



QSA DHAMMA MAGAZINE

Sangha Samaggi Togetherness of the Buddhist Sangha

Published by the Queensland Sangha Association Inc

An incorporated association of Buddhist monks and nuns in Queensland, Australia. Est. 2007

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15 JUNE 2023

NUMBER 034

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QSA ZOOM CHANNEL FOR DHAMMA QUERIES

QSA has set up a new ZOOM channel to answer questions on the Dhamma and queries regarding QSA and its activities. At present the channel will be active from 2.30 pm every Saturday. Anyone can reach us through the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6043658907>

When you are in the meeting room, please speak to the Buddhist Counsellor on duty for the information that you seek. In case of a difficulty, please email QSA via infoqsa@gmail.com

Channel time needs to be booked; bookings can be made by emailing QSA, as above.

QSA CALENDAR FOR A FEW WEEKS IN JUNE 2023

2023

JUNE

4 *Sunday 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm*

BUDDHIST COUNSELLORS PACKAGE 19

- 1 Dhamma applications in daily life- Past bad kamma can be over-powered by good kamma (Dhammapada 173)
- 2 Buddhist educational principles-Bad kamma may show results only at the opportune time (Dhammapada 71)
- 3 Dhamma practice techniques including meditation-Reminiscence on equanimity

JUNE

11 *Sunday 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm*

BUDDHIST COUNSELLORS PACKAGE 20

- 1 Dhamma applications in daily life- Gradual practice and not practice in jumps

- 2 Buddhist educational principles- The path to evil is easy, not so the path to good (Dhammapada 163)
- 3 Dhamma practice techniques including meditation-I shall not deceive another

JUNE

18 *Sunday 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm*

BUDDHIST COUNSELLORS PACKAGE 21

- 1 Dhamma applications in daily life-Health is paramount (Dhammapada 203)
- 2 Buddhist educational principles-Have faith in the teacher
- 3 Dhamma practice techniques including meditation-I shall not despise another

JUNE

25 *Sunday 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm*

BUDDHIST COUNSELLORS PACKAGE 22

- 1 Dhamma applications in daily life-Envy and jealousy can harm me more than the other
- 2 Buddhist educational principles-Attention must come before mindfulness
- 3 Dhamma practice techniques including meditation-I shall wish no harm or give fear to another

If you are interested in any of these programs, please send QSA an email via infoqsa@gmail.com We will then send you the entry link. If you are unable to attend, you can ask for the scripts of presentations to be sent to you by email.

Please note that meetings of ABC (Assembly of Buddhist Counsellors) are held after Dhamma discussion is concluded.

Article 181

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON DISCOURSES-
LESSON 0105

Edited by John A. Cartwright

PERSISTANT EFFORT (Utthana Sampada)

Everyone has a way of living. The essentials of life need to be gathered. Food, clothing, shelter, transport, and medicine are common examples. Children have this need. Monks and nuns too have this need.

Most working adults get salaries and wages, run businesses, or are engaged in trades or farming or other types of work. Sangha get their needs as offerings from supporters and in return they give counsel to them. Children perform their assigned duties and get their needs from parents. Being lazy does not help and one must build necessary skills to do the work.

They need to use discernment to develop the means they apply. In bigger organisations they develop the skill to delegate and supervise.

This way they achieve success in making a living. That is an accomplishment of persistent effort, to make a living.

Article 182

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON MEDITATION-
LESSON 2006

Edited by Dayani de Silva

CALMING MAKES THE MIND STRONGER

We find it hard to stay still but tend to move the whole body or at least a part of the body. Our mind is also like that. The mind just cannot stay still. It needs to roam around. That is normal.

While running sideways, it is not easy to hit a target with a ball in hand. It is easier to hit while moving slowly in the best direction. It is easy to notice this skill in cricket. What you apply here is a strong force facilitated by relative stillness.

It is not effective to think of a difficult problem while having a run around. Stay quietly for a little time, clear thinking starts. The calmness adds strength to the mind.

