

# BMMV digest

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*For Non-Muslims only*

Sabbadānam Dhammadānam Jināti ~ The Gift of Dhamma excels all other Gifts



## World Peace Pagoda, Lumbini, Nepal

The Lumbini Shanti Stupa/Peace Pagoda in Nepal was constructed by Buddhist monks of the Japanese Nipponzan Myohoji organisation at a cost of a million US dollars and was dedicated in November 2001 at the Buddhist pilgrimage site in Kapilavastu district, Lumbini, Nepal. A Peace Pagoda is a Buddhist stupa; a monument to inspire peace, designed to provide a focus for people of all races and creeds, and to help unite them in their search for world peace. The stairs at the stupa lead to three different levels. The stupa is whitewashed and the floor is stone-paved. It has four large golden statues of Buddha facing four directions.

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## Meditation Tips by Bhante H Gunaratana (Bhante G)

“Occasionally when you sit in meditation, the mind is completely chaotic. This may be due to something that happened prior to meditation session, such as excessive stimulation during the day or something that caused overwhelming anxiety, the mind is so agitated, with images and emotions coming so quickly, that you have hardly dealt with one negative thought before you face the next. You may experience what I have heard students call a “multiple hindrance attack”. That is when several hindrances arise and take over the mind, one after another. If you accept the mind running around in this way, it can become a difficult habit to overcome. It is better to use everything you’ve got to calm the mind.

If all of the usual methods fail in such a case, there is another method: try counting your breaths. This is a trick to get the mind focused on one thing. First count the breaths from 1 to 10; then from 10 to 1. Next count from 1 to 9 and from 9 to 1. Continue counting to 8, to 7, and so forth until you reach 1 to 2 and from 2 to 1. Here’s the stern part: If the mind wanders even the tiniest bit while you are counting, you must start over. You continue this counting until you can complete the entire cycle of counting without distraction; then you can return to your usual method of meditation. This is a challenge. Starting over again with each distraction causes the mind to get tired of running around.

Even though this method is strong, some people may suffer too much chaos even to do the counting. In that case, make the chaos itself the object of meditation. Watch as the chaos changes.”

## Reflections on Metta

*By one who is skilled in goodness  
And who knows the path of peace:  
Let them be able and upright,  
Straightforward and gentle in speech,  
Humble and not conceited,  
Contented and easily satisfied,  
Unburdened with duties and frugal in their ways.  
Peaceful and calm, and wise and skillful,  
Not proud and demanding in nature.*

*Let them not do the slightest thing  
That the wise would later reprove,  
Wishing in gladness and in safety,  
May all beings be at ease.*

*Whatever living beings there may be,  
Whether they are weak or strong, omitting none,  
The great or the mighty, medium, short, or small,*

*The seen and the unseen,  
Those living near and far away,  
Those born and to be born,  
May all beings be at ease.*

*Let none deceive another  
Or despise any being in any state.  
Let none through anger or ill-will  
Wish harm upon another.*

*Even as a mother protects with her life  
Her child, her only child,  
So with a boundless heart  
Should one cherish all living beings,  
Radiating kindness over the entire world*

*Spreading upwards to the skies  
And downwards to the depths,  
Outwards and unbounded,  
Freed from hatred and ill-will;  
Whether standing or walking, seated,  
Or lying down – free from drowsiness –  
One should sustain this recollection,  
This is said to be the sublime abiding.*

*By not holding to fixed views,  
The pure-hearted one, having clarity of vision,  
Being freed from all sense-desires,  
Is not born again into this world.*

*(Extracted from Amaravati Monastery chanting book)*

# Feature

## Karma and the Three Refuges



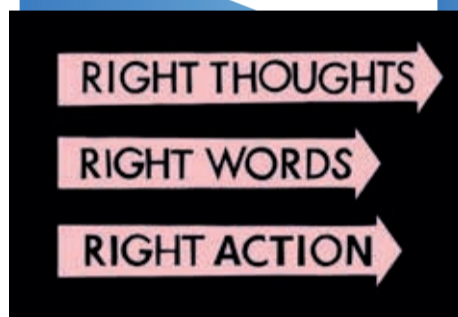
*(an excerpt from a chapter in the book 'A Step in the Right Direction – Teachings of Ven Bhikkhuni Dr K Kusuma')*

The Buddha said 'There is good karma and bad karma and there is good vipaka and bad vipaka? Results. If you do good karma, you get happy results and if you do bad karma, you get unhappy results. Those who do physical misconduct by way of body (kayasankhara), or by way of speech, or by way of thought – these are the three ways people can make karma – no other way – either by thinking, by speech or by action.

### Right thinking – right speech, right action

Generally, when the thinking is right, speech and action are right. When the thinking is wrong, speech and action are wrong. If it is right action, right speech and right thinking then you do good karma, for which you get happy results. But if it is wrong action, you get unhappy results and you will be born into pain and suffering.

Then the Buddha said 'Kamassakomhi'. I am born out of karma, that is to say, kamma yoni – my birthplace is karma. Normally we say that the birthplace is the birth canal of the mother. The Buddha says no, that is not your birthplace. Kamma is your birthplace. Because of what you have done, you have come into this world, therefore you have inherited your kamma. And that kamma is your relation – kammabandhu. It is the Karma that gives you happiness. Karma now here means results of Karma. You have done good Karma in the past and you get happy results. Buddha says your Karma is your relation, that is to say, you are getting happiness not because of father and mother and other things. All your happiness and unhappiness is because of your Karma. The fact that you are born into this particular father and mother is the cause of Karma. Therefore all the happiness and unhappiness you get in this birth is also Karma bound. Why did you get this father and mother? You could have gotten another father and mother in a different country. A dog father, a dog mother, or something like that? So you are born into this as a result of your previous Karma. Therefore Karma is your relation. It is not your father and mother who are giving you happiness and unhappiness. Normally we think our father and mother and others are giving us happiness, but no. You have brought enough Karma to deserve the happiness you have got, to deserve the father and mother you have got, to deserve the unhappiness you have got.



### Living according to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha

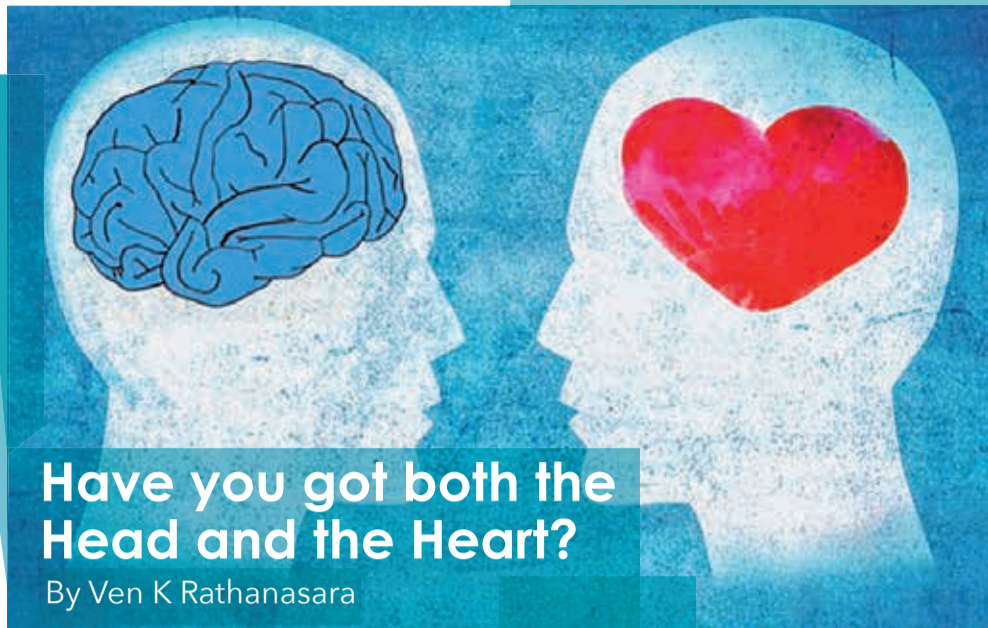
So it is your own good Karma or bad Karma that you are born into these parents, so therefore your relations are your Karma (not your parents). You got the parents because of your Karma, you see that? And then the Buddha says Karma is your refuge. Normally we say 'Buddha saranam' – we go for refuge to the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha; now the Buddha says Karma is your refuge – you do good Karma and you get happy results. Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha cannot give you refuge. If you live according to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha then you make good Karma and that is your refuge. Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha will show you the path. If you follow the path, then you make the right Karma, which is going to be your refuge. Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha alone cannot do anything. You have to do it, but they will show you the way. So finally your refuge is your Karma. You cannot pray to the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha and ask for refuge. You can only follow them. Buddha always says, "I am only a teacher. I am only showing you a way. I cannot release you from suffering". If the Buddha could have, He would have taken all of us to Nibbana. He is so kind and gentle but He cannot do that. That is why He said, 'I am only a teacher, you have to do it'. If the Buddha could, He would have taken Devadatta (a cousin of the Buddha, who tried to kill him) from that misery, but he could not. All of us would have met the Buddha but he could not help us if we were not willing to take the training. So unless, and when we do, the right Karma according to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, becomes our refuge (Kamma Bandhu, Kamma Patisarana). Whatever Karma I do, whatever thing I commit by way of thinking, by speech or by action, I am the heir to that Karma. I will have to suffer the consequences, good or bad. It is extremely individual. We cannot blame the world, we cannot blame our parents, we cannot blame anybody for what we do, for what we inherit, for what we think and speak. From morning till night, what do we do? From the moment we open our eyes in the morning until we go to sleep, what do we do? If somebody asks you what you do from morning till night, you are either thinking, speaking or doing something. So you are making Karma throughout the day, you are making good or bad Karma. Up to you. If you know what is good, you will be careful to do that. If you do not know? Say you are born into a fishing family or in the Arctic or Antarctic somewhere. You are a human being but you do not know the Dhamma, so you behave the way they do because you are ignorant. So it is one in a million chance that you are born into a human being and you get the right kind of refuge, in a sense you get the influence of the right advice of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. Without that, you will be listening to all kinds of advice. Somebody will say God created the world, God is giving punishment and happiness, and they pray to God from morning till night to give me this, give me that, give me the other. Poor God; he does not know what to do, he cannot help it. Buddhist never pray because they know that they are making Karma and they are responsible for their results. We only respect the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha by worshiping only to say, that I am loyal to the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha because they are showing me the right path. So imagine, how many million, trillion people are not able to get this right path and they do all kinds of miserable things and they think they are doing very well. So it is very important to learn the Dhamma and very important to have the right view because then the thinking is right, speech is right, action is right.

