



**HAPPINESS THE BUDDHIST WAY**

# **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 JULY 2023

NUMBER 035

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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. Please ask for a time slot that suits you.

**Channel time needs to be booked; bookings can be made by emailing QSA, via [infoqsa@gmail.com](mailto:infoqsa@gmail.com)**

**The link will be given to you when the time slot is decided.**

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](mailto:infoqsa@gmail.com)

## **QSA CALENDAR FOR A FEW WEEKS**

The Dhamma program Buddhist Education-Tertiary, first delivery, will be concluded on 16 July 2023.

Please note that meetings of ABC (Assembly of Buddhist Counsellors) will be held during the time available on Sunday evenings in July and August.

### **Article 190**

**EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON DISCOURSES-  
LESSON 0106**

**Edited by John A. Cartwright**

### **BEING WATCHFUL (Arakkhaka Sampada)**

A person having acquired possessions, cannot keep them intact without watchfulness.

He needs to guard what he has come to possess, from thieves, from other persons and agencies such as the government, from flood and fire, from carefree children and so on. Even a person having a secure job needs to relate well to superiors and subordinates, keep an eye on jealous associates. Everyone needs to be in touch with technological advances, changes in the economy,

social attitudes, and influence of powerful foreign companies to hold on to what they have.

This active awareness is the accomplishment of watchfulness.

One needs to observe reasonable and practical limits in this skill.

This skill leads to success in whatever you do, studies, job, business or whatever. Success in any of these areas leads to happiness for oneself, for the family, and for the community.

Does it help in spiritual advancement? Yes, it does. There are people around us who want to pull us towards unwholesome activities like drinking and gambling. Being watchful keeps us safe in a spiritual sense.

### **Article 191**

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON MEDITATION-  
LESSON 2007

Edited by Dayani de Silva

## **CALMING LEADS TO CONCENTRATION**

We speak of a mind in concentration when it is dwelling on a single object. For example, if you are keeping your mind on the flame of a candle, to the exclusion of all other objects, then the mind is concentrating on the flame. This is easy to say but it is hard to achieve. You might not get the exact result, but it is not difficult to get close to it.

In a practice aimed at concentration, the preliminary requirement is calming of the mind. When you are trying attend to many things at the same time, the mind is not calm but is agitated. So, the background for concentration is prepared by achieving calmness of mind.

When the mind is calm, it does not move a lot. In that situation one can try to keep the mind on a few objects like the body. And when the mind is nearly still, it can home in on one object and try to stay there.

When there is turbulence in the atmosphere, leaves of trees keep moving this way and that way. When wind reduces, the leaves also become relatively still. When the blowing is no more, the leaves become still.

Similarly, as you reduce the disturbing factors, the mind tends to become still, and at some stage, it becomes still. That is concentration.

The term concentration implies a strong activity. Stillness indicates the ceasing of activity. So, in a way stillness is a better term to use than concentration. The Pali word for stillness is Samadhi.

### **Article 192**

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON DHAMMA-LESSON 3008

Edited by Lyna Chen

## **MONASTERIES, NUNNERIES AND TEMPLES**

It is a tradition held by most of the Sangha that they voluntarily get cut off from their families. When a person becomes a monk, he gets a new name, a new type of robes, shaves the head, gives up property and commercial connections so that they become free to practice on the spiritual path. Hence the need for residential places for the Sangha called temples and monasteries, nunneries.

When the Buddha was living, several monasteries and nunneries were built for monks and nuns. Jetavanarama was one of these.

There is usually a group of supporters in every monastery, to help maintain the premises. In Western countries these must be incorporated associations set up according to the associations' incorporation law. The law is to help and protect the office-bearers from individual liabilities.

Temples are an essential type of organisation that enables the continuation, protection, and advancement of Buddhism in the modern world and therefore it is a particularly meritorious act to set up and maintain temples.

### **Article 193**

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY-LESSON 5006

Edited by Janani Welgama

## **THE THREE SIGNATA OF EXISTENCE**

As mentioned before the three signs of all things that exist in the universe are, impermanence, suffering and no-self.

Our idea of suffering is empirical. Are there situations that are not easy to bear? That is where suffering is. One might not observe this as a

continuous occurrence. It may seem to be intermittent. Yet, it is there. If a person thinks that he has no suffering, it is probably a delusion. If you fail to see an elephant in front of you, we can only wish you good luck.

Buddhist philosophy asserts that even in moments of pleasant experience, suffering now or later is an inherent feature. Some have the penetrative wisdom to see this with little effort, but others are not that sharp, right now.

Suffering does not mean that all experiences are unbearable. The important aspect is that there is some sort of inherent dissatisfaction. We try to cover that dissatisfaction with sweet words. From the psychological point of view that might be useful. There is no need to lament about it. It is necessary to understand it.

