

The Essential Principles of Buddhism for Human Beings

Venerable Pherb Viengsavanh

Member of Domestic and International Relations Department and

Member of the Committee for Sangha Foreign Affairs of central Buddhist

Fellowship Organization of Lao PDR

Email; P.dhammo2009@gmail.com

Essential Moral Principles of Buddhism

The principles of morality for Buddhists, as bestowed and taught by the Lord Buddha, are complex and nuanced, encompassing a broad spectrum of teachings tailored to various levels of practice and spiritual maturity. They include teachings that are suitable for daily living as well as higher levels of practice. If any Buddhist, or anyone else, who resolutely committed to following these teachings, it will certainly bring about peace and happiness in their lives and in society as a whole, that is to say:

The Five Precepts as Universal Human Virtues

The Five Precepts are moral guidelines for human conduct. When a society adheres to these five precepts, it becomes a noble, peaceful, and prosperous community. These precepts are as follows:

1. **Pāṇatipāta veramaṇī** (abstaining from killing living beings): This means refraining from killing, causing harm, oppression, or cruelty to life and body. It is about respecting the lives of others, whether humans or animals, as all beings love their own lives. Practicing this virtue involves having kindness (mettā), goodwill, wishing for the happiness and prosperity of all life, and compassion, the desire to help others out of suffering;

2. **Adinnādānā veramaṇī** (abstaining from taking things not given) this refers to refraining from theft, which is the act of stealing or robbery. It also means avoiding any form of exploitation or harm toward others' possessions. Practicing this virtue involves righteous conduct, earning a living through honest and ethical means;

3. **Kāmesu micchārā veramaṇī** (abstaining from Sexual Misconduct): this means refraining from improper conduct in matters of sexuality, avoiding actions that harm one's spouse or

others, as it can destroy dignity and peace of mind, causing disorder within families. Practicing this virtue involves mindfulness and restraint in matters of pleasure sense, knowing when to stop and control desires, avoiding indulgence in sensory pleasures such as sight, sound, taste, and touch;

4. **Musāvādā veramaṇī** (abstaining from false speech): This means refraining from lying, deceit, or using speech to harm others or destroy their well-being. Practicing this virtue involves truthfulness, sincerity, and honesty in one's words and actions;

5. **Surāmerayamajja-pamādaṭṭhānā veramanī** (abstaining from intoxicating drinks and drugs casing heedlessness): denoting refraining from drinking alcohol and avoiding substances that cause intoxication, leading to a loss of mindfulness. Intoxication can result in recklessness and mistakes due to a lack of awareness, such as causing accidents or, at the very least, undermining the sense of stability and safety within society. Practicing mindfulness means being continuously aware and conscious, training oneself to always think carefully and remain self-aware, knowing what should and should not be done. This mindfulness ensures that one does not become intoxicated or reckless.

The Ethical Principles of Buddhism

The principles that are the virtues of Buddhism are centered on the person as a teaching of the Buddha, who teaches the people to be good people, which has three principles: **abstaining from all evil** that is, abstaining from bad things, abstaining from wrongdoing, and corruptness. Abstaining from evil deeds may germinate to be seen clearly in three ways, i.e., restrain from evil bodily, verbal, and mental deeds.

Abstaining from all evils

Abstaining from bodily evils at a basic level involves four aspects:

1. **Pāṇātipata Veramaṇī**: abstaining from taking life, causing injury, or destroying life, and instead cultivate kindness and compassion, helping and saving others;

2. **Adinnādānā Veramaṇī**: abstaining from taking anything that is not given, stealing, cheating, violating property rights, or destroying others' possessions. Instead, respect others' property rights;

3. **Kāmesumicchācārā** Veramaṇī: abstaining from improper sexual behavior, violating what others hold dear, and do not transgress sexual norms and traditions.