Source : "A Step in the Right Direction" – Teachings of Ven Bhikkhuni Dr. Kolonnawe Kusuma from a 9-day Meditation Retreat



About the Author: Ven Bhikkhuni Dr Kusuma is a fully ordained Buddhist nun from Sri Lanka who has pioneered the re-establishment of the Theravada Female Buddhist Order in Sri Lanka in 1996 thus becoming the very first woman in Sri Lanka to don the robes of a Bhikkhuni after a lapse of 1,000 years. This book is available at the Buddhist Maha Vihara.

## Feature



### Have you got both the Head and the Heart?

By Ven K Rathanasara

**H**ead represents wisdom, understanding, and intellectual capacity. Heart, on the other hand, represents the human values and wonderful virtuous qualities such as compassion, goodwill, friendship, generosity, and loving kindness. In short, heart represents virtues, while brain represents wisdom. Just like a bird needs a pair of wings to fly, we need both virtues and wisdom, in order to lead a pure righteous life and be a noble human being in the society.

What will be the outcome if one were to develop only the heart qualities or virtues but ignore the development of the brain qualities or wisdom?

#### Outcome of Heart qualities

In such a case, good virtues will be cultivated, but without wisdom, it is possible that one might eventually be victimised by others. The danger of developing heart qualities without brain qualities, is that one might be taken advantage of by evil, wicked and immoral people who might find virtues such as compassion, goodwill, and gratitude as weaknesses. If one were to face such situations in life, sufferings occur - one would feel unhappy that his good qualities were being taken advantage of, and it is possible that anger, hatred, jealousy, cruelty, and many other defilements might arise in one's mind, possibly leading to destructive actions that result in suffering for oneself and others. Hence, cultivation of virtues must go hand in hand with wisdom.

Another danger of developing only the heart qualities, is that it is possible one might become a nuisance to the society due to the lack of common sense. Whilst compassionate acts of care and love for animals are indeed virtuous, such acts could lead to public nuisance if not properly managed or done with wisdom. For example, some might scatter food in public places or even in their houses to feed birds, or stray cats and dogs without concern for hygiene, leading to the breeding of ants, cockroaches, and rats which could cause the spread of diseases. Likewise, some do not remove or clean the dirty water out of misguided compassion, resulting in the breeding of mosquitos that could spread diseases such as dengue.

While generosity through giving is good, this needs to be practised with wisdom and understanding of the nature and character of the beneficiary. Suppose a person who is addicted to drugs needs money, giving money to such a person who will use the money for such addictions will only cause more harm than good. Similarly, if donations were made to support negative causes, such acts of giving are done without wisdom, as they would bring more harm than good to oneself and society. Likewise, although being friendly is a good and virtuous quality, one needs wisdom in discerning the type of friends one associates with. Developing friendships with bad companies such as criminals or drug addicts will lead one to eventually become a part of the bad influence, and that is not being wise.

So heart qualities must be developed with brain qualities, otherwise, one will suffer in this life, create suffering for the others, and become a nuisance to the society.

On the other hand, what will the outcome be in the other extreme where one develops brain qualities or wisdom with little or no regard to heart qualities or virtues?

#### Outcome of Head Qualities

One could become very clever, smart, intelligent, cunning, and wicked, ruthlessly willing to do anything just to achieve one's objectives, without caring for anyone in the society, and without regard for whether it is right or wrong. Such a person who focuses mainly on achievements could develop into being a materialist, who would act at all costs, going to the extent of denying the importance of virtues. Such is the danger of developing only the brain qualities.

For example, a person who is very skilled in handling computers but who lacks heart qualities could misuse his intelligence and knowledge in technology to cause harm, such as by engaging in cyber-crimes, spreading viruses to computers, or hacking into others' accounts to steal important data, possibly resulting in losses to both institutions and individuals. Similarly, an accountant who has good mathematical skills, if appointed to a leadership position in a financial institution, could misuse his skills to commit fraud and steal the money, if he does not have virtues.

The Buddha teaches that for people who only have brain qualities but who do not have heart qualities, whatever skills that they have, these skills are only going to destroy themselves and the world. Hence, the Buddha encourages us to develop both the heart and brain qualities, i.e. both compassion and wisdom.

Developing head qualities is emphasised in many materialistic societies. The younger generations who grow up in such societies are often pressed by parents to develop mainly the brain qualities but ignoring the heart qualities. Many parents expect their children to perform and excel in school, and achieve the materialistic aspects of life, often at the expense of developing the heart qualities. Sadly, some children could not cope with such pressures and ended up committing suicide. For those who made it, even though they might become very intelligent and successful, they operate like computers without heart qualities. With little understanding of human virtues, their desire to continue to measure up to their success by gaining more materials might lead them to obsessions, such as plotting to amass the fortunes of their parents, thereafter abandoning them in their old age. In such instances, the parents have only themselves to blame for not developing the heart qualities of their child in the growing years. Therefore, parents are encouraged to train their child not only to develop the brain qualities but also the heart qualities, both are equally important.

So how does religion come into play at this juncture? Generally speaking, religions encourage the heart qualities, that of faith and virtues. Buddhism, however, has the perfect balance between heart and brain, and encourages the development of both heart and brain qualities. Evidently, in the first two factors of the Noble Eightfold Path, we start with having Right Understanding (instead of mere faith) which requires brain qualities such as analysing, scrutinising, questioning, and learning, and Right Thought which comes from developing heart qualities through thoughts of generosity, loving kindness (or goodwill), and compassion. This provides the process of transformation for all practising Buddhists to train and develop both head and heart qualities right from the beginning, eventually leading to the attainment of enlightenment when these qualities are developed to the maximum level.

