



HAPPINESS THE BUDDHIST WAY

QSA DHAMMA MAGAZINE

Sangha Samaggi Togetherness of the Buddhist Sangha

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QSA ZOOM CHANNEL FOR DHAMMA QUERIES

QSA has set up a 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

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

QSA CALENDAR FOR A FEW WEEKS

The Dhamma program Buddhist Education-Tertiary, first delivery, was concluded on 16 July 2023. Expressions of interest are invited for the following programs:

Family Peace

Applied Buddhist Psychology

Introduction to Buddhist Counselling (repeat 1)

Please note that meetings of ABC (Assembly of Buddhist Counsellors) will be held during the time available on Sunday evenings unless otherwise reserved.

DHAMMA ARTICLES

Article 223

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON DISCOURSES-
LESSON 0110

Edited by John A. Cartwright

DRUNKENNESS

People who drink intoxicants, often lose their memory. They spend more and more on drinks for themselves and for their bad friends. They lose control of their duties in the job or in business. Driving licenses can be lost and bad points noted on licenses. There are cases where jobs have been lost, heavy damages paid due to drunken driving. Even worse, lives are often lost due to drink driving. We cannot make a replacement when a life is lost.

Article 224

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON MEDITATION-
LESSON 2111

Edited by Dayani de Silva

FORTY OBJECTS OF MEDITATION

The following objects of meditation are listed in the books:

Material devices (kasina)	10
Foulness of the body	10
Reminiscences (recollections)	10
Divine abodes (brahma vihara)	04
Immaterial states (arupa)	04
Repulsiveness of nutriment	01
The four fundamental elements	01
Total	40

These are briefly described here. The ten material devises are:

Earth Kasina (can be brown clay disc about 20 centimetres in diameter).

Water kasina

Fire kasina

Air kasina

Blue kasina

Yellow kasina

Red kasina

Hite kasina

Sky kasina

Light kasina

These meditations need to be done under the direct supervision of a teacher. Instructions given need to be strictly followed. It is suggested that the name of the kasina can be chanted softly to help in the meditation.

Foulness of the body is taken as an object, using the decomposing dead body. The last one is the skeleton. This is not possible in society today, as there are no charnel grounds.

The other cases are considered in some detail under the respective topics.

Article 225

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON DHAMMA-LESSON 4001

Edited by Lyna Chen

FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

The second part of the first discourse is a description of the Four Noble Truths, the basis of Buddhist philosophy. The whole of the Dhamma is an elaboration of the Four Noble Truths. Enlightenment is reached by understanding the Four Noble Truths. It is the ultimate goal of every practising Buddhist. To get that understanding one needs to practise in line with the indicators of the noble eight-fold path. So, what are the Four Noble Truths?

1 Existence is suffering

- 1.1 Birth, Decay, Disease, Death
- 1.2 To be united with the unpleasant
- 1.3 To be separated from the pleasant
- 1.4 Not getting what one desires
- 1.5 The attachment to the five aggregates

2 Craving is the cause of suffering

- 1.1 Craving for sensual pleasures (Kama Tanha)
- 1.2 Craving for existence (Bhava Tanha)
- 1.3 Craving for non-existence (Vibhava Tanha)

Craving produces rebirth, it is accompanied by passionate clinging and welcoming this and that.

3 Cessation of suffering

Complete separation from or the destruction of craving (Asesa viraga nirodho) in ways such as the following:

Forsaking craving (Cago)

Renunciation of craving (Pati Nissaggo)

Liberation from craving (Mutti)

Non-attachment to craving (Analayo)

4 The Path leading to the Cessation of suffering

This is the Noble Eight-Fold Path which is described in part 3 of the discourse.

Regarding the four truths there are three aspects and therefore twelve different ways of understanding them. The 3 aspects (Tisarivattam) are:

- 1 The existence and nature of the truth (applies to all four truths)
- 2 The function relating to each of the truths
- 3 The accomplishment of each of the truths

TRUTH 1

The function of the first truth is the **comprehension** of the truth. The accomplishment of the first truth is its **understanding**

TRUTH 2

For the second truth it is the **need to eradicate** and the **actual eradication** of craving.