Abstaining from evil speech at a basic level involves four aspects, namely:

1. **Musāvādā** Veramaṇī: abstaining from telling lies or deceiving others;
2. **Pisuṇāya Vacāya** Veramaṇī: abstaining from speaking in a way that causes conflict, slanders, or disrupts harmony;
3. **Pharusāya Vacāya** Veramaṇī: abstaining from using rude or harsh language;
4. **Sampappalāpā** Veramaṇī: abstaining from engaging in frivolous and meaningless conversations that are not beneficial;

Abstention from evil deeds of the mind at a basic level involves three aspects:

1. **Abhijjhālu** Veramaṇī: (Covetousness): abstaining from covetous thoughts and desiring others' belongings;
2. **Bayāpādā** Veramaṇī: (Ill-will): abstaining from thoughts of ill-will and plotting harm against others;
3. **Micchādīṭṭhi** Veramaṇī: abstaining from holding wrong views contrary to the righteous path.

Abstaining from apāyamukha- channels to the ruin of property involves six aspects, namely:

1. Abstaining from being addicted to drinks and drugs;
2. Abstaining from wandering around at night;
3. Abstaining from frequenting entertainment shows and gatherings;
4. Abstaining from indulge in gambling;
5. Abstaining from consorting with evil friends;
6. Abstaining from laziness and neglecting work.

The Practice of Good Deeds

The practice of good deeds refers to performing **kusala** (wholesome actions) and behaving righteously through body, speech, and mind. By abstaining from all evil actions, one commits to only good deeds by cultivating various merits, as follows:

1. **Dāna-maya:** Doing good deeds achieved through charity and generosity;
2. **Sīla-maya:** Doing good deeds achieved through observing moral precepts, engaging in righteous conduct, and maintaining discipline;
3. **Bhāvanā-maya:** Doing good deeds achieved through meditation, mental training, and the cultivation of discernment;
4. **Apacāyana-maya:** Doing good deeds achieved through humility and showing respect;
5. **Veyyāvacca-maya:** Doing good deeds achieved by contributing to virtuous efforts and offering assistance;
6. **Pattidāna-maya:** Doing good deeds achieved through sharing one's merits with others;
7. **Pattānumodanā-maya:** Doing good deeds achieved by rejoicing in the merits of others;
8. **Dhammassavana-maya:** Doing good deeds achieved through listening to the Dhamma and seeking knowledge;
9. **Dhammadesanā-maya:** Doing good deeds achieved by teaching the Dhamma and imparting wisdom;
10. **Ditthijukamma:** Doing good deeds achieved by holding correct views and aligning them with the truth.

Saṅgaha-vatthu-dhamma

The term “**San᳚gaha-vatthu**” refers to the qualities that bind people together. These are the principles that hold the hearts of individuals and unify society through harmony, or the principle of helping. There are four key principles:

1. **Dāna** (generosity): this refers to acts of giving, which include kindness, selflessness, sharing, and helping others, whether through material gifts, knowledge, or advice;
2. **Piyavācā** (pleasant speech): this means speaking in a kind and endearing way, using polite and gentle words that promote harmony and friendship. It involves saying things that are truthful, beneficial, and backed by reason, thus fostering goodwill and trust among people;

3. **Ātṭhacariyā** (helpful conduct): this involves engaging in actions that benefit others, such as assisting with tasks, contributing to public welfare, and helping to solve problems, promote improvements, and encourage virtuous behavior;
4. **Samānattatā** (evenness): this refers to maintaining consistency and fairness in all dealings, being uniform in happiness and suffering, and collaborating in problem-solving. It involves acting appropriately according to one's status, circumstances, and environment, in accordance with righteousness in every situation.