Source : <https://dhammadhamma.org/2018/08/26/have-you-got-both-the-head-and-the-heart/>

*About the Writer : Ven K Rathanasara received his higher ordination (Upasampadā) in 1998 at the Malwatu Mahā Vihāraya in Kandy, Sri Lanka. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (Special) degree in Mass Communication, a Postgraduate Diploma in Fundamental Buddhist Studies, and a Master of Arts degree in Buddhist Studies, from the University of Kelaniya. Ven Rathanasara joined the famous Sri Lankaramaya Buddhist Temple in Singapore as Resident Monk in 2001. After sixteen fruitful years at the temple, in 2018, he heralded a new beginning in his lifelong monastic career by dedicating full time to teaching the Dhamma at the Dhammadhamma Buddhist Society in Singapore, where he is the Founder and Spiritual Advisor*



By Barbara O'Brien

### Third Precept: No Sexual Misconduct

I will be honest and sincere in my relationship with others, nurturing true love and compassion.



Most religions have rigid, elaborate rules about sexual conduct. Buddhists have the Third Precept—in Pali, “Kamesu micchacara veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami”—which is most commonly translated as “Do not indulge in sexual misconduct” or “Do not misuse sex.” However, for laypeople, the early scriptures are hazy about what constitutes “sexual misconduct.”

#### Monastic Rules

Most monks and nuns follow the many rules of the Vinaya Pitaka. For example, monks and nuns who engage in sexual intercourse are “defeated” and are expelled automatically from the order. If a monk makes sexually suggestive comments to a woman, the community of monks must meet and address the transgression. A monk should avoid even the appearance of impropriety by being alone with a woman. Nuns may not allow men to touch, rub, or fondle them anywhere between the collar-bone and the knees.

Clerics of most schools of Buddhism in Asia continue to follow the Vinaya Pitaka, with the exception of Japan.

Shinran Shonin (1173-1262), founder of the Jodo Shinshu school of Japanese Pure Land, married, and he also authorized Jodo Shinshu priests to marry. In the centuries after his death, the marriage of Japanese Buddhist monks may not have been the rule, but it was a not-infrequent exception.

In 1872, the Meiji government of Japan decreed that Buddhist monks and priests (but not nuns) should be free to marry if they choose to do so. Soon “temple families” became commonplace (they had existed before the decree, but people pretended not to notice) and the administration of temples and monasteries often became family businesses, handed down from fathers to sons. In Japan today—and in schools of Buddhism imported to the West from Japan—the issue of monastic celibacy is decided differently from sect to sect and from monk to monk.

#### The Challenge for Lay Buddhists

Lay Buddhists—those who are not monks or nuns—must also decide for themselves whether the vague precaution against “sexual misconduct” should be interpreted as an endorsement of celibacy. People mostly take cues about what constitutes “misconduct” from their own culture, and we see this in much of Asian Buddhism.

We can all agree, without further discussion, that non-consensual or exploitative sex is “misconduct.” Beyond that, what constitutes “misconduct” within Buddhism is less clear. The philosophy challenges us to think about sexual ethics very differently from how most of us have been taught.

#### Living the Precepts

The precepts of Buddhism are not commandments. They are followed as a personal commitment to Buddhist practice. Falling short is unskillful (akusala) but not sinful—after all, there is no God to sin against.

Furthermore, the precepts are principles, not rules, and it is up to individual Buddhists to decide how to apply them. This takes a greater degree of discipline and self-honesty than the legalistic, “just follow the rules and don’t ask questions” approach to ethics. The Buddha said, “be a refuge unto yourself.” He taught us to use our own judgment when it comes to religious and moral teachings.

Followers of other religions often argue that without clear, explicit rules, people will behave selfishly and do whatever they want. This sells humanity short. Buddhism shows us that we can reduce our selfishness, greed, and attachments, that we can cultivate loving kindness and compassion—and in doing so, we can increase the amount of good in the world.

A person who remains in the grip of self-centered views and who has little compassion in his heart is not a moral person, no matter how many rules he follows. Such a person always finds a way to bend the rules to disregard and exploit others.

#### Specific Sexual Issues

Marriage. Most religions and moral codes of the West draw a clear, bright line around marriage. Sex inside the line is good, while sex outside the line is bad. Although monogamous marriage is ideal, Buddhism generally takes the attitude that sex between two people who love each other is moral, whether they are married or not. On the other hand, sex within marriages can be abusive, and marriage doesn’t make that abuse moral.

Homosexuality. You can find anti-homosexual teachings in some schools of Buddhism, but most of these reflect local cultural attitudes more than they do Buddhism itself. In the several schools of Buddhism today, only Tibetan Buddhism specifically discourages sex between men (though not between women). The prohibition comes from the work of a 15th-century scholar named Tsongkhapa, who probably based his ideas on earlier Tibetan texts.

Desire. The Second Noble Truth teaches that the cause of suffering is craving or thirst (tanha). This doesn’t mean cravings should be repressed or denied. Instead, in Buddhist practice, we acknowledge our passions and learn to see that they are empty, so they no longer control us. This is true for hate, greed, and other negative emotions. Sexual desire is no different.

In “The Mind of Clover: Essays in Zen Buddhist Ethics,” Robert Aitken Roshi says that “[f]or all its ecstatic nature, for all its power, sex is just another human drive. If we avoid it just because it is more difficult to integrate than anger or fear, then we are simply saying that when the chips are down we cannot follow our own practice. This is dishonest and unhealthy.”

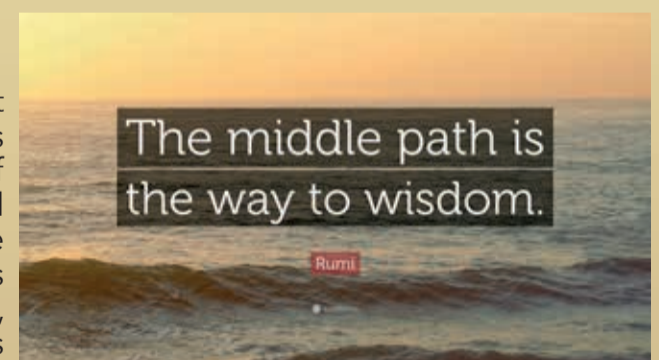
In Vajrayana Buddhism, the energy of desire is redirected as a way to achieve enlightenment.

#### The Middle Way

Western culture at the moment seems to be at war with itself over sex, with rigid puritanism on one side and licentiousness on the other. Always, Buddhism teaches us to avoid extremes

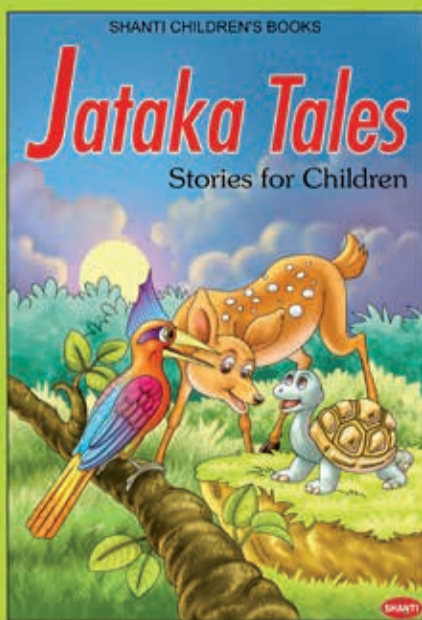
and to find a middle way. As individuals, we may make different decisions, but it is wisdom (panna) and loving-kindness (metta), not lists of rules, that show us the path.

Source : <https://www.learnreligions.com/sex-and-buddhism-449730> O'Brien, Barbara. “What Buddhism Teaches About Sex.” Learn Religions, Feb. 11, 2020, [learnreligions.com/sex-and-buddhism-449730](https://www.learnreligions.com/sex-and-buddhism-449730).



About the Writer : Author, writer and an expert on Zen Buddhism, Barbara O'Brien began her formal study in Buddhism in 1988. O'Brien has actively engaged in meeting Buddhists from other traditions and cultures to learn about the many forms of Buddhism. She has written extensively about Buddhism, and religion in general, and how it impacts politics and culture.

## Feature



### JATAKA stories - Myth or Fact?

The Teachings of Buddhism are now so vast that there is much room for concern over what might be the original and basic teachings of Gautama, and what might be additions through the ages, made by many interpreters, particularly since it must be remembered that nothing of the Teachings was put into written form until several centuries after the Great Maha Parinibbana.

One such segment of Buddhist literature about which there is much controversy as to its authenticity, is the JATAKA, the Birth Stories of the Buddha, presuming to be an historical account of the previous incarnations of Gautama Buddha, as he passed through many forms of life, including once as a frog, a hare and a dog; twice as a pig, four times as a cock and a serpent; six times as an elephant, ten times as a lion, eleven times as a deer.