One can argue that all three signs mean the same thing. There is no harm in doing so in a philosophical sense. The analysis into three aspects, however, makes it easier to deal with them.

If everything is in a state of flux, there is nothing permanent to hold on to. Whatever that seems nice, also is subject to change. Each of the three ideas gain relevance with the passage of time.

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 of time.

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 seem to be connected to the idea of change.

### Article 194

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON DHAMMA PRACTICE-LESSON 6006

## TAKING REFUGE IN THE TRIPLE GEM

Everyone runs into difficult situations now and then and at such times we need to shelter ourselves from harm. That is why we need refuges. What better refuge can there be other than the Triple Gem, the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. We have seen some attributes of the Buddha. The Dhamma represents the Buddha today. The Sangha are those spiritual individuals who carry the message of the Dhamma, practise the Dhamma and protect it.

In a way, the three concepts amount to the same essential idea.

If I want a to be called a Buddhist then taking the three refuges with proper understanding, is the easiest way to formally become a Buddhist.

At the start our understanding is bound to be minimal. With more practice and learning of the Dhamma, the idea of refuge begins to grow.

### Article 195

## QUOTES FROM AJAHN BRAHMAVANSO

*Gratefully extracted from the newsletter of the Buddhist Society of Victoria*



"Meditation is not about attaining more things, but about letting go of things and becoming more free."

#### Article 196

## DEVELOPING THE PSYCHIC POWERS- (3) COMMITMENT

### INTRODUCTION

The four psychic powers form the third group in the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. The four bases of psychic power are interest, election or desire, energy or effort, strong commitment, and investigativeness. In Pali these are *canda, viriya, citta and vimamsa*.

When an action is called for, Interest, and effort may become active. If you notice that things are not moving, it might be that your commitment is not adequate. The added push will come when you develop a commitment and more so when a strong commitment is developed. It is a strong citta that is missing.

Motivation helps to promote commitment. Visibility of likely results and clarity of expected advantages promotes motivation. In the case of Dhamma practice knowledge of the Dhamma applicable is very helpful. Determination is necessary.

Ascetic Siddhartha exhibited strong commitment to attaining enlightenment. That is how and why he succeeded.

Students who do well in studies have strong commitment. People pursuing a spiritual path sacrificing common interests, have a commitment to the practice.

As in all things limits must be observed. Students who keep studying ignoring the need for exercise and rest do not seem to be sensible. The writer recalls how he performed well as a student, committing himself to a plan which included physical exercises and adequate rest. His approach was balanced.

***Most of these details have been taken from lesson number 4111 in the QSA-DPTA lesson bank on Dhamma.***

### **WHY CALL IT A PSYCHIC POWER?**

The term psychic is sometimes used in a different sense. What we discuss here is not a mysterious power. It is a power of the mind without which nothing can be achieved in life.

We can see this in worldly pursuits quite often.

When it is available in abundance, we can see what incredible things people achieve. Some achievements are like miracles. This might be the reason for the choice of the English word psychic powers.

Similar evidence is available in spiritual life.

### **EXAMPLES OF WORLDLY SUCCESS ACHIEVED WITH COMMITMENT**

- 1 The first man on the moon can be attributed to a strong commitment shown by John Kennedy, the then president of US
- 2 Great bridges were built against all odds by engineers due to strong commitment
- 3 Incredible railway lines in Austria, Canada and India were built due to strong commitments
- 4 It is a similar story with tunnels built in Switzerland, Canada, and Austria
- 5 Pyramids and similar structures, in Egypt and South America, tall Stupas in Sri Lanka, are monuments to commitment
- 6 The three gorges dams in China are there today due to commitment
- 7 The list is endless

All these are due to the commitments of individuals, able to apply resources in an incredible or miraculous way. It is worth reading the stories behind these. Many of these are available in television.

### **EXAMPLES OF SPIRITUAL SUCCESS ACHIEVED WITH COMMITMENT**

- 1 Ascetic Siddhartha attained Buddhahood, because of the strong commitment he had



- 2 All or most individuals who became Arahants owe their attainments to a commitment they had
- 3 All of us need commitment to advance on the spiritual path

### **LETHARGY AND LACK OF MOTIVATION ARE DETERENTS**

One needs to develop energy and effort to seek commitment. When we have no targets and when we cannot see the advantages of a pursuit, the need for commitment is not even a dream.

The Dhammapada has many stanzas relating to these.

### **Article 197**

EXTRACT FROM THE QSA TRAINING PROGRAM FOR BUDDHIST COUNSELLORS 6.2

#### **FALSE PRIDE CAN BE A BARRIER IN LEARNING**

An efficient learner quickly builds up knowledge and skills. The gathering of knowledge and skills can cause the growth of an unnecessary level of pride. A practitioner needs to be mindful of this possibility and take guard. The growth of pride is connected to the self-concept or the identity concept, which we always have, though not admitted. It is also connected to the tendency for comparison and measurement as against others.