Nāthakaraṇa-dhamma

The term “Nāthakaraṇa-dhamma” refers to the qualities that enable an individual to become a reliable refuge for oneself. These qualities are encapsulated in the following ten key aspects:

1. **Sīla** (moral conduct): good and pure behavior, maintaining discipline, and engaging in virtuous and honest professions;
2. **Pāhusacca** (Extensive Learning): Being well-educated, knowledgeable, and having a deep understanding of things;
3. **Kalyāṇamittatā** (Admirable association): Having good friends; associating with virtuous people who provide good counsel and guidance;
4. **Sovacassatā** (being easily spoken to): Being easy to admonish with, teaching and learning with an open mind, and accepting reasons;
5. **Kiṇikaraṇīyasuta-thakkhatā** (Diligence in Service): Being willing to help in any tasks, both big and small, of colleagues and the community, being able to consider and make decisions to ensure success;
6. **Dhammakāmatā** (being a lover of truth): desiring Dhamma, seeking knowledge and truth, speaking and listening well, creating satisfaction, and being eager to engage in discussions, learning, and appreciating detailed principles of Dhamma and Vinaya;
7. **Vīriya-rambha** (having effort): he is industrious in avoiding and abandoning evil actions and cultivating the good; he makes an effort and strives forward; he does not give up in despair or neglect or forsake his duties and responsibilities;

8. **Santuṭṭhī** (being content): being happy and satisfied with what one has, appreciating the four requisites acquired through righteous effort;

9. **Sati** (having firm mindfulness): maintaining mindfulness, remembering one's actions and words, staying cautious and careless;

10. **Paññā** (Wisdom): processing wisdom, knowing reasons, thinking critically, and understanding the true nature of all things as they are.

Purification of the Mind

Purifying the mind involves cleansing it of impurities, which means removing greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). It brings about joy, mental freshness, and a healthy mind. To purify the mind and make it clear and free from defilements, one must cultivate certain virtues through the practice of the four **Brahmavihāra**, which are the sublime states of mind of an exalted, great-hearted person. These four aspects are:

1. **Mettā** (loving kindness): A profound and all-encompassing wish grounded in genuine goodwill. It embodies an earnest desire to aid all beings in realizing the benefits of success, joy, and happiness;

2. **Karuṇā** (compassion): The empathetic aspiration to relieve the suffering of all sentient beings. Alleviating pain and hardship, extending care and support to those in distress with a sincere wish for their liberation from suffering;

3. **Muditā** (Sympathetic gladness): The capacity to take delight in the happiness and success of others; it is the genuine joy felt in witnessing the accomplishments and virtues of others, marked by an enthusiastic willingness to support, encourage, and celebrate their progress and well-being;

4. **Upekkhā** (Equanimity): engaging in a balanced mind, seeing things as they truly are, establishing mind in order, stable, upright like weighing apparatus, recognizing that each being reaps good or bad results from their actions. Fostering the readiness to act with the guided principles of reason and fairness.

Pathāna-dhamma

The term “Pathāna-dhamma” is rendered as the qualities that are established in diligent and noble efforts. There are four key aspects:

1. Saṁvara-padhāna (prevent): The effort to prevent and guard against all evil, ensuring that no harmful deeds arise within oneself;
2. Pahāna-padhāna (abandon): The effort to abandon and eliminate any evil or harmful deeds that have already arisen, removing them completely from oneself;
3. Bhāvanā-padhāna (cultivate): The effort to cultivate and develop good qualities within oneself, enhancing and increasing virtuous traits;
4. Anurakkhaṇā-padhāna (maintain): The effort to maintain and protect the good qualities and virtues one has achieved, preventing them from deteriorating, and striving to further advance and enhance them.

The Fundamental Principle of Paramatha-dhamma

Buddhism admonishes regarding **Paramattha-dhamma** (Ultimate Realities), which is **the state of things as they truly are. It is a great truth and a natural law that follows cause and effect.** Regardless of whether the Lord Buddha arose to attain enlightenment or not, all things inherently follow their causes and conditions. When the Perfectly enlightened One attained enlightenment and realized the entirety of this truth, he recognized that all phenomena are not self, are not beings, and are beyond the control of any entity. He then conveyed, explained, revealed, and made this truth easy to understand, establishing it as a fundamental principle.

The Ultimate Reality is not a metaphysical concept that one can understand merely by intellectual reasoning. The Ultimate Reality is something that truly exists. Therefore, correct views (Sammā-ditthi) and correct understanding (Sammā-saṁkappa) pertain to the comprehension of the Ultimate Reality according to its nature.