TRUTH 3

For the third truth it is the **need for realisation** and the **actual realisation**.

TRUTH 4

For the fourth truth it is the **need to pursue the development** of the truth and the **completion of such development**.

This way for the 4 truths there are 12 ways (Dvadasakaram) of treating them.

Article 226

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY-LESSON 5010

Edited by Janani Welgama

THE CYCLE OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS

As discussed before, it is the body that dies. The mind abandons the dead body. According to the last state of mind, the mind seeks another body somewhere. The influencing factor is what is called kamma discussed later. One's kamma is a natural force or energy, generated by one's own past thoughts, words, and deeds. Good kamma produces good results in this birth or in a future birth. Similarly, bad kamma produces poor results.

There is no one keeping records and doing it. It is a natural occurrence. If you are unhappy about what you are or what you have now, generally you can attribute it to kamma. Kamma is not fate. You can do good kamma now and change course. By getting enlightened one can cut short the long journey in the cycle of births and deaths, called samsara.

Most people like to be re-born in good places like the celestial world or the human world but for that one needs good kamma.

Buddha and arahants have finished the cycle; those who have attained various stages of enlightenment will finish the cycle next birth in a few births.

Article 227

EXTRACT FROM THE DHAMMA PRACTICE TRAINING ACADEMY (DPTA) LESSON BANK ON DHAMMA PRACTICE-LESSON 6050

HOLDING A BALANCE IN LIFE

Many feel the need to get a balance in life. When one starts practising, initially there is a tendency to lose the normal balance. One tends to go to extremes. Knowing that can happen one should be ready to deal with it arises at all. The writer is aware many who have faced this type of situation. As they were not prepared for it, the tendency is to live with it, complaining all the time, or being unhappy all the time, unable to cope with the imbalance.

If there is a noble friend, the friend must be able to help resolve the problem.

Disturbance of balance can occur with respect to the family, to the study environment, to the work environment or the community environment. The community environment in a temple might offer an opportunity for a correction.

Article 228

EXTRACT FROM THE QSA BOOK TITLED
INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST COUNSELLING-SECTION B-CHAPTER 10

ARISING AND CEASING AS A CONTINUOUS PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

Science tells us that the smallest particles of matter are molecules and atoms. Smaller sub-atomic particles like electrons are within atoms. The sub-atomic particles keep moving and changing. There is nothing constant about matter.

The cells that are fundamental particles of our body are made up of these tiny ever-changing particles. They arise under suitable conditions and cease to exist as conditions change.

Although we see the body as an apparently continuing entity, in reality, it is composed of particles that constantly change, arising and ceasing. The entity is a camouflage for an unseen process.

The Buddha's description of matter is no different. Different terms are used.

The more important thing that Buddha enunciated was that the mind itself is not a constant entity. The mind itself is a fleeting entity. It arises when a sense object (such as a tree), aligns with a sense (such as the eye) thus making contact, consciousness is said to arise. That is called the mind (citta). Citta arises and passes away every moment.

So, the human being is the appearance of a process, of arising and ceasing. The process is so fast that we cannot observe it happening every moment. We can notice changes after a while only.

Through meditation we can get an understanding of the process and observe it as it happens.

WHY IS THAT WE HAVE DIFFICULTY IN SEEING THIS PROCESS?

We think of things as permanent, satisfying and belonging to us so much that the mind cannot discern the truth.

Our senses cannot grasp a thing that changes very quickly.

For example, if an aeroplane flew at high speed close to the ground, we would not see it at all. The writer as a schoolboy was in this situation at an air show conducted by the Air Force many years ago. That plane may have gone at only 600 kilometres per hour. Today planes are faster than that.

OUR IDEA OF THE SELF

This discussion shows how false is our idea of the self. Nearly all our problems are caused by this wrong view of a permanent, substantial, and satisfying entity.

This view needs to be abandoned by a person reaching the first stage of enlightenment. This view is called *sakkaya ditthi* in Pali.