It can start within the group of learners, in which one gets a sense of superiority. Sometimes, the learner tries to feel superior to the teacher.

How does pride adversely affect the process of learning?

When you are proud and are conscious of your pride, the pride as a mental state forms a cloud covering your wisdom. Pride becomes a space filler in the mind. Then, there is less room for the subject matter to enter the mind. Even if it enters the mind wisdom will not function at high capacity.

Hence, the pride of the efficient learner can adversely affect the learning process itself.

### **Article 198**

EXTRACT FROM 6HE QSA TRAINING PROGRAM FOR BUDDHIST COUNSELLORS 6.3

# **MEDITATION-REMINISCING THE ATRIBUTES OF NIBBANA (ENLIGHTENMENT)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The writer thinks that he does not have a complete understanding of the term Nibbana (Nirvana), but yet he chooses to write these lines. This can be questioned.

How many things in this world that we deal with on a daily basis, do we fully understand? You can name thousands including the weather, sun, and the moon. How about growth of cells, electricity, magnetism and gravity?

As Buddhists we can think and talk about Nibbana too, although we might be poor in our understanding.

## **SOME DESCRIPTIONS OF NIBBANA**

Writers have attempted to describe Nibbana in terms of mundane experiences. Some of these descriptions are set out below.

- 1 The pinnacle of moral and ethical perfection
- 2 The ultimate goal of the Aryan Path to emancipation
- 3 The end of the cycle of births and deaths
- 4 The destruction of all cankers of the mind
- 5 The ending of suffering
- 6 The ending of craving
- 7 The ending of attachments
- 8 The ending of ignorance
- 9 Attainment of ultimate wisdom
- 10 Ultimate happiness, bliss
- 11 Absolute peace

All these ideas are useful to us ordinary people. There is no need to cling to any of these as definitions. These ideas are mostly connected to Theravada scriptures and practices.

In Mahayana, the thinking seems to be different. The Arahants (who have attained enlightenment) are respected. However, prominence is given to the Bodhisatva, the aspirant to Buddhahood.

## A SUGGESTION

It is not within our power to reconcile the differences between Mahayana and Theravada. It is still possible to form an idea of emancipation (Nibbana) in terms of current experience.

It is reasonable to assert that the world is full of turmoil and that it is far from a state of peace. The turmoil is due to greed, hatred, and ignorance. The ending of these three features of existence leads to peace.

Such a peace is welcome, regardless of the Yana (tradition) to which we might belong.

The writer believes Nibbana is an ultimate sense of peace.

This conforms to the term *Arahant (Arahato)*. The Arahant has eliminated all cankers in the mind, and so is at peace.

## REMINISCENCE MEDITATION ON NIBBANA-METHOD 1

- 1 Get settled in a sitting meditation position on the floor or in a chair.
- 2 Breathe six times.
- 3 Feel the in and out breaths
- 4 Notice that some are long, and others are short
- 5 Feel the in-breath reaching different parts of the body
- 6 Get the body settled
- 7 Now you are settled
- 8 Now think clearly of the possibility of peace
- 9 Repeat this reminiscence as many times as possible in this sitting.
- 10 Enjoy the peace you have as long as you wish

## REMINISENCE MEDITATION ON NIBBANA-METHOD 2

- 1 Get settled in a sitting meditation position on the floor or in a chair.
- 2 Breathe six times.
- 3 Feel the in and out breaths
- 4 Notice that some are long, and others are short
- 5 Feel the in-breath reaching different parts of the body
- 6 Get the body settled
- 7 Now you are settled
- 8 Select another idea of Nibbana from the descriptions given above
- 9 Reminisce that idea continuously as long as you wish

## YOU CAN BUILD OTHER METHODS TOO

These can be done in the same way.

## 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 [sanghaql.org](http://sanghaql.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)
- 3 Primary Dhamma book for years 4, 5 and 6
- 4 Primary Dhamma book for years 1,2 and 3 (with pictures)

## U-TUBE VIDEO RECORDS ON DHAMMA

The production of video records of Dhamma Lessons and Dhamma discussions has commenced. The plan is to create videos in the following seven categories:

- 1 Family Peace
- 2 A general framework for happiness
- 3 How the mind works
- 4 Buddhist Education-primary
- 5 Buddhist Education-secondary
- 6 Buddhist Education-tertiary
- 7 Buddhist Education-research and practice

At the time of writing, three videos in category 6 are in U-tube. To access these please use the following link:

**[facebook.com/happiness.the.buddhist.way](https://www.facebook.com/happiness.the.buddhist.way)**

***Please email Queensland Sangha Association via email [infoqsa@gmail.com](mailto:infoqsa@gmail.com) for more information.***

The end of the QSA Dhamma Magazine for the period July 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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