There are two genres of Ultimate Reality: Rūpa (material phenomena) and Nāma-dhamma (mental phenomena), or Rūpa-Nāma (material and mental phenomena). Rūpa is the state that does not experience objects, while Nāma is the state that experiences objects (objects are things that appear and can be known as both material and mental phenomena. When

consciousness arises and knows something that which the consciousness knows is called **ārammaṇa** or object). According to the principles of Buddhism, consisting of four types of Ultimate Reality: Citta, Cetasika, Rūpa, and Nibbāna.

1. Citta (State of consciousness): This is the primary phenomenon that knows the appearing objects, such as seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, etc. Citta (consciousness) is the knowing state, a mental phenomenon, characterized by the three marks of existence: impermanence (Danicaṃ), suffering (Dukkhaṃ), and non-self (Anattā).

2. Cetasika (mental factors): These are phenomena that arise together with consciousness, know the same object as consciousness, cease together with consciousness, and arise in the same place as consciousness. Each Cetasika has its own characteristics and functions according to its type (e.g., feeling, perception, and volition). They are mental phenomena characterized by the three marks of existence (Aniccaṃ, Dukkhaṃ, Anattā).

3. Rūpa (Corporeality): These are the states that do not know objects, such as color, sound, smell, taste, etc. Rūpa is material phenomena characterized by the three marks of existence (Aniccaṃ, Dukkhaṃ, Anattā).

4. Nibbāna: This is the mental phenomenon that extinguishes Kilesa and Dukkha. Nibbāna is not subject to causes and conditions that give rise to its existence; hence it neither arises nor ceases. Nibbāna is the liberation from the aggregates and is characterized by Anattā.

Buddhism instructs the principles of Ultimate Reality, which include the four types: Citta, Cetasika, Rūpa, and Nibbāna. This repudiates the existence and power of a Creator God (since a Creator God is not included in Ultimate Reality) and believes that this world is arisen by natural laws, or niyāma, the natural order of things. These natural laws are comprised of five stages, viz.

1. Utu-niyāma: The natural law that governs temperature and various natural phenomena, particularly relating to the elements—earth, liquidity, wind, air, and the seasons, which form the environment for human life;

2. Bīja-niyāma: The natural law concerning heredity, including the transmission of genes and species characteristics;

3. Citta-niyāma: The natural law that governs the workings of the mind, detailing the functions and processes of mental activity;

4. Kamma-niyāma: The natural law concerning human actions, which governs the process of cause and effect related to kamma and their results;
5. Dhamma-niyāma: The natural law that governs the interrelationship and causal connections between all phenomena.

The Fundamental Principle of Buddhist Reality

Ariya-sacca (The Four Noble Truths)

The etymological term “Ariya Sacca” is derived from “Ariya,” denoting “noble,” and “Sacca,” meaning “truth.” Therefore, “Ariya Sacca” denotes the noble truths; the truths of the noble ones or truths are what lead an individual to become noble ones. The Four Noble Truths are fundamental teachings in Buddhism, consisting of four: Dukkha, Samudāya, Nirodha, and Magga.

1. Dukkha (suffering): This refers to the state of being that is hard to endure, a condition that cannot stay the same. It is a state of tension and unease. Dukkha includes Jāti (birth), Jāra (aging, oldness, and decline), and mārana (death, decay, and disappearance). Union from what is displeasing, separation from what is pleasing, and not getting what one desires are suffering. In brief, the five aggregates subject to Upādāna (clinging) are suffering;

2. Samudāya (Origin of Suffering): The cause of suffering is the origin of three types of craving (tanhā), viz., Kāma-tanhā—the craving for sensual pleasures, the desire for sensory enjoyment; Bhava-tanhā—the craving for existence or becoming, the desire to be something, to exist in a particular way. This includes desires bound up with Bhava-diṭṭhi (eternity belief) or sassata-diṭṭhi (eternity belief), and Vibhava-tanhā—the craving for non-existence, the desire to be free from existence, the wish not to be, or for things to cease. This includes desires bound up with Vibhava-diṭṭhi (nihilistic views) or uccheda-diṭṭhi (annihilationist views);