Also Gautama was reported in the JATAKA to have lived, among other forms, twice as a thief, once as a devil-dancer; twenty times as Indra and twenty-four times as a Brahmin, fifty eight times as a king, eighty-three times as an ascetic; four times as Maha Brahma. But never once as a woman. Thus through a long chain of successive personalities, Gautama made his way to Perfect Buddhahood, where no further births were necessary.

#### Birth Stories

These birth stories have accordingly been read with both critical and sympathetic interest. Probably the greater part of Buddhists believes that these Stories were first taught by Gautama himself, but this is an error. Nowhere is there any record of Gautama having presented these stories himself. As a matter of fact, they were first presented as holy legends, decades after his passing. Indeed, Gautama taught that there is no soul existing separately from the body after death that man should renounce the 'clinging to existence'. How then could there be a soul-transmigration in re-incarnated forms?

The JATAKA Tales are the most ancient and complete collection of folk-lore extant in the world today. They are ancient, but not ancient history. (It should be remembered that historical dates have always been the weak point in Indian literature and history). The tales are at least as old as the Buddhist canon compiled at the Council of Vesali, 377 BC.

"After the death of their Master, the followers of Gautama, as is usual, in devotion identified Gautama's most memorable characteristics with personages of folk-lore already extant in India, Gautama Buddha was identified with certain renowned ancient sages in an effort to relate their Teacher as a successor to earlier prophets, identifying him with the heroes of popular fables."

The historical Buddha was never shown in old sculpture directly, and it was only much later that a composite picture of these several earlier sages was presented as picturing the Buddha, and Gautama became a superhuman, deified by the Birth Stories. Much of this lore preserved its Indian origin more than the latter Buddhist pattern, as is abundantly clear in the content of the Tales - explaining why many Buddhists find the Tales difficult to understand as "Buddhist" Tales.

When the Council of Vesali was held it was true that a great schism had taken place already in early Buddhism. It was here that the Canon was re-arranged.

The Dipavamsa reported changes made at the Council. It was here that stress was given to the Bodhisatta ideal of the Bodhisatta developing through many efforts and lives to become eventually a Buddha. Already, in this Council, the Northern Buddhists had

changed the face of primitive basic Buddhism. Some years later than this Council, the Birth Stories were taken to Ceylon by Mahinda, and there, later translated into Sinhalese by Buddhaghosha in the 5th Century, A.D. It is this version which is most well-known today, there is, however, a shorter collection than the whole voluminous book compiled at the Council.

#### Still Exist

A few early copies of the Birth Stories still exist in Tibet, Nepal and elsewhere. Arya Sura, the Northern poet, who transcribed some 24 of the Stories before his death, intermingled and added a flowery prose to them. Sura evidently lived before 434 AD when a Chinese translation was made from his translation from Pali into Sanskrit.

Prof. J. S. Speyer translated Sura's collection in 1895. Prof. Rhys Davids made a translation in 1880; in 1882 R. Morris translated the Cariya Pitaka for the Pali Text Society; in 1877 V. Fausball translated the Stories into seven volumes in London; and in London in 1895, E. B. Cowell translated them in six volumes at Cambridge; also in London (Oxford) H. Kern made a similar effort (in 1895).

Aside from these scholarly translations, the JATAKA Tales are found in widely separated and different expressions the world over, in the common miracle plays and religious dramas, and in the fables of many lands. Through a curious migration of fables from country to country, the Stories have spread into fields which are not always aware of their origin. For instance, Aesop's Fables were not written by Aesop, but were put together in the 14th Century at Constantinople, by the Monk Planudes, who drew largely from JATAKA.



Aesop's Fables that is not written by Aesop

#### Very Popular

If one does not lose sight of the truth that the JATAKA Buddhist Stories were never taught, or probably even known, one can nevertheless derive great benefit from a study of these Tales. There is a certain amount of truth and morality in all Fables. These Buddhist Birth Stories must be considered in three aspects: 1. The Tales themselves. 2. The frame-work of their origin and development. 3. Their interpretation on the widest and deepest scale.

"The stories have a loftiness of moral thought, and beyond a belief in metempsychosis, they have a wider claim than mere externalism. If forms are often exaggerated, the spirit of the Dhamma is there also. Something more than a craving for existence in future births is there. The Teachings run through every Story."

The virtues of love and pity are stressed. A mother who loves only her own child learns a boundless love for all beings even for all sentient life. When a Buddhist can feel the suffering of pain even of animals, he understands and pities the whole sentient world. One of the most popular of the Stories is when Gautama as a Bodhisatta in a previous birth, gave his body to be eaten by a mother tiger so that she could nourish her starving young.

Another much recited story of the Buddha's earlier life was as King Vessantara, when he gave to everyone who asked for, even his prized possessions, including a valuable white elephant, and in the end, gave even his children. Incidentally, it is reported that Arya Sura, the Poet and translator of the Stories, also gave his life to be devoured by a starving tigress.

In the Stories, which certainly need not be rejected out-of-hand, one can perceive the Teaching of an unbroken chain of cause-and-effect, of justice in a world of the suffering of the innocent.

The Stories of the Buddha's continuing lives need not be points in history, but are rather situations in all lives which arise many times. The Buddha is more than a human figure in time.

Source : <https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/dkbs-media-files/eRESOURCES/Dhamma-Articles/DKBS-DA-Jataka-Birth-Stories-Of-The-Buddha.pdf>

# BMV News & Events

## Past Events in December 2020, January and February 2021.

### 1. Virtual Dhamma Sharing (Streamed online via BMV Public Facebook Page)



**Bhante D Vijitharathana Thera (Sri Lanka)**

Sunday, 13th December

**Mandarin Dhamma Talk** - Verse 5 & 6 of the Dhammapada

Sun 3rd January

**Mandarin Dhamma Talk** - Verse 7 & 8 of the Dhammapada



**Bhante N Samitha Thera (USA)**

Friday, 18th December

**Bahiya Sutta** (Udana 1.10)



**Sayalay Susila (Malaysia)**

Saturday, 19th December

**Mandarin Dhamma Talk** - 'Take Care of Yourself. Take Care of Others'



**Bhante W. Mahinda Thera (Sri Lanka)**

Sunday, 20th December

**Dealing with Stress** - The Buddhist Approach



**Bhante K. Suseela Thera (Sri Lanka)**

Friday, 25th December

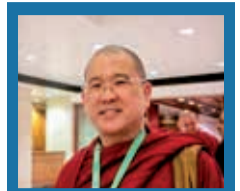
**Avaranata Sutta** - How to Listen to the Dhamma



**Bhante Dr S. Pamarathana Thera (USA)**

Sunday, 27th December

**Setting Resolutions for the New Year**



**Ven Dr Dhammapala Thera (Malaysia)**

Sunday, 10th January

**Mandarin Dhamma Talk** - Mangala Sutta Part 1



**Bhante W. Bhaddiya Thera (Sri Lanka)**

Friday, 15th January

**Acelaka Vagga Part 1** - The Buddha explains 3 Types of Practices

Friday, 22nd January

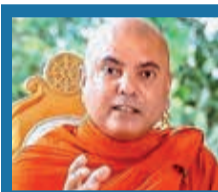
**Acelaka Vagga Part 2**



**Bhante Dr Candana Thera (USA)**

Sunday, 17th January

**Life After Death**



**Bhante P. Pannasiri Thera (Sri Lanka)**

Friday, 29th January

**Five Powers for Attaining Nibbana**



**Bhante P. Wineetha Thera (Sri Lanka)**

Sunday, 31st January

**Bala Pandita Sutta Part 1** - Discourse on the Foolish and the Wise

Friday, 5th February

**Bala Pandita Sutta Part 2**



**Bhante M. Piyarathana Thera (Sri Lanka)**

Sun, 7th February

**Alavaka Sutta** - Discourse to the Demon Alavaka

## 2. BMV Community Support Project

### A. Donations of provisions for welfare homes and needy families

An appeal went out to the BMV devotees, supporters and well-wishers in mid January for donations of provisions for welfare homes and needy families supported by the BMV on a monthly basis. We were touched by the overwhelming response in cash and kind and BMV Management extends its grateful thanks to all individuals, welfare groups and organisations for their generosity and kindness in showing empathy towards the less fortunate.