Constant practice of insight meditation reflecting on the three features of existence (change, suffering and no-self) can lead us to this end.

Article 229

EXTRACT FROM THE QSA BOOK TITLED
INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST COUNSELLING
SECTION C CHAPTER 10

FINITE THINGS CANNOT EXPLAIN INFINITE THINGS

INTRODUCTION

Our day-to-day experience is with finite things. Objects, situations, people, are all finite and we have some idea of their size and extent. There are many things we deal with though they are not comprehensible to our senses. We can go round the world in a ship or in an aeroplane, but we have little understanding of the globe. We learn about it from books and believe it.

A distant star can be visible, but the distance is not easy to understand. Scientists may say it is so many trillions of kilometres away. Do we understand that statement. If they say it is 100 light-years away, it is worse.

In teaching, ideas of comprehensible things must not be extended casually to incomprehensible things.

For example, our idea of going from this place to that, must not be extended to Nibbana as a place. That is very misleading. Nibbana is not a place to exist in. The very idea of existence cannot apply to the idea of Nibbana. Dhamma teachers need to realise this.

However, a teacher can try to explain a thing by extrapolation. For example, the teacher can say, that if you experience peace sometimes, Nibbana is like experiencing absolute peace.

We must be careful in explaining an infinite or incomprehensible idea using the measurements of the world we experience right now.

The time lapse between one Buddha and the next cannot be expressed in terms of years. We must not try to do that. It is enough to say that it is a very long time.

Books state that venerable Maha Moggallana, the second of the two great disciples of the Buddha, famous for miraculous powers, wanted to go round the universe. The Buddha was not supportive of the idea. Anyway, he tried. Having seen some universes, he was still going. The Buddha had to recall him using his own powers and advised him about the futility of that endeavour.

The mistake was trying to translate worldly experience to deal with infinity.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DHAMMA TEACHER

We must try to teach of things that we experience. Leave things at infinity where they are.

ILLUTRATIONS

- 1 Most times we talk about the next life. According to the teachings of the Buddha, our main concern must be with what we do in this life.
- 2 Discursive minds try to analyse things far away and develop theories. We should be paying attention to the present moment, and our current experience.
- 3 If we think, speak and act with mindfulness right now, whatever happens later will be resolved. That is the best we can do.

WARNING

Thinking about serious problems endlessly is a dangerous pursuit. It is more sensible to do what is required right now.

Article 230

EXTRACT FROM THE QSA BOOK TITLED
INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST COUNSELLING
SECTION D CHAPTER 10

SOCIAL CONTRACTS FOR MARRIED PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

Relationships between spouses in marriage are often taken for granted. Good relationships can be cultivated. That requires knowledge, understanding, guidance and constant practice.

A standard package such as the one shown below might help. Alternatively, a better package can be drawn up to suit the individuals concerned and their culture.

The idea is to pay attention to matters usually ignored but have great value in sustaining and improving a relationship among spouses.

The package should be studied individually and together. The idea must be understood. The social contract must be reviewed in a meditative state with the mind fully applied.

TERMS OF THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

Marriage is a legal commitment where one spouse accepts the other as the partner for life. Although certain promises are made at a wedding ceremony, there are many social contracts between a married couple that need to be understood, and observed throughout the marriage, hopefully for a lifetime.

Couples need to be reminded about these obligations, and the beneficial aspects of the observance of these obligations. Some such obligations are set out below, although the list is endless. It can be customised.

The aim of this package is to promote the smooth progress of a marriage relationship. It also promotes continuing an established marriage, despite obstacles and occasional unbearable experiences.

It is believed that Siddhartha and Yasodhara were spouses in 500 previous births. That helped each other to progress spiritually. So can be a married couple living today. It is not about just existing, but about a vibrant, interesting, and productive togetherness.

This standard package of social contracts within a marriage is suggested as a working basis. The spouses together can expand and modify these considerations.

