, then it will not be drinkable. What if I go down on my fours, drink like cattle and go away. Then he goes down on his fours and drinks the water in the cattle rut and goes away satisfied.

Fourth are people with impure bodily behaviour and impure verbal behaviour. In addition they do not even do any good deeds from time to time. Venerable Sariputta encouraged us to be compassionate to them by using this example to assist us in managing our anger. It is like a gravely sick man who has traveled far on the highway. There is no

village in sight ahead or behind him. He can not get suitable food, medicine, or any assistance. A certain man seeing him on the highway feels compassion. He thinks, "If I do not help him he will surely die. I will assist him. May this person not fall to destruction!" Similarly

arouse compassion and reduce your anger.

The fifth are people with pure bodily behaviour and pure verbal behaviour; In addition, from time to time they do good deeds. Despite their

purity one still feels anger towards them because of envy jealousy or false rumours One should think about their pure bodily behaviour and pure verbal behaviour. The Venerable Sariputta gave the following example so that he could recognize his folly. It is like a pond with pure, clear water in a pleasant surrounding with several trees bordering it. Then a certain person comes tired and thirsty. He descends into the pond, bathes, and then drinks the water which he has soiled. One should realize the harm one is doing to one self by harboring anger towards a pure person and reflecting on this example learn to manage your anger.

**Samadhi (13)**



**Why did Buddha say that Brahma is in your home?**

Understanding the four sublime states taught by Lord Buddha, I would like to see why the Buddha said that Brahma is in your home?

The Lord Buddha, in this statement, was referring to our own parents. The Bud-

dha said that our parents have the same qualities as Brahma and always show these four great qualities - Metta, Karuna, Muditha and Upekka - towards us at all time unconditionally.

We know that our mothers begin to practice loving kindness towards us even before we are born. When they were pregnant they took all measure such having good food, not travelling long distances, not doing harmful physical activities etc to ensure the wellness of the baby to be born. They also take time of from their job to take care of the baby.


Parents practise Compassion towards their child when they get up late at night to feed and clean the baby. They sacrifice their comforts to take care of the baby. When the baby is sick they stay up with the baby and provide medicines and comfort to the baby hoping for an early recovery.

When the child grows older the parents continue to be compassionate to their children's needs and provide them with a good education so that they can have a better future. Sometimes parents forgo their own life comforts and migrate to different countries or move to different provinces to provide better education and living standards for their children.

When the children grow up and work towards a brighter future, parents watch them with sympathetic joy and are always happy in their success. They never feel jealousy (even in a dream) over the happiness or

achievements of their children.

Parents practise equanimity towards their children by letting them go when they are older. Even though they will miss them they do not show it and will be happy when they have to leave to go to University in a distance province or country. They will let you go even if you are going to the other side of the world for your betterment.



Parents are as Brahma  
Compassionate unto their children.  
Thus the wise should pay them honour.  
Serve them with food,  
drink, clothing & shelter.  
For service such as this,  
Sages praise  
And he has reward of joy  
in heaven.



Even though it is one of our most important duties to look after our parents, they don't get upset if we are not able to look after them properly. They have practised equanimity to their children and do not want to hold them forever for they understand the impermanent nature of the world.

The beauty of the parents nature is that they always show loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity towards all their children and they do not show any speciality for anyone.

Now we know what the Lord Buddha meant when he said, "Brahma is in your home", it is because our Parents practised the four great qualities (said to belong to Brahma) of Metta, Muditha, Karuna and Upekka towards us. Just think if our parents did not have those qualities, we would not be able to enjoy our lives with joy, happiness and luxuries. Therefore it is our duty to maintain our lives according to the expectations of our parents and help them and treat them properly when they are in need.

**Charmi (12)**



**The effects of good and bad actions**

A long time ago there was a monk named Tissa. He started to get big blisters and boils on his skin that hurt a lot when they burst. No one wanted to take care of him because of the smell that was emitted.

The Buddha heard about his situation and came to take care of him. After making him comfortable the Buddha taught him the Dhamma. Shortly after, Tissa attained enlightenment and

passed away. The Buddha then encouraged the other monks to take care of the sick by saying, "He who tends the sick tends me."

People were curious as to what evil deeds Tissa had done to be so painfully sick and what good deeds he had done to realize enlightenment so easily. The Buddha in-

formed them that Ven Tissa got this sickness because in a previous birth he had been a hunter. He shot birds for the king. Sometimes he shot more birds than he required. Back then there were no fridges or freezers to stop them from being rotten. Therefore, the hunter's practice was to break the bones of the wings of the birds so they would not fly away. The effect of this evil action was the painful sickness with boils.

Then one day an enlightened monk came and he gave him the meal that he had prepared for himself. In gratitude the monk taught him the Dhamma and the bad effects of kill-

ing. From that day onwards he stopped killing birds for the king and became a good person. He followed the teachings of the monk and practiced the Dhamma. Tissa received the effects of both his bad and good actions. Though Tissa became a monk he could not change the effect of the bad karma from his previous



births. That is why he got the disease, but at the same time because of the effects of his good deeds and practice of the Dhamma he attained enlightenment.

### Lahiru (11)

The Buddha encouraged his monks and devotees to attend to the needs of the sick by saying, "He who tends the sick tends me".

### How Meditation Helps Me

Firstly, I do not meditate daily. I do put in some degree of effort to try to, but I generally only end up meditating three to four times a week. The things I will talk about here will be close to the minimum change that meditation can cause. It is also known that different people experience the benefits in different ways and may receive them earlier than others. I will talk about how meditation personally helps me.

I do not practice meditation solely for the purpose of attaining Nibbana. I wish to develop my brain so that I can deal with the challenges presented to me by the world in a calmer and smarter

manner than what I am capable of presently. I use the breathing (Anapana Sati) meditation because Metta meditation does not help me as much with the above statements, and I cannot fully focus well enough to control my mind for Vipassana meditation. I have already noticed minor changes within me but it has not been anything drastic. Examples of these would be that I was surprisingly calm during exams, and whenever there is a tense situation; I can maintain a mostly clear mind. I often do some light meditation before a difficult chess tournament to keep my thoughts collected and focused for the game. I find that whenever any sort of negative emotion gets to my head, it's only a matter of a few seconds of concentrating on my breath before I can suppress any unnecessary thoughts. Meditation can also help me stay on track when I'm in the middle of some form of work. It may be coincidental, but since I started meditation, my marks have steadily been improving also. The things you experience from meditating are probably not going to be the same as mine, but I can guarantee that proper meditation done with some level of effort will definitely produce good results.

Sashika (14)



The Buddha advocated meditation on Concentration (Samadhi) and Insight (Vipassana) for eliminating delusion and ignorance. The Buddha taught 40 types of Samadhi meditation. The most commonly used Samadhi meditation is Breathing Awareness (Anapana Sati). Samadhi meditation is very calming and also results in tranquility. As such Samadhi meditation is also known as Tranquility (Samata) meditation.

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