### B. Donation to Chinese Cultural Association of the Blind

BMV responded to an appeal from The Chinese Cultural Association of the Blind Malaysia and donated 50 packets of dry food to the Chairperson Mr Yeoh Kok Soon. The parcels were handed by the BMV Monthly Bojjhanga Puja Group Volunteers led by Sis Lydia and Bro Richard.



# BMV News & Events

## 3. Donation of Bedding towards new Monks Quarters

On behalf of the Bhojjanga group, Sis Lydia and Bro Richard presented 15 sets of bedding towards the newly renovated Monks Quarters. Each set consisted of 1 pillow, 2 blankets, 2 pillow cases, 1 mattress protector and 2 bedsheets.



## 4. Chinese New Year Celebrations - 12th to 13th February

BMV was opened daily from Chinese New Year eve till the 19th of February from 8am to 2pm. The government SOP was in place for 30 people to be allowed in every 30 minutes, face mask, temperature check, social distancing and contact tracing.



# PEN PORTRAITS

## PORTRAITS OF 93 EMINENT DISCIPLES OF THE BUDDHA

### No 43. Bhaddiya Maha Thera ~ The third of the vanguard of the Buddha's army

**B**haddiya was the son of a Brahmin scholar. His father was one of the holy men who prophesied that Prince Siddhartha would either be a great Ruler or a great religious leader.

King Suddhodana invited five wise men to witness his infant prince's naming ceremony and to suggest a good name for the prince. Kondanna who was the youngest of the wise men then said "The prince will be the Buddha and nothing else". Having this knowledge, Kondanna followed Prince Siddhartha into the ascetic life with four other Brahmin scholars of whom Bhaddiya was one and the rest were Assaji, Vappa and Mahanama. They became known as the Pancavaggiya (The group of Five) or Pancaka Bhadravargiya (The Group of Five Fortunate Ones).

After Siddhartha had mastered all the teachings of Alara Kalama and then Uddaka Ramaputta, he left and began practicing self mortification along with Bhaddiya and the Pancavaggiya at Uruvela. They attended to Siddhartha in the hope that he would become enlightened through self-mortification. These involved self-deprivation of food and water, and exposing themselves to the elements to near-death for six years, at which point Siddhartha abandoned this practice to follow the Middle Way.

The group of five left him in disappointment, believing he had become indulgent. Bhaddiya and his colleagues became disillusioned,



**Bhaddiya seated among the Pancavaggiya listening to the Buddha**

believing Siddhartha to have become a glutton and moved away to Sarnath near Varanasi to continue their practices.

After His Enlightenment, the Buddha visited the group at Sarnath. The Buddha preached the Four Noble Truths and the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, and they became the first five bhikkhus of the sangha. Bhaddiya became an Arahant after listening to the Anattalakkhana Sutta, Buddha's second Discourse after the Dhammacakkapavatana Sutta. He was the third to achieve arahantship after Kondanna and Vappa. Having realized arahantship, Bhaddiya and the rest requested the Buddha for permission to retire from the world, which Buddha granted with the words "ehi bhikkhu."

Long before the two Chief Disciples (Sariputta and Moggalana) entered the Order, these five monks had become Maha Arahants in accordance with their aspiration and the prophecy of the Buddha

Following the emergence of the sangha, Bhaddiya and the other monks travelled with the Buddha on foot through the Gangetic plains area of what is now Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to spread the dharma.





# Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS)

## NEW YEAR GREETINGS FROM YASA CLASS (8 & 9 YEARS OLD)

We started our e- Dhamma class on 17th January and we are having a great time bonding and sharing with our friends. Two of our classmates, Ryan Yeoh and Haeley De Silva led our class' chanting (Pali and English verses) last Sunday and many others have also volunteered to be "chanting leads". We want to thank our dear parents for their support and for giving us this priceless opportunity to learn and practice the Dhamma in an interactive way....

Here's wishing all teachers, staff, parents and students of BISDS a very happy ,healthy and safe year ahead. We would also like to wish you a fruitful and prosperous Year of the Metal Ox .

May all of you be well and happy.  
Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu.

Students of Yasa Class, BISDS.  
28 January 2021



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# Six Ways to Make A New Marriage Work



“After the honeymoon, real life sets in—budgets to balance, toilet seats left up, and in-laws coming for dinner. Relationships aren’t easy, says Susan Piver, but if we practice the six paramitas, or transcendent perfections, we can discover how to live in love.”

Dharma practitioners are taught the critical importance of developing nonattachment (noticing without holding on as phenomena arise, abide, and dissolve), understanding the only route to happiness is to think of others before ourselves, and accepting the truth of impermanence (nothing will last). This is not only a perfect prescription for spiritual awakening, but also for making our romantic relationships work.

When it comes to relationships, however, even the most basic dharma teachings are difficult to implement. As one who has been both a Buddhist practitioner and a wife for roughly fifteen years, I can tell you that in no area of life are we less likely to apply the dharma than in our love life. I don’t know about you, but although we could practice not holding on to either the good or the bad moments, thinking of our lover first, and recognizing that, no matter what, this relationship will end and we should savor each moment more fully, well, I’m more likely to be a mad grudge holder, to worry overly about whether I’m “getting my needs met,” and, when it comes to acknowledging the eventual end of my marriage, whether through anger, boredom or death, that’s just too much to ask. I need this one little area of my life to exist outside the law of impermanence. And I often catch myself pretending that it does.

This leads to a very painful situation, one where I attempt to enlist my love life in service to my deepest illusions rather than my awakening. As I look around, I see that I’m not alone in the attempt to use romantic partnership to solidify rather than liberate illusion. Yet, as anyone can tell you who has been romantically involved with someone for more than, oh, three months, relationships are custom-made for battering illusions.

Of course, relationships aren’t easy. Though we may be a genius at solving problems at work or with our friends, when problems arise in love, our elevated viewpoints evaporate and we resort to fancy, adult hissy fits. No one, it seems, is immune: not therapists, ministers, beauty queens, captains of industry, or our post-therapy selves. Forget about Smith & Wesson—relationships are the great equalizer. That said, we can work with relationships by keeping in mind the “container principle.”

The container principle is the idea that the environment you establish or find yourself in can influence or even give rise to an outcome. For example, when you practice meditation in a shrine room, it feels

different than when you practice alone at home or outside by the sea or on an airplane. When you eat your dinner standing up over the sink, it may actually taste different than when you are seated at a table with linens and lovely music. If you want to have a difficult conversation with someone, it feels one way to do it in person and another when done via email. These are all examples of containers.

When it comes to relationships, something interesting happens when we expand our view of solving problems to include not just your behavior and my behavior and a deep understanding of our family-of-origin issues, but also the environment in which our relationship is taking place. I don’t mean our house or bank accounts. Nor do I mean if only you were neater or I listened more carefully, or we lived in a different town or spent more or less time together. I’m talking about the energetic structure we create to house our love. Following this advice is not about reducing our conflicts to whatever faults or actions or moments gave rise to them. It is about expanding beyond our list of complaints, and taking refuge in a far more spacious view. We create the container in which love itself wants to live.

There are six elements that go into creating this container. If you practice these steps (called the six paramitas, or transcendent perfections) with devotion, the container arises spontaneously and, poof, you live in love, which is way better than trying to feel it. This is akin to owning the petri dish, not the mold, if you will.

### 1. Generosity

We each have some pretty distinct ideas (whether we know it or not) about what relationships are supposed to look like. When we were growing up we may have imagined what love would feel like or what it would mean to be in love, and by the time we’re thirteen or so, we have a very fancy relationship movie script to go along with our ideas. It’s like we have a lens stuck in the middle of our forehead and everywhere we look, we project our film onto the environment. Whoever walks through our screen is cast in a role. The people I see when I walk to work are extras; my boss is a villain; the new person at work is a possible lover. When we enter an actual relationship, our filmmaking goes into overdrive and at some point we cease to see the actual human we’re in a relationship with and see only how they do or don’t match our ideal. If we break up, we hope that central casting will quickly send a more suitable person to cast in the role of lover.

We all know what it feels like to treat others this way and to be treated like this—as a device rather than a person. It is very painful and, at the same time, very ordinary. You can tell when someone is looking right at you but not seeing you at all. They see their projection and, when you match it, there is harmony. When you diverge, there is discomfort. We all do this to others, all day long.