When running around the mind uses a part of the energy it has. When you stay still the mind can summon its energy a lot more effectively.

For success and happiness, we need to learn how to stay calm and still. Young people need calmness for success in studies. Young adults need calmness for happiness in the family. All people who seek spirituality learn calming techniques to achieve good results.

Learning mindfulness and concentration is based on calmness of mind.

Article 183

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON DHAMMA-LESSON 3006

Edited by Lyna Chen

THE SANGHA

The Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha are together called the triple gem in Buddhism. The idea is very deep and can be discussed deeply much later. At this time, we need to understand the simple meaning of the Sangha. Sangha usually means a group, and in this case, it refers to the entirety of past, present and future monks and nuns who have chosen to follow the Buddha for spiritual advancement.

Since the Buddha is not living it is useful to have someone to guide us in our spiritual journey, and the obvious choice is the Sangha. The Sangha are the custodians of the teaching and help us to understand the teaching.

The books in which scriptures are written are actually looked after by the Sangha. In fact, after the demise of the Buddha, it was the Sangha who assembled the Dhamma at a great convocation. Initially they memorised the teaching dividing responsibility for different chapters and collections.

The monks in Sri Lanka long later are credited to have written the first scripture books under the patronage of the Kings who ruled the country many centuries ago.

Monks belong to various lineages claiming connections to the Buddha. One way of proving the identity of a monk is the statement of his lineage. So, just wearing a robe is not full proof of the identity of a monk. That is how the integrity of the Sangha is protected. The connection of a monk to his teacher is very important.

The Sangha depend on lay people for their food, robes, shelter, medicine etc and in return they give us teachings and guidance. Hence, we hold the Sangha in great regard.

Article 184

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY-LESSON 5005

Edited by Janani Welgama

CONTINUOUS CHANGE

This leads us to the natural phenomenon of change. Nothing seems to stay as it is. Things keep changing. Some changes occur very quickly. Others may take longer, even centuries.

Buddhist philosophy asserts that everything belonging to this universe, changes. That includes both material things and mental things. For example, our thoughts change from moment to moment.

This is called impermanence (Anicca) in Buddhism. The body keeps changing, becoming sick sometimes, ageing, deteriorating and eventually ceasing to function, or dying. You might not see this happening every second, but you do observe this over periods.

It is the same with the mind. It might be efficient at a young age but as people grow old the mind starts showing signs of weakness, getting illnesses of old age, unable to perform ordinary activities. Medicine tries to delay the process, but that is not always effective.

Impermanence is one of the three signs of existence (anicca, dukkha and anatta). Understanding this is by itself is well recommended. The other two signs are the concepts of no-self and suffering. These will be discussed later. In a way, all three seems to be connected to the idea of change.

Article 185

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON DHAMMA PRACTICE-LESSON 6005

PAYING HOMAGE TO THE BUDDHA

Many educated people are not interested in regular practice of paying homage to the Buddha. Paying homage is not just a way of showing respect to the Buddha. It is also a confirmation of the idea of the Buddha. Hence one needs to get a good idea of the statement of homage.

In Pali, the statement of paying homage includes three important words Bhagavato, Arahato, Samma Sambuddhassa. What do these words mean? Many explanations have been given by scholars. One explanation is given here.

The term Bhagavato is often translated as the fortunate one. What makes a person fortunate? A fortunate person has accumulated good kamma. It is a combination of meritorious conduct as well as skilful (kusala) conduct. So, a Buddha has the supreme attribute of being full of Kusala.

The term Arahato seems to imply that the actions of Buddha excludes all that is considered unskilful. This virtually the same idea but expressed in a negative way.

Samma Sambuddha implies that the person is accomplished in every way. There is no one to compare with the Buddha. When all kusala is there, when all akusala has been eliminated, and when this is attained fully understanding it, then we have the concept of the Buddha. This concept of the Buddha can be related even remotely to our own experience in spiritual practice and is well suited to the idea of paying homage to the Buddha.

