



# SAMĀDHI

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## SAMVEGA - SPIRITUAL INSPIRATION

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*Head of the London Buddhist Vihara*

The concept of “Samvega” in Buddhism motivates us with spiritual inspiration along the path to achieve wisdom, liberating our mind from suffering. The purpose of this article is to reflect upon that concept of Samvega.

The term Samvega has a deep meaning in a spiritual sense. It could be a moment when we are reminding ourselves we are not too late to start a spiritual practice which has been forgotten although it is essential. Samvega is used in two senses.

The first is to describe a sense of shock, anxiety and spiritual urgency to reach liberation and escape the suffering of saṃsāra. When the bodhisatta was still living in the palace and saw the old man, the sick man, and the corpse, this created samvega in him. This is what motivated the bodhisatta to renounce his life of luxury and embark on his spiritual quest. In the Ariyapariyesana Sutta we read, “What if I, being subject myself to birth, seeing the drawbacks of birth, were to seek the unborn, unexcelled rest from the yoke: Unbinding? What if I, being subject myself to aging... illness... death... sorrow... defilement, seeing the drawbacks of

aging... illness... death... sorrow... defilement, were to seek the aging-less, illness-less, deathless, sorrowless, unexcelled rest from the yoke: Unbinding?” (MN 26)

In his Treatise on the Paramis, the commentator Acariya Dhammapala says that a sense of spiritual urgency is the proximate cause of the perfection of renunciation (nekkhamma). This arises when one looks deeply into the general dangers inherent in all conditioned existence within the round of birth and death (saṃsāra). These are summed up in a formulation called the eight bases for samvega, for acquiring a sense of urgency.

The eight bases of Samvega are:

1. Reflection on birth.
2. Reflection on old age.
3. Reflection on illness.
4. Reflection on death.
5. Reflecting on the miseries in one’s past existences.
6. Reflecting on the miseries of one’s future existences.
7. Reflecting upon the miseries of rebirths in lower realms of existence.
8. Reflecting on the suffering connected with the search for food.

We need spiritual maturity to see properly these bases and the underlying realities of impermanence, suffering and non-self behind these factors.

Samvega is also used in a second, slightly different sense, Samvejaniya-tthana, and was used by the Buddha to refer to a religious emotion, or feelings of reverence, which could be aroused by visiting one of four places connected with important events in the life of the Buddha: the place of his birth, the place of his enlightenment, the place of his first sermon and the place of his death. In the Mahaparinibbana Sutta the Buddha says, “Ananda, there are four places the sight of which should arouse emotion in the faithful. Which are they? Here the Tathagata was born is the first. Here the Tathagata attained supreme enlightenment is the second. Here the Tathagata set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma is the third. Here the Tathagata attained the Nibbana-element without remainder is the fourth. And, Ananda, the faithful monks and nuns, male and female lay-followers will visit those places. And any who die while making the pilgrimage to these shrines with a

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devout heart will, at the breaking-up of the body after death, be reborn in a heavenly world.” (DN16 5.8) We know these places by the following names: (a) Lumbini (now Rummind-ei in Nepal), (b) Uruvela (now Buddha Gaya in Bihar), (c) the deer-park at Isipatana (modern Saranath), near Varanasi (Benares), and (d) Kusinara.

It may not be possible for everyone to travel to India to visit the four places of pilgrimage, but even without leaving our own home we can reflect on how we are living our daily life. Are we just “going with the flow”, drifting along, lacking any real sense of purpose in our life, indulging in sensual pleasures and materialistic desires? Are we making

a genuine effort to follow the Buddha’s path or, indeed, the path of any other religious teacher? We should reflect that we have a very special opportunity at the moment. We have been born in a healthy condition and at a time when the Buddha’s teachings are known in their pure, unadulterated state. Furthermore, we are living in a part of the world where these teachings are freely available to us. We do not know where our next birth will be and whether the dhamma will still be known there. We should make the best of this precious birth because we do not know when such an opportunity will occur again. The Buddha said that it is very difficult for a being who has been born in a woeful plane to escape into a higher plane in his next birth. He gave a simple illustration. Suppose

there is a blind turtle living on the floor of the ocean, and suppose there is a ring floating on the surface of the vast ocean. Once every hundred years, the blind turtle comes to the surface. The frequency with which the turtle will put his head into the hole in the ring is greater than the frequency with which a being living in a woeful plane will be reborn in a happy plane. This should stimulate us into making the best possible use of our present circumstances to follow the Buddha’s path towards the attainment of Enlightenment.

We are today very fortunate have these rare opportunities for spiritual progress.