One definition of generosity in relationships is this: turn the projector off. Continuously set the intention and make the effort to separate the person you love from your projections about who they are and who you think they ought to be. Instead of holding them to your ideals, let down your guard. Open to them as they are. Release your agenda over and over. This is an incredibly generous thing to do.

### 2. Discipline

When many people hear the term discipline in the context of a relationship, they think that what is meant is a strict adherence to a system of thought that, if observed diligently, will resolve emotional conflicts.

Some systems contain wonderful counsel, such as advocating that couples always seek to compromise, or make sure to spend enough time together (or apart), or that they observe the same rituals or religion. But while these suggestions can be useful, they don’t seem to have anything to do with love. When done with an agenda, even the agenda to create a better relationship, actions fail to connect with love’s transcendent properties.



I propose an alternative view of discipline. Discipline in a relationship is to work with each individual situation that arises with integrity and openness, and also to take the largest view possible of the relationship itself, over and over. This view is rooted in trust in each other's basic sanity, that over and above our inadequacies, we each possess a kind of brilliance.

When you and your beloved trust in each other's goodness and basic sanity first and the truth of your flaws second, there is the possibility that the difficulties you experience will self-liberate. So when you find yourself becoming mired in a theory about why a difficulty has arisen, try this. Don't abandon the theory. Look at it. Examine your views. Take them seriously. Then let them go. The discipline here is to come back to your beloved with open eyes and to see them as they are right now, without having an agenda to change them.

### 3. Patience

Patience doesn't just mean tolerance for your beloved's frailties, nor does it mean maintaining hope in the face of repeating arguments over the exact same issues. It has more to do with tolerance for your own frailties first, a willingness to take on and work with your own mind. You could say that all relationship difficulties begin with the unwillingness to face our own emotions. It is painful to me when I feel inadequate, unappreciated, invisible—and this pain is real. However, it is a mistake (i.e. not helpful) to assign responsibility for my feelings to my husband, no matter how much of a jerk I may perceive him to be in any given moment. Patience has more to do with becoming solely and always responsible for my emotional reactions.

The sitting practice of meditation is the most direct method I know for adapting such a relationship to your own inner life. I'm pretty sure that without it I wouldn't have been able to make space for the extraordinary holograms of emotion that come and go during even a single day as partners.



### 4. Exertion

When I was getting married, I read a lot of books and articles about how to have a successful relationship. I mean, look around. Not many people get it right. I got so into the topic I even wrote one such book myself, *The Hard Questions: 100 Essential Questions to Ask Before You Say "I Do."* (I like to prepare.)

Almost all of the advice I got from books, friends, and family boiled down to a single dictum: Relationships take work. I have to say, this did not make me happy. Not that I have anything against work, but when I looked at my sweet boyfriend and imagined that all the effortless love, passion, and delight we took in each other was somehow, through marriage, going to become a kind of drudgery, I thought WTF? How does that happen? And how can I avoid it at all costs?

The Buddhist view of exertion provides a few clues. Rather than implying drudgery, exertion is synonymous with joy. It's not about working hard to make problems go away or trying your very best to make an effort at all times. It is so much simpler than that. Here, exertion is the noble act of taking an interest. When you get along, you take an interest in that. When you don't, you take an interest in that, too. You take an interest when you are able to connect with your beloved openly, gracefully, and easily, and also when you connect to them with grumpiness, stupidity, and a sense of entitlement. Taking an interest is not about reductive analysis or figuring out what is going on so you can dispatch it. It is a way of opening to your own experience—and to your beloved—with tenderness and honesty. It is the act of continuously disposing of your agenda to instead live your experience fully, which gives rise to vitality, energy, and joy.

Exertion, as Chögyam Trungpa defined it, is to "work unceasingly

with our own neurosis and speed." Who doesn't want to be married to someone who does that? When I know that my husband is committed to work in this way, whether he succeeds or fails in any particular instance, I not only trust him, my heart melts toward him.

### 5. Meditation

In meditation practice, the breath is the object of attention. You train yourself to notice when the mind strays from the breath, let go of what it has strayed to, and then return to the breath. Our practice in a relationship is similar, but instead of the breath, love itself is our mutual object of attention. When attention strays into rage, disconnection, resentment—or even affection, delight, and passion—we come back to love. By love, I don't mean any particular feeling. Perhaps opening is a better word. When my husband pisses me off with his unbelievably hypercritical comments, or I irritate the crap out of him with my self-absorption or complete lack of spatial awareness, I'm not suggesting that he or I drop our feelings and try to be all sweet and nice to each other. I'm suggesting that we simply open to each other. Again. Again. Again.

Who is he to me right now? Someone I love. And now? Someone I despise. Someone who bores me. Inspires me. Soothes me. And who is he right now, and right now, as best I can tell? Someone who feels happy. Sad. Alone. Confused. When it comes to love, the best you can hope for (and it is far better than whatever you may imagine, based on movies and whatnot) is not someone for whom you feel love all the time—or passion or admiration—but someone who will take your hand and step with you into the insane flood of need and desire and emotion and connection, and, eyes wide open, watch it all and feel it fully. Together.

To become each other's object of meditation is a good problem-solving methodology when it comes to love.

### 6. Wisdom

In all my thinking about the nature of wisdom, there is only one thing I can say about it with any confidence: it has nothing to do with me or my little understandings or insights, not that there is anything wrong with them. It has more to do, it seems, with giving up on the idea of "my" wisdom and instead making a relationship to wisdom itself, the field of intelligence that underlies, encapsulates, gives rise to, and is utterly indifferent to "me."

When I try to love my husband from a place of thinking I know what is going on between us or I know what love is, I fail to connect with him. When I am able to disengage from my ideas about who either of us is or should be or what love itself should look like, and meet him in a place beyond knowing, I see again and again that wisdom, groundlessness, and love are absolutely inseparable. So—whether our connection feels joyous, contentious, dull, or shocking—we begin again. And again.

After all the fights, daily irritations, and completely unpredictable disappearances and resurgences of love and desire, I have given up trying to analyze or control what makes us argue or reconcile. Instead, the best I can do is look at each disconnect, the teeny ones and the seemingly insurmountable ones, as yet another chance to step beyond my comfort zone and into a deeper (and more uncomfortable) love. When I try to hold our relationship in the cradle of loving-kindness in just this way, our difficulties become ornaments in the crazy dance of love.

Source : <https://www.lionsroar.com/six-ways-to-make-it-work-september-2011/>



*About the Writer : Susan Piver is a Buddhist teacher and the New York Times bestselling author of many books, including *The Wisdom of a Broken Heart* and *Start Here Now: An Open-Hearted Guide to the Path and Practice of Meditation*. Her latest is *The Four Noble Truths of Love: Buddhist Wisdom for Modern Relationships*. She is founder of *The Open Heart Project*, an international online meditation community.*

# Social Interest

## WOULD BUDDHA BUY A SMARTPHONE OR USE SOCIAL MEDIA?



By Christopher Cocchiarella

My interest in Buddhism began when I was a teenager. Buddha's philosophy of attachment and mindfulness (which I'll recap below) always resonated with me, although applying it is challenging in today's busy, high-tech, digital world. I've often asked myself: Were Buddha alive today, would he buy a smartphone? Would he use social media?

At first, I was tempted to answer such questions with a resounding no. The more I studied Buddhism, however, the more I realized the answer is highly nuanced. Part of my hang up was overcoming stereotypes about ascetic monks who abstain from modern technologies. Those stereotypes, I learned, misunderstood what Buddhists mean by 'attachment.' So, let's unpack that word.

### Attachment and its Discontents

A common misunderstanding about Buddhism is that it preaches a nihilistic worldview, a renunciation of everything in life, including modern technologies. In fact, Buddhism doesn't renounce life or technological conveniences at all. It does, nevertheless, remind us these conveniences are impermanent. Hence, we should be wary of 'attaching' ourselves to such things.

Buddhist texts (a.k.a. sutras) describe attachment as grasping or clinging (from the Sanskrit word *Upādāna*). Attachment, in this sense, causes frustration (*dukkha*), because everything is temporary. Nothing lasts forever. By attaching ourselves to things that are temporary, we inevitably suffer from anger or anxiety the moment we lose it. Therefore, goes the Buddhist logic, we shouldn't feel attached to them.

But what does that really mean, not to feel attached to anything? Shouldn't I feel attached to my wife, family, and friends?