To summarise, the one who is full of skills, and has eliminated all unskilfulness, with complete understanding of these two features is my spiritual guide, and I pay homage to him.

Repetition of this thought at appropriate times, and remembering it at all times, surely, should be beneficial to us in our spiritual practice.

Instead of arguing about the meanings of terms this is far more beneficial as a practical achievement.

Article 186

QUOTES FROM AJAHN BRAHMAVANSO

Gratefully extracted from the newsletter of the Buddhist Society of Victoria

4 May 2023



"Real generosity is giving, expecting nothing back in return."

11 May 2023



"It's very hard to progress in meditation, when you have a fault-finding mind. You always see what's wrong, you never see the beauty."

Article 187

THE DANGER OF CONTINUING ENMITIES

DHAMMAPADA STANZA 005

In this world, hatreds do not cease by hatreds. Through love alone they cease.

The Pali original is as follows:

Nahi verena verani, Sammantiḍha kudacanam

Averana ca sammanti, Esa Dhammo Sanantano

THE STORY IN BRIEF

There is a story recorded with this stanza. There lived a married couple at the time of the Buddha. The lady was unable to bear children. Fearing ill-treatment, the wife arranged her husband to marry another woman. On two occasions she became pregnant, the first wife served her food with drugs to prevent a birth of a child. The third time the second wife became pregnant, she kept it a secret. When the first wife came to know of the pregnancy, she again caused an

abortion. The second wife died. Unfortunately, before she died, the second wife vowed to take revenge and a feud started.

In later existences, the two were reborn as a hen and a cat, a doe and a leopardess, and finally as the daughter of a nobleman in Savatthi, and an ogress.

One day the demon (Kala Yakkhini) was in pursuit of the lady and her baby. The lady went to the Jetavana monastery in which the Buddha was preaching. The baby was placed the feet of the Buddha, hoping for protection. The demon was there but did not grab the baby.

The Buddha told them that hatred cannot be appeased by hatred. Both women understood the teaching.

After the sermon the Buddha asked the lady to hand over the baby to the demon. Out of respect to the Buddha she did so. The demon showed her love to the baby and handed the baby back to the mother. Goodwill was re-established.

THE SCOPE OF THE TEACHING

This teaching is very fundamental. The way to emancipation is the elimination of greed and hatred. In a way hatred is the other side of greed. If you are greedy for a thing, by implication you repel opposite things. For example, if you are desiring warmth all the time, it means that you are repelling the idea of cold. In some cases, this may not be obvious.

The story is regarding vengeance. It is hatred being carried over into the future in this birth or a later one. Vengeance results from a strong hatred. Strong hatreds result from not dealing with the hatred in the first place.

Metta (goodwill) comes into play as a therapy to anger and hatred. The therapy must not be delayed. Delay allows things to become worse.

Many of our mental states are linked or based upon hatred. For example, jealousy is linked to hatred of a person or situation.

Avarice or miserliness is also linked to hatred.

If hatred can be reduced the intensity of many other unwholesome mental states also can be reduced thereby.

Remembering the story can help solve similar problems. The happy ending is striking.

HARED GRID

This is not from the scriptures but has been constructed by the writer. Many people do not accept or understand that they do have hatred in their minds. If you ask the question, most people deny that they have hatred in the mind. It is partly because they want to look civilised or because they simply do not know what goes on in the mind. Or, just that the word hatred is wrong here.

The following are all representations or facets or levels of hatred, and you can assess what is in your mind for your own information and guidance in spiritual development:

WORDS	INTENSITY OF FEELING (High, medium, low)	DURATION OF FEELING (Long, medium, short)	DAMAGE
Dislike	H, M, L	L, M, S	?
Displeasure	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Discomfort	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Hard to tolerate	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Repulsion	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Distaste	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Detestation	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Abhorrence	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Abomination	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Aversion	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Ill-will	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Antipathy	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Offensive	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Animosity	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Ghastly	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Anger	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Hatred	H, M, L	L, M, S	
Enmity	H, M, L	L, M, S	

Rejection	H, M, L	L, M, S
Vengeance	H, M, L	L, M, S

The grid can be used to assess yourself and identify the areas in which you need to improve. Where the intensity is high, a determination is necessary to lower the intensity. There is no need to get anxious.