- 1 No one is perfect; this applies to each of the spouses.
- 2 The relationship is not for me to have a good time but to practise and give attention to making the other party happy and satisfied. A feeling of kindness and compassion for the other party is paramount.
- 3 In Buddhist culture, the roles of husband and wife are demarcated in the *Sigalovada Sutta*. The husband needs to look after the needs of the wife and give gifts to her in admiration.
- 4 Friction between spouses is natural. No two people can think exactly the same way
- 5 When harsh words happen to be used in a bad situation, a spouse must feel sorry and say sorry to the other. Accept that the mistake was made due to a weakness of the offending spouse. An apology needs to be given reasonably soon.
- 6 If you have lied to your spouse, learn to admit that, and discuss with your spouse how a similar situation will not arise again.
- 7 In social mixing, one spouse might feel an attraction to another person but there is no need to start an argument about it. Talk softly and settle any misunderstanding.
- 8 Wasting money is a common accusation made against a spouse. One solution is to agree on the way incomes are held in banks, and expenses are paid out of the accounts, ensuring that household expenses are met reasonably by both spouses, while each can keep an agreed amount for personal use.

One spouse might be a squanderer, and the other stingy. Such facts need to be acknowledged and worked around.

It is not sensible for one spouse to dictate to the other in matters relating to finances. Open discussion, negotiation and coming to an amicable agreement regarding finances are very important.

- 9 Due attention must be given to the needs of children.
- 10 Never have arguments in the presence of children, even when they are quite small. Children may feel fearful and sad in such circumstances.
- 11 Never use a child for your advantage.
- 12 Always show admiration of your spouse for his or her capabilities. Everyone likes to be admired.
- 13 Never look down on the spouse for any reason or make derogatory comments in public or private.
- 14 Never dislike or hate the spouse for a fault but try softly to communicate and educate.
- 15 The level of intelligence might not match between spouses. That should be understood as a part of nature but must not be emphasised by the stronger spouse.
- 16 Some spouses though good inside, might not be able to articulate well.
- 17 In a marriage think of the future well-being of the children
- 18 In many marriages the mother-in-law or the father-in-law might be creating problems. They belong to an earlier generation and have different ideas. King Suppabuddha, Yasodhara's father always obstructed Siddhartha. Even a *Bodhisatta* could not escape this calamity. If this happens to you, learn how to get around it. Never try to teach a lesson to them.
- 19 If a mother-in-law has problems with the daughter-in-law, use your wisdom to deal with it. This will never be eliminated in this world.
- 20 Women carrying big dowries tend to look down on their husbands as poor people. Husbands need to appreciate the wealth of the family, and show appreciation of that, for the sake of children. This can be a problem in Asian and sub-continental families.

- 21 In Asian countries political power can be very imposing. Never forget that these things are temporary.
- 22 In the sub-continental countries (e.g. India and Sri Lanka), tribal superiorities are often valued. Remember the Buddha's teaching:
One is not a *brahmin* (high caste) by birth
One is not lowly by birth
One is superior owing to actions only
One is inferior due to actions only
- 23 Tribal feelings are an anachronism. Never pay heed to these things. Admire a person for his or her thoughts, words, and actions only.
- 24 Grievances of seniors need to be noticed and actioned upon
- 25 Each spouse must learn to let go unpleasant experiences. Remembering these and mulling over these endlessly is the worst thing one can do.

FAILURES ARE POSSIBLE

Failures are possible. Constant goodwill meditation can help in avoiding failures. A Buddhist Counsellor might be able to help in resolving problems.

FREE DHAMMA BOOKS AND DHAMMA LESSONS

PRINTED BOOKS (small stocks now available in some temples)

- 1 Buddhist Chaplaincy, 182 Pages in size A4 (about 275 copies available)
- 2 Buddhist Psychology-the building blocks, First edition, 168 pages in size A5 (only 10 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 157 pages A4)
- 2 Family Peace-the Buddhist Way (about 70 pages A4)
- 3 Primary Level Dhamma books Grades 1 to 6 (about 80 pages A4 each book)

- 4 Secondary level Dhamma books Grades 7 to 12 (about 80 pages A4 each book)

The Buddha Dhamma book for Grade 1 was published in October 2023.

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 for more information.

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

Issued by the President of QSA, Reverend James Wilson

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