3. Nirodha (Cessation of Suffering): This is the cessation of the cause of suffering, which comes from complete and remainderless eradicating the three kinds of tanhā;

4. Magga (Path to the cessation of suffering): This is the practice that leads to the cessation of suffering. It consists of the Eight-fold Path, which includes: Sammāditthi-Right View, Sammāsaṅkappa-Right Intention, Sammāvācā-Right Speech, Sammākammanta-Right Action,

Sammāājiva-Right Livelihood, Sammāvāyāma-Right Effort, Sammāsati-Right Mindfulness, and Sammāsamādhi-Right Concentration. Together, these are known as Majjimā-Paṭapaṭha or the Middle Way. The Noble Eight-fold Path can be summarized within the Three-fold Training, namely: *Adhisīla-sikkhā* (Ethical Conduct) includes Sammāvācā, Sammā-kammanta, Sammāājiva *Adhicitta-sikkhā* (Mental Discipline) includes Sammāvāyāma, Sammāsati and Sammāsamādhi and *Adhipaññā-sikkhā* (Wisdom) includes Sammāditthi and Sammāsañkappa.

Functions in the Four Noble Truths- Ariya-sacca

1. Pariññā-dukkha (Suffering should be understood) One should understand the problem or the state of suffering as it is, in a direct and realistic way and confronting and acknowledging the issue;
2. Pahāna-Samudaya (the Cause of Suffering should be abandoned): One should eliminate the cause of suffering, which is about resolving the issue at its root;
3. Sacchikiriyā-nirodha (the Cessation of Suffering should be realized): One should comprehend the state of the cessation of suffering, referring to the state free from problems, a peaceful and light state which is the ultimate goal;
4. Bhāvanā-magga (the Path should be cultivated): One should practice and train in following the path that leads to the cessation of suffering. This refers to the method or the way that brings one to the desired state of being free from problems.

These four functions must be practiced in alignment with each of the components of the path, ensuring correctness. This practice is called Kiccañāṇa. Kiccañāṇa is part of a broader understanding known as Three-fold Knowledge or Yānadaṭsana (Insight), which refers to knowing the three rounds of truth comprehensively. When combined with the functions in the Four Noble Truths, it forms Yānadaṭsana (The Knowledge of Insight) in twelve aspects, which includes:

Saccañāṇa: Knowing the truth of the Four Noble Truths:

1. This is dukkha -suffering, affliction, stress (*Idhañ dukkhañ*);
2. This is the cause of dukkha (*Idhañ dukkha-samudayañ*);
3. This is the cessation of dukkha (*Idhañ dukkha-nirodhañ*);

4. This is the path leading to the cessation of dukkha (Idhaṁ dukkha-nirodha-
gāminīpaṭipadā);

Kiccañāṇa: Knowing what duties correspond to the Four Noble Truths:

1. Suffering should be understood (Dukkhaṁ pariññeyyaṁ);
2. The cause of suffering should be abandoned (Dukkhasamudayaṁ pahātabbaṁ);
3. The cessation of suffering should be realized (Dukkhanirodhaṁ sacchikātabbaṁ);
4. The path leading to the cessation of suffering should be cultivated (Dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā bhāvetabbaṁ).

Katañāṇa: Knowing that the duties have been completed:

1. Suffering has been understood (Dukkhaṁ pariññātaṁ);
2. The cause of suffering has been abandoned (Dukkha samudayo pahāno);
3. The cessation of suffering has been realized (Dukkhanirodho sacchikataṁ);
4. The path leading to the cessation of suffering has been developed (dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā bhāvitaṁ).