Where the duration is long, some sort of therapy is required.

The assessments must be carried out in varying situations. Some possibilities are within the family, with the spouse, with children, at work, or in the community.

In some environments you might be reasonable, and in others not so much. Search for an answer as to why this happens.

ACCEPT THE RESULTS OF YOUR ADVANCEMENT

Some of the results of your spiritual advancement might at the start seem to be disadvantageous. Learn to accept that. The benefits are in the long term.

For example, when your spouse continues to be harsh while you show a soft reaction, it may seem that you look weak. Let it be so. You will win in the long run. Similar acceptance is required in dealings with children, work mates and members of the community. Do not allow your ego to obstruct progress.

NOTICE THE GROWTH OF YOUR PEACE OF MIND

During this spiritual advancement, you will notice one thing grow, first slowly and later steadfastly. That is your peace of mind. After all we identified Nibbana (enlightenment) as a setting of peace at the highest level.

In that context, this is no mean achievement.

LEARNING BY ASSESSING ANOTHER TEACHER

INTRODUCTION

Often, we do not see our own faults and shortcomings. But we can see shortcomings in others very easily. This skill can be harnessed to note defects in teaching.

No teacher is perfect in teaching. Defects can be seen in posture, language, knowledge, economy, techniques used in teaching, relating to students and so on.

Notes can be kept about the shortcomings. Further thought about every item is recommended. Make sure that you understand your own assessment.

Take care not to offend the teacher.

The Buddha is regarded as an ideal teacher.

Article 189

REMINISCENCE MEDITATION ON ATTRIBUTES OF THE BUDDHA

SOURCE

The nine qualities of the Buddha are mentioned in many places in the Tripitaka.

The following lesson has been taken from the lessons bank of the Dhamma Practice Training Academy (DPTA) of the Siddhartha Institute of Buddhism, the education division of QSA.

2201 REMINISCENCE OF THE BUDDHA (BUDDHANUSSATI)

The qualities of the Buddha are so many that it is practically impossible to reflect on all such qualities. In fact, we do not know or understand fully some of those qualities. Hence a summary of nine qualities is given in the Dhamma. This summary is given here for the benefit of the meditator.

- 1 *Bhagava* (full of merits from the past, as a bodhisatta)

- 2 *Araham* (would not do any wrong)
 - 3 *Samma Sambuddho* (one who realised correctly, perfectly)
 - 4 *Vijja Carana sampanno* (endowed with both wisdom and conduct)
 - 5 *Sugato* (well-gone, on the correct path)
 - 6 *Loka vidu* (knower of the worlds)
 - 7 *Anuttaro purisadhamma sarathi* (incomparable trainer of men)
 - 8 *Sattha deva manussanam* (teacher to humans and celestials)
 - 9 *Buddho* (perfect in knowledge and understanding)
- Bhagava* (exalted, full of merits)

You can understand these a little at the start. As you progress in meditative practice the understanding will rise to a higher level. It is useful to discuss this with a Buddhist counsellor. It will help in many other ways.

The writer has observed that familiarity with a particular Buddha statue to the extent that you can remember it at will, helps to bring the idea of the Buddha to a focus very quickly.

If it is difficult to remember the attributes of the Buddha, it is suggested that the focus be set on the second quality (*araham*), namely that the Buddha does nothing wrong, or the idea that the Buddha has cleansed his mind off all thoughts that are unwholesome, including their roots greed, aversion, and ignorance. Initially you can say *araham* softly until the mind gets hold of the concept.