## BACK TO BASICS

### Purification by Knowledge and Vision by what is Path and Not-Path (Maggamaggananadassanavisuddhi)

The understanding of the distinction between the direct path and its counterfeit, the misleading path, is referred to as Purification by Knowledge and Vision of What is Path and Not-Path. When the meditator arrives at this stage, he has already passed four stages of purification. It is noteworthy that the last three purifications (i.e. Purification by Knowledge and Vision of What is Path and Not-Path, Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way, and Purification by Knowledge and Vision) have the qualification “Knowledge and Vision,” unlike the first four. Hence Purification by Knowledge and Vision of What is Path and Not-Path marks a significant turning point in the ascent through the purifications and the knowledges.

By the time the meditator reaches this Purification by Knowledge and Vision of What is Path and Not-Path, he has gained a certain degree of

clarity owing to his Purification by Overcoming Doubt. Since he has eliminated obstructive views and doubts, his power of concentration is keener than ever. Now his concentration has reached maturity. His mind is virile and energetic. He understands the nature of phenomena, manifest to him as mind-and-matter, together with their causes and conditions. He has also gained two other significant advantages.

The first is relief from stray thoughts, especially when he meditates without a break for the whole day; for such a meditator the stray thoughts arise only very rarely, and whereas earlier the stray thoughts that arose used to stay with him for a long while, now he can dismiss them summarily with a mere mental note.

The second advantage is a significant reduction in the painful feelings that arise when sitting in medita-

tion; to his great relief, the meditator finds that even though pains arise, he is now able to note them mentally without being distracted so that he can more easily keep his mind on the subject of meditation. Even severe pains now appear to him as normal events rather than disturbances. This is the “conquest of pain,” a victory with a special significance. With this new-found strength the meditator carries on mental noting with great precision. This stage marks the final phase of the Purification by Overcoming Doubt.

#### BUDDHISM IS FOR HUMAN NEEDS

*From the Buddhist point of view religion is not something that has come down from heaven to fulfil a divine purpose, but something that has grown up on earth to satisfy the deepest of human needs: peace, happiness and liberation.*

# SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP

*By Bhikkhu Bodhi*

People new to Buddhism often take the Dharma to be a purely individual path of spiritual development. They imagine that the only correct way to follow the Dharma is to lock oneself up in one's room, turn off the lights, and devote all one's efforts to practising meditation. However, if we look at the Buddhist texts, we would see that the Buddha again and again stressed the value of spiritual friendship as a support for the Buddhist path throughout the entire course of its practice. On one occasion the Venerable Ananda, the Buddha's attendant, came to the Buddha and said that in his view half the spiritual life revolves around spiritual friendship. The Buddha immediately corrected him and said, "Do not say this, Ananda! Do not say this, Ananda! Spiritual friendship is not half the spiritual life. It's the entire spiritual life!" Then, with reference to himself, the Buddha added, "In this whole world, I am the supreme spiritual friend of living beings, because it is in dependence upon me, by relying upon me, that those who are subject to birth, old age, and death become liberated from birth, old age, and death."

I want to make a distinction between two types of spiritual friendship, which might be called the "horizontal type" and the "vertical type." What I call horizontal spiritual friendship is friendship between people who are at roughly the same level in following the path; this is the friendship between "partners" in following the path, and what unites them as spiritual friends is a common dedication to following the Buddhist path.

People come together and unite as friends for various reasons. We usually take the gregarious side of human nature for granted, but to understand the nature and importance of friendship it's instructive to reflect on the factors that bring people together and unite them as friends. To do so will give us a standard for

evaluating our own friendships and seeing which are helpful and which harmful.

The Buddha says that it is because of an "element" that people come together and unite. What is meant by "element" here is the basic disposition or trait of character. Thus the Buddha says that those of inferior disposition come together and unite with those of inferior disposition, whereas those of superior disposition come together and unite.

So, if we cast our mental eye out upon the world, we can see that on a given Saturday night many people will go out to night clubs to enjoy themselves dancing; others will go to bars to enjoy drinking and chatting together; others might go to sports matches; others will get together and watch crude films. That is what unites them in friendship. So this is how people of inferior disposition come together and unite.

But others come together to listen to Dharma talks, participate in meditation retreats, and study the Dharma. In this case, what unites them is a shared dedication to the Dharma. So, the defining characteristic of spiritual friendship is dedication to a common teaching, in this case, the Buddha's teaching. This is dedication to a common teaching, dedication to the practice of the same path, dedication based on similar ideals and aspirations, unity based on engagement in similar practices. To unite with others in a common dedication to the spiritual path has a strengthening and uplifting effect upon our own practice. When we try to practise the path alone, we may feel as though we are walking through a desert. It can be very lonesome, the landscape around us is rough and barren, and we have no refreshment, no inspiration from others to replenish our energies. But when we unite with others in spiritual friendship based upon common aspirations, this rein-

forces our own energies. When we walk a common path and engage in common practices, we gain encouragement, strength, and inspiration to continue in our practice. This is like crossing the desert in a caravan: others help us carry the supplies, we can pause for conversation, we have a sense of sharing the trials along the way, and we rejoice together as we approach our destination.