The Four Noble Truths in Paṭicca-Samupāda

In Buddhism, Dukkha is part of the Three Characteristics of Existence (tilakkhaṇa), which are the fundamental characteristics of all things. These three characteristics, as taught by the Buddha, help one understand the nature of reality:

1. Aniccaṁ (Impermanence);
2. Dukkhaṁ (Suffering), Nothing remains in a perfect state;
3. Anattā (Non-self), Lack of essence.

The origin of Dukkha

The origin of suffering (Samudāya), i.e., Paṭicca-Samupāda (dependent origination), which is a key principle in Buddhism. Buddhism also has proposed that suffering does not arise from any specific thing, person, or external force but rather from various contributing factors coming together, rooted in ignorance (Avijja). This ignorance triggers a continuous process, driven by Nam-dhātu, natural laws called Mahapāṭhāna; this causes the arising of saṁkhāra-citta-sika, conditioned consciousness, which is similar to a biological mind process that revolutionizes to

dhamma-dhātu (mental base element). Consciousness is combined through the functions system of Nam-khan—immateriality (recognition and controlled by the mental states of immateriality and relinking—Consciousness) as admonished the fully Enlightened One, Radiation (Rāṇgsi-Yothātu), systemically arisen from the functions of immateriality, it can combine or form life, such as viruses, bacteria, trees, cells, etc., these are conditioned by the law of Bijā-niyāma—natural law, it leads Rūpā-khan to the cause of Nām-khan as analogy (Mind is dominant, while Body is slaves). This process continues with the development of the five sensory faculties, adding one Mano-dhavala (Sense-door), which gives rise to Āyatāna (the six sense bases); When Āyatāna (the sense bases) are stimulated, they give rise to Phassa (sensory contact), which conditions the arising of Vedanā (sensation): pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral (Upekkhā).

Dependent on sensation (Vedanā), craving (Tanhā) arises;
 Dependent on craving, searching or seeking (Pariyesanā) arises;
 Dependent on searching, acquisition (Lābho) arises;
 Dependent on acquisition, attachment (Vinicchayā) arises;
 Dependent on attachment, contentment (Santutthiyā) arises;
 Dependent on contentment, clinging (Parikkhappa) arises;
 Dependent on clinging, stinginess (Maccariya) arises;
 Dependent on stinginess, protection (Ārakkho) arises;
 Dependent on protection, disputes or issues that arise from safeguarding (Ārakkhā-thikaraṇa) emerge, such as using non-sharp weapons, using sharp weapons, arguments, quarrels, conflicts, verbal abuses like “You!!! You!!!” insulting or criticizing, lying, and various evil deeds or immoral actions. All of these arise together with such attitudes. And the firm belief that something is “self” (Ahankāra) or “belongs to self” (Maṇmakāra) leads to the arising of Upadāna (attachment), which is the clinging or grasping due to the perception or assumption that things exist in certain ways. This leads to the formation of Relinking-Consciousness or Bavaṇghacitta (Sub-consciousness) and creating Kamma which causes the arising Bhāva and Jāti the cycle perpetuates the wandering and rebirth of consciousness (Viññana), creating different lifetimes over countless ages in the various realms of existence, encompassing the thirty-one

planes, ranging from the most distressing like Niraya (hell) to the most blissful like heaven, appropriate to the kamma accumulated, this called Saṁsāravatṭa.

The wandering and rebirth of Relinking-consciousness are caused by **Avijjā** (ignorance), which is the lack of understanding of the true nature of reality. This ignorance leads to delusion, mistaking conceptualized things for reality, which is the root cause of all kilesa (defilements). As long as ignorance persists, beings in the world will continue to wander through the cycle of birth and death and encountering Tilakkhaṇa (Three Marks of existence), giving rise it faces endless forms of dukkha i.e., Old age, and death until the root cause, ignorance, is eradicated

The Extinction of Dukkha

The extinction of suffering (Nirodha), known as **Nibbāna**, represents the ultimate goal in Buddhism and the culmination of its teachings. Nibbāna embodies the highest form of happiness, transcending all worldly experiences. It is described through various synonymous terms that capture its profound nature:

- **Virāga**: Detachment from kilesa (defilements);
- **Vimokkha**: Liberation from saṁsāra (the cycle of rebirth,);
- **Anālayo**: The absence of attachment or clinging;
- **Paṭinissaggaya**: The relinquishment of defilements;
- **Vimutti**: Complete freedom from mental fabrications;
- **Atammayatā**: Unshakable imperturbability;
- **Suññatā**: Emptiness, free from all defilements.