The writer recommends the second quality as it directs the mind to attain Nibbana.

REMINISCE MEDITATION-METHOD 1

- 1 Get settled in a sitting meditation position on the floor or in a chair.
- 2 Breathe six times. Get more settled.
- 3 Notice in-out breaths distinctly.
- 4 Notice long and short breaths

- 5 Notice the breath reaching all parts of the body (at least some).
- 6 Body formations and mental formations have ceased. If successful you might be in a Jhana by now.
- 7 Turn your attention to the second quality of the Buddha.

Contemplate *ARAHAM, ARAHAM, ARAHAM*

Recollecting the meaning NO WRONGS DONE
- 8 Repeat this reminiscence as many times as possible in this sitting.

Your mind gets absorbed in the idea of the Buddha not doing anything wrong.

EMINISENCE MEDITATION-METHOD 2

- 1 Get settled in a sitting meditation position on the floor or in a chair.
- 2 Breathe six times. Get more settled.
- 3 Turn your attention to the second quality of the Buddha.

Contemplate *ARAHAM, ARAHAM, ARAHAM*

Recollecting the meaning NO WRONGS DONE
- 4 Repeat this reminiscence as many times as possible in this sitting.

Your mind gets absorbed in the idea of the Buddha not doing anything wrong.
- 5 Stay in the meditation for a few minutes and switch on to breathing meditation using steps 4, 5 and 6 in method 1

In this meditation we acquire merits, and we cleanse our minds. In addition, we may attain to an absorption (*Jhana*). Practice this many times until you begin to feel a sense of joy (*piti*).

It does not matter whether you apply method 1 or 2.

FREE DHAMMA BOOKS AND DHAMMA LESSONS

PRINTED BOOKS (small stocks now available in some temples)

- 1 Buddhist Chaplaincy, 182 Pages in size A4(about 300 copies available)
- 2 Buddhist Psychology-the building blocks, First edition, 168 pages in size A5 (only 50 copies left)
- 3 School year 8 textbook (used in Queensland)(a couple of copies left)

ELECTRONIC BOOKS (that can be emailed on request)

- 1 The Buddhist Way to Happiness (English) (Maha Mangala Sutta), 85 pages a4
- 2 The Buddhist Way to Happiness (Sinhala) (Maha Mangala Sutta), 91 pages A4
- 3 Practical Techniques of Teaching Buddhism to Youth, 185 pages A4
- 4 Basic Buddhist Psychology-second revised edition, 152 pages A5
- 5 Buddhist Chaplaincy, 182 pages A4
- 6 Q and A for students in years 11 and 12, 55 pages A4

ELECTRONIC DHAMMA LESSONS BOOKS (in 5 banks)

(that are in website sanghaqld.org or can be emailed on request)

- 1 Lessons Bank 1, on selected Discourses, 130 Pages A4
- 2 Lessons Bank 2, on Meditation, 50 pages A4
- 3 Lessons Bank 3 on Buddha Dhamma, 105 pages A4
- 4 Lessons Bank 4, on Buddhist Psychology and Philosophy, 58 pages A4
- 5 Lessons Bank 5, on Dhamma Practice, 48 pages A4

RELATEDSUPPORT DOCUMENTS (not on website as yet)

Alphabetical Index to all 5 lesson banks (not on website yet)

Curriculum related to the lesson banks (not on website yet)

Teaching Techniques suggested (not on website yet)

BOOKS IN PREPARATION

- 1 An introductory Course in Buddhist Counselling (about 75 pages A4)
- 2 Family Peace-the Buddhist Way (about 70 pages A4, available in late June 2023)

Please email Queensland Sangha Association via email infoqsa@gmail.com

The end of the QSA Dhamma Magazine for the period June 2023

Issued by the President of QSA, Reverend James Wilson

You are welcome to forward this to a friend who is likely to benefit from this magazine. It is not for public circulation but for the information of members of QSA or for their friends. Past copies of the magazine are held on the current page the QSA website

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