### Positive vs. Negative Attachment

The problem I had with this idea was that I interpreted the word 'attachment' differently. In my culture (urban American), the word 'attachment' has positive connotations. It may mean emotionally engaged or committed (as in, "I'm attached to my spouse"). Psychologists use the phrase "Attachment Theory" to explain those natural bonds.

In Buddhist parlance, 'attachment' conveys something different. Basically, it means clinging to something in a state of negativity, like anger or anxiety (as when an angry child screams, "That's MINE").

A major "ah-ha" moment came to me once I started reading the writings of the 14th Dalai Lama. He's a master of translating concepts from East to West. For instance, in his book *From Here*

to Enlightenment, he discusses a linguistic subtlety to distinguish negative and positive attachment (probably to help Western biased folks like me). Here's what he says.

How do you understand the idea of grasping? If your engagement with others is tainted by strong attachment, craving, aversion, anger, and so forth, then that form of grasping is undesirable. But on the other hand, when you are interacting with other living beings and become aware of their needs or suffering or pain, then you need to fully engage with that and be compassionate. So there can be positive attachment in this sense of active engagement.

Buddhist masters have long used the term attachment to describe the quality of compassion for others

So, the argument goes, it's sensible to feel positively attached to things, in the sense of emotional engagement or commitment. We should avoid feeling negatively attached to things, in the sense of clinging to them out of anger or adverse emotion. In other words, positive versus negative attachment is akin to positive versus negative emotion. You can definitely see positive attachment/emotion in the Dalai Lama's expression.

### Mindfulness and its Benefits

This teaching on attachment is ancient (Buddha taught it over two millennia ago), but I believe it lends valuable insight for those of us seeking a modern philosophy of technology. Simply put, this philosophy goes as follows:

Avoid negative attachment to technology, and cultivate positive attachment.

Well then, how do we become less negatively attached, and more positively attached, to technology? The answer, according to Buddha, is mindfulness.

### Mindful Technology Use

What does it mean to be mindful? In essence, mindfulness means focusing attention on the present moment. Being mindful is being conscious of how the body and mind react to things in the world, including technology.



While engaging with smartphones and social media, for example, mindfulness may mean paying attention to how our bodily emotions and mental reactions arise as we use these technologies. In other words, pause a moment before replying to texts or posting messages online. Then ask: What effects (or karma) will my actions generate? In this way, mindfulness creates cognitive space to contemplate intelligent action (or, at the very least, less stupid action).

By contemplating action, mindfulness encourages ethical conduct too. Are our intentions good when we text about such-and-such or when we post about so-and-so; or are we just gossiping or virtue signaling? Am I checking my smartphone and social media for needed updates; or am I just looking at these technologies impulsively?

### Buddha on smartphones and social media

So to return to the original question, perhaps Buddha would buy a smartphone and use social media, but he'd engage with them mindfully. True, that's easier said than done, but using technology mindfully is an ideal goal to strive for.

Source : <https://mindfultechinics.com/buddha-smartphone-social-media/>



About the Writer : Christopher Cocchiarella is a training and development specialist with a background in technical communication and user experience.

# Buddhist Art, Symbols & Literature



**Standing Buddha  
Offering Protection,  
late 5th century,  
Gupta period, India,  
red sandstone, 33  
1116 inches high  
(The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art)**

Not all scholars accept these theories, however. It seems likely that various kinds of religious imagery, in the Buddhist, Hindu, and other contexts, were created in ephemeral materials before being created in stone. Indeed, the great sophistication and high level of sculptural expertise expressed in Maurya stone sculpture implies that the sculptural tradition was already highly developed by this time. The imperial might and Buddhist inclinations of the Emperor Asoka may have been the first great instigators of a transition to large-scale stone sculpture in India. More than three hundred years later, in the Kushana era, a strong imperial ruler bringing various outside artistic and stylistic influences to the realm, seems to have contributed to further artistic developments and a hitherto unseen profusion of sculpture created in stone.

We are not entirely sure how all Buddhist figures were used in ritual and worship. Buddhist images and sculptures originally adorned the complexes of stupas (sacred mounds containing relics) as well as monastic structures. Early Buddhist sites also incorporated indigenous imagery such as loving couples and fertility figures. Caves were hewn from rock in parts of India, creating spaces for worship rituals and community meetings, as well as monastic dwelling quarters. These rock-cut cave complexes became increasingly elaborate in terms of imagery and iconography, which was created in painting as well as carved from stone in situ. Laypersons contributed to small- and large-scale constructions as a means of acquiring merit. Votive images also developed for private use, and as souvenirs for pilgrims to sacred sites.

## Development of the Buddha Image

There is significant debate concerning the development of the Buddha image—where it first occurred, why, and when. Broadly speaking, the image of the Buddha emerged during the first few centuries C.E. in two major centers of Indian art during the Kushana period. One center of artistic production was the ancient region of Gandhara, an area that includes northwestern India as well as parts of present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan. Gandharan images have a style that is reminiscent of Hellenistic sculpture, and artists in the region were certainly influenced by the presence of Hellenistic colonies, and the large-scale trade and exchange that occurred in this cultural crossroads.

A second area of artistic production is associated with Mathura, a city that still stands to the south of Delhi. Here, artists developed a style that can be characterized as more indigenous, less concerned with naturalistic realism in the human form, and more with the symbolic qualities of the spiritual figure. Mathura artists created other kinds of religious imagery as well. It is probable that Buddhist imagery was influenced by the development of Hindu and Jain figures, and that various communities were developing images of devotional figures simultaneously.

A very significant gap of several centuries exists between the lifetime of the historical Buddha, and the creation of the first surviving images of the Buddha in stone or any other medium. The first surviving Buddhist art in stone was actually created prior to images of the Buddha himself. During the Maurya period, in the reign of emperor Asoka (272-231 B.C.E.), significant monuments and other artworks in stone were commissioned, apparently for the first time. Although stone sculpture, such as large columns surmounted by images of lions and wheels, expressed Buddhist symbolism and motifs, there are no Buddha images from this period. Many scholars have speculated that an aniconic (without idols) period existed in Buddhist art, where there was a prohibition against depicting the actual Buddha, and various symbols substituted for an explicit anthropomorphic representation. Some scholars have interpreted narrative reliefs at early Buddhist monuments to illustrate early Buddhist processions or festivals, where aniconic symbols, rather than anthropomorphic symbols, represented the Buddha.



**Seated Buddha -  
Pakistan\_ perhaps  
Jamalgari, Peshawar  
valley, ancient region  
of Gandhara. Schist.  
Courtesy of the Asian  
Art Museum**

The figure of the Buddha and attendant bodhisattvas, and other divine and semi-divine beings, became the objects of devotion themselves. As these divine personages expanded in number and complexity, they required larger stupa and temple structures to house them. Over time, the proliferation of great numbers of Buddhist images, in some cases explicitly created through mass production techniques, reflected beliefs in the meritorious repetition of various names and phrases.

In Buddhist art, the image of the historical Buddha is often labeled "Shakyamuni" (sage of the Sakya clan). This distinguishes the image of the historical Buddha, the Buddha who lived on earth during this present period, from past, future, or cosmic Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, or other divine beings.

Source : <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/beginners-guide-asian-culture/buddhist-art-culture/a/development-of-the-buddha-image>

# Projects

## LEND A HAND

The Buddhist Maha Vihara "Lend A Hand" programme is to support the undertaking of a number of crucial projects that are needed for continuous maintenance and upgrading for the benefit of all devotees. We appeal to your kind generosity to help us realise the following:

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- ii) Outside Hall Lights  
- Balance Required - RM39,400



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Balance Required – RM17,470

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**Standing Buddha Frieze**  
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SAMMA VACA (Right Speech)	Available
SAMMA AJIVA (Right Livelihood)	Available
SAMMA SATI (Right Mindfulness)	Available
SAMMA SAMKAPPA (Right Resolve)	Available
SAMMA KAMMANTA (Right Action)	Available
SAMMA VAYAMA (Right Effort)	Available
SAMMA SAMADHI (Right Concentration)	Available