Due to the intrinsic nature of sentient beings, there is a prevalent tendency toward selfishness and the accumulation of negative actions, while virtuous deeds are often performed with an expectation of reward. As a result, the natural state of existence tends to involve more suffering than true happiness. The wise, who perceive the illusory nature of worldly pleasures, recognize that such happiness is fleeting and illusory. Consequently, they yearn for Nibbāna, which represents the only true and lasting happiness.

For those endowed with wisdom, the attainment of Nibbāna marks the complete eradication of kilesa and tanhā. Although life and the physical body, composed of the four dhātu (elements), may continue to exist temporarily, they do so as mere manifestations of natural processes governed by cause and effect. Upon the dissolution of the five aggregates (pañca-khandhās), the mental formations (cetasikā) that constitute consciousness also disband. Since there are no causes or conditions left to reassemble the mind, past kamma lose their potency and no longer bear fruit. (Ahosi-kamma). What remains is the enduring goodness and virtue that one has cultivated. This residual merit continues to benefit others who revere it, akin to the sound of a drum that, though unaware of its own resonance, produces sound for those who strike it to hear. The reverence of others for such goodness ensures its influence persists, offering benefit to all who honor it.

The Extinction of Dukkha

The way to end dukkha (Magga) is Majjimā-paṭipadā, which is a key principle of Buddhism. It is the way to transcend all forms of suffering in Saṃsāra (the cycle of existence) and can only be achieved by following the Middle Way, called Majjimā-paṭipadā. This path is also known as the Ariya-Magga (the Noble Path), which is a supreme practice. It involves cultivating mindfulness (the mind's role as the perfect knower), leading to the cessation of suffering through Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna (the Great practice on the four Steadfast of mindfulness). Practicing mindfulness, with an empty mind, involves carrying out duties with mindfulness and awareness in every task, focusing on the present rather than being distracted by other things. Being mindful in an artistic manner means knowing the right time and place and acting appropriately according to the situation. The ultimate goal is to attain Nibbāna through the stages of Ariya-Magga and its fruits. The practice of mind training consists of three stages of cultivation, viz.,

1. **Sīla** (Morality): Training and disciplining the body and speech by refraining from harming oneself and others. This includes self-discipline and controlling the mind, so it does not fall under the influence of lower desires. One should live a life of moderation and righteousness;
2. **Samādhi** (Concentration): Training the mind to focus until reaching calmness and tranquility (Samatha). This leads to insight into reality (Vipassanā) with right effort;

3. Paññā (Wisdom): Contemplating the nature of reality until realizing the truth that all phenomena are as they are suchness (Tathatā). This leads to awakening from Māyā (the illusion) that deceive the essence of mind (Diṭṭhi-būṭam).

Fundamentals of the Buddhist approach

Buddhism emphasizes the path to liberation from suffering and teaches an understanding of suffering and the ways to eliminate it. It focuses on freeing oneself from ignorance about the true nature of existence, which causes suffering through Kilesa-defilements such as lobha, dosa, and moha. The teachings also emphasize the importance of education, training, and having Yonisomanasikāra—attentive thought by wisdom in order to verify the truth—understanding the principle of cause and effect, when this exists, that exists. Through this wisdom, one can see reality as it is, understanding that all things follow the laws of Tilakhaṇa and all beings are governed by the law of kamma. By applying the right teachings of Buddhism, which correspond to the results one seeks in an appropriate and correct way, by living mindfully without negligence, one can attain happiness in this life and future lives and ultimately reach the goal of Nibbāna, for the wise.

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