PILLARS ON LEVEL 1 (5 Nos) FIVE PRECEPTS	Two out of five Sponsored
PANATI-PATA VERAMANI SIKKHA PADAM SAMADIYAMI (I observe the precept to abstain from destroying living beings)	Sponsored
ADINNA-DANA VERAMANI SIKKHA PADAM SAMADIYAMI (I observe the precept to abstain from taking things not given)	Available
KAMESU MICCHA-CARA VERAMANI SIKKHA PADAM SAMADIYAMI (I observe the precept to abstain from missing sexual misconduct)	Available
MUSAVADA VERAMANI SIKKHA PADAM SAMADIYAMI (I observe the precept to abstain from false speech)	Sponsored
SURA MERAYA-MAJJA-PAMADATTHANA VERAMANI SIKKHA PADAM SAMADIYAMI (I observe the precept to abstain from taking anything causing intoxication or heedlessness)	Available



**Dhammacakra Wheel**  
**Balance Required:**  
**RM200,000**

## General Items for Temple and Devotees' Use

Items displayed are for illustration purpose only



1. Supply and Install Visual System at 1st Floor, Puja Hall (for dhamma talks and retreats)

Estimated Cost : RM25,730



1. Meditation cushion with cushion  
Big 2 feet x 2 feet @ RM65 x 62 nos = RM4,030  
Small 10 x 14 x 46mm  
@ RM55 x 106 nos = RM5,830

Total Estimated Cost : RM 10,120



1. Wireless Head Set Microphone

Balance Required :  
RM2,300



1. Microphone System  
Estimated Cost : RM4,800



1. Mobile Stage with Skirting and Staircase

Estimated Cost : RM7,700



1. 10-seater Round Tables (50 tables)

Estimated Cost : RM9,000



1. Skirting for Banquet Table (for 100 tables - 6 ft x 2 ft)

Estimated Cost : RM9,500

### Vehicle for Transport



Balance Required: RM77,500

**CONTACT BMV ADMIN  
OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE**

**TEL:** 03 - 2274 1141 / 011- 2689 6123

**eMAIL:** info@buddhistmahavihara.org

**Account Name:**

**Buddhist Maha Vihara**

**Account Number:** 292-00-01161-8

**Bank:** Hong Leong Bank

**Tax Exempt Receipts can be issued for sponsorship**

### Partial Sponsorship

**Names of Sponsors for Amounts RM500 and above**

#### *Buddha Statues Huts*

In memory of Madam Chin Beng Choo - RM1,000

*With the merits accrued by your generous donations, May you and your family be blessed and protected by the Noble Triple Gem*

*Sadhu.....Sadhu.....Sadhu*

# Buddhist Maha Vihara (Established in 1894)

The Vihara was founded by the Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society, which is the oldest registered Buddhist Society in the country. The Vihara was elevated to that of a Maha Vihara since 1994 with the full complement of the three main sacred objects of veneration namely the Buddha image (1894); the Bodhi Tree (1911) and the International Buddhist Pagoda (1971). Being the oldest Buddhist temple in the Klang Valley, we have served the community selflessly as follows:

## Religious Activities

- Daily Buddha Puja at designated hours
- Full Moon and New Moon Buddha Puja
- Bojjangha Puja for good health
- Dhamma Talks
- Meditation Classes and Retreats
- 8 Precept Programme
- Chanting Classes
- Wesak Programme and Candle Light Procession
- All Night Chanting to invoke Blessings
- Kathina Ceremony
- Novitiate Programme



## Socio-Welfare Activities

- Weekly Feeding the Homeless and Needy
- Festive Season Midnight Aid Distribution to the Homeless
- Grocery Aid Distribution to Welfare Homes and Orang Asli Settlements
- Weekly Traditional Chinese Medicine Clinic
- Pursuing inter-religious harmony through the Malaysian Consultative Council for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST)

## Education Programme

- FREE Buddhist education for children and adults via the Sunday School since 1929.
- Systematic tertiary Buddhist education.
- Distributed more than 2 MILLION free publications and CDs/MP3/ DVD/VCD in 30 languages since the 1950s.
- Dharma for the Deaf class since 1999

## VISION

To be a leading international center for the Learning, Practise and Dissemination of the Buddha Dhamma

## MISSION

To provide a conducive environment to:

- promote scholarship and study of the Buddha Dhamma
- propagate the Buddha Dhamma
- be the focus of Buddhist activities for the larger community
- foster Theravada Buddhist cultural and traditional practices

## Six Strategic Objectives

To be the Buddhist center of choice for:

1. Pariyatti - Structured Buddhist education for children and adults.
2. Patipatti, Pativedha - Regular programmes for the practice and the realization of the Buddha Dhamma.
3. Dhammadutta - Dhamma materials for the masses locally and abroad
4. Karuna - Compassion in Action
5. Kalyana Mitrata - Networking and Fellowship with Buddhist and non-Buddhist organisations to sustain the Buddha Sasana.
6. Samajivikata - Financial viability while committing to Religious and Cultural Obligations.

## Four Ennoblers

1. Loving Kindness
2. Compassion
3. Altruistic Joy
4. Equanimity

## Motto

Go forth, for the good, happiness and welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world.

## DAILY ACTIVITIES

**Mon - Sun**  
- 6.30am - 7.30am  
- 11.30am - 12.00noon  
- 7.30pm - 8.30pm

**Daily Morning Buddha Puja**  
**Daily Noon Buddha Puja**  
**Daily Evening Buddha Puja**

## WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

**Mon, Wed, Thurs** - 8.00pm - 10.00pm  
**Tues** - 10.30am - 12.00noon  
- 8.30pm - 10.00pm  
**Thurs** - 7.30pm - 9.00pm  
**Fri** - 1.00pm - 2.00pm  
- 8.00pm - 9.30pm  
**Sat** - 8.30am - 10.30am  
- 10.30am - 11.30am  
- 2.00pm - 7.00pm  
- 7.30pm - 8.30pm  
**Sun** - 8.30am - 9.30am  
- 9.30am - 11.00am  
- 9.30am - 12.00noon  
- 10.00am - 11.30am  
- 10.00am - 2.00pm  
- 11.00am - 12.30pm  
- 1.30pm - 5.00pm  
- 2.00pm - 7.00pm  
- 3.00pm - 4.30pm  
- 5.00pm

**Meditation Class**  
**Senior Club Yoga for Beginners**  
**Qigong Practise**  
**Senior Club Yoga for Intermediate**  
**Afternoon Puja & Talk**  
**Dhamma Talk**  
**Qigong Practise**  
**Tai Chi Practise**  
**Degree & Master's in Buddhism Classes**  
**Bojjhanga Puja**  
**Morning Puja**  
**Abhidamma Class**  
**Sunday Dhamma School for Children & for Adults**  
**Dhamma Talk**  
**Traditional Chinese Medicine**  
(Every Sunday except Public Holiday)  
**Pali / Sutta Class**  
**Sinhala Language Classes**  
**Sinhala Cultural Dance Classes**  
**Diploma & Degree in Buddhism Classes**  
**Dhamma for the Deaf (fortnightly)**  
**Feeding the Needy and Homeless**

## You can donate towards our many projects :

- Dhammadutta
- Free Buddhist Publications
- Welfare Activities
- Monks Dana
- Sunday Dhamma School
- Maintenance of Shrine Hall
- K Sri Dhammananda Library
- Temple Lighting
- BISDS Building Fund

## Payments can be made via :

**BMV Office Counter** : Cash, cheques & credit cards  
**Postage** : Make cheques payable to "Buddhist Maha Vihara" & write your name & contact telephone at back of the cheque.  
**Direct Debit** : Hong Leong Bank Brickfields  
Acct : 292-00-01161-8

## BMV Statement of Accounts :

Buddhist Maha Vihara's Monthly Statement of Accounts is displayed on the Notice Board at the Reception area for public viewing. Please address all queries to the Hon. Secretary in writing.

**We accept VISA and MASTERCARD for donations. Thank You.**

Donations to Buddhist Maha Vihara operations are tax exempt.

Any donor who wants a tax exemption for computation of personal or corporate tax can request for a tax exempt receipt.

PLEASE BEWARE OF UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS SOLICITING DONATIONS.

KINDLY ENSURE THAT ALL DONATIONS ARE ISSUED WITH A NUMBERED BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA OFFICIAL RECEIPT.

**BMV OFFICE HOURS**

**MON - SAT : 9.00 am - 9.00 pm**

**SUN & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS : 9.00 am - 5.00 pm**



**BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA**

123, Jalan Berhala, Brickfields, 50470 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Tel: 03-2274 1141 H/P: 011-2689 6123

E-Mail: info@buddhistmahavihara.org

Website: www.buddhistmahavihara.org | www.bisds.org