When we unite with others in spiritual friendship, this not only transforms our approach to the practice, but also has an impact upon the very nature of our friendships.

In our worldly life, our friendships are very closely connected with personal attachments, which in turn are rooted in our own egocentric needs. Even when we think we love the other person, often we really love that person because this relationship in some way satisfies a deep need within ourselves. When the other person fails to satisfy this deep need within us, our feelings quickly become embittered and our love turns into resentment or even enmity.

But when we enter into a spiritual friendship based upon dedication to a common goal, this friendship helps us to transform our attachments and ego-centred drives. Even more, it helps us to transcend the very idea of the ego-self as a substantive reality. Spiritual friendship, we discover, is not about satisfying my personal needs, or even about my satisfying the other person's personal needs. It's about each of us contributing as best we can to uplift each other, and to bring each other closer to the ideals of the Dharma.

In spiritual friendship we are concerned with the other person not because of the ways that person satisfies us, but because we want to see the other person grow and develop in the direction of greater wisdom,

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greater virtue, greater understanding. We want the other person's wholesome qualities to attain maturity and bring forth fruits for the benefit of others. This is the essence of "horizontal" spiritual friendship: a keen interest in helping our friends grow and develop in the practice of the Dharma, in maturing their potential for goodness, for understanding, for wholesomeness.

The other aspect of spiritual friendship is what I call "vertical" friendship. This is the spiritual friendship between people who are at widely different levels on the path. We might also call this "asymmetrical" friendship, in that the relationship between the two members is not one of equality. This type of spiritual friendship is the bond between senior and junior followers on the path, especially the bond between a teacher and a student.

Because the relationship between the two is not equal or symmetrical, if this relationship is to be mutually beneficial, different qualities are required of the teacher and the student. In a relationship that revolves around the Dharma, the ideal teacher should have wide knowledge of the Buddhist scriptures and also abundant practical experience in following the teaching. Few teachers measure up to the ideal in all respects, and thus most students must be ready to settle for teachers who, like themselves, are still far from perfect. But two essential qualities in a teacher are a clear understanding of the fundamental principles of the Dharma and a sincere dedication to the proper practice. Besides knowledge and practical experience, the teacher must be willing or eager to teach. This willingness or eagerness to teach, however, should not stem from personal ambition or egotism, from the desire to be an outstanding teacher surrounded by a flock of admiring disciples. Rather, the teacher should regard himself as a humble transmitter of the tradition, and his desire to teach should be motivated by compassion for his students and by a sincere wish to uplift the students by improving their knowledge

and practical experience.

The teacher should treat the students with kindness and gentleness when they are well disciplined and obedient; but though he should be kind and gentle, he should not treat his students too leniently but should know how to maintain the proper distance needed to preserve his own dignity as a teacher. And if he is a true spiritual teacher and not just one who is imparting knowledge, he should be ready to discipline his students when necessary by admonishing them, pointing out their faults, and attempting to correct their faults. The student should adopt the proper attitude in relation to the teacher. In Buddhist spiritual training, the attitude required is quite different from that of a student at a university. The attitude required of a student is one directed toward spiritual understanding and realisation. Whereas academic study can lead to success independently of the personal character of the student, in the study of the Dharma, success is directly proportional to the purification of one's character. Thus at the outset students need the qualities conducive to spiritual growth.

Students should have faith in the teacher, confidence that the teacher is a superior person able to help them, to guide them in their spiritual development. This, of course, is not blind faith, but a trusting confidence in the spiritual capacities of the teacher. It is the trust that the teacher has invested a long period of time in his own spiritual training and thus is sufficiently qualified to guide the student at least a few steps further in the practice of the Dharma. Both teacher and student are united in a common faith, faith in the Triple Gem, faith in the efficacy of the Dharma as a path to liberation and to the realisation of the ultimate good. But students should assume that the teacher, by reason of his role, has a faith that is deeper and more solidly grounded than their own and thus that the teacher's advice and guidance should be accepted as worthy of trust. This does not mean that the student must regard the teacher as infallible and accept every bit of ad-

vice that the teacher offers, nor does it mean that the student must docilely follow every order that the teacher issues. The Buddha respected the capacity of mature human beings to make independent judgements; he did not subscribe to the view held by many Indian religious teachers that disciples must regard their teacher's word as absolute law. In the Vinaya, the Buddhist code of monastic discipline, pupils are authorised to correct their teachers if they see them engaging in improper modes of conduct or hear them advancing wrong interpretations of the teaching. This principle, laid down over two thousand years ago, is still valid today and should regulate the relationship between teachers and their students. But to allow students to evaluate their teachers' ideas and conduct does not mean that the students are entitled to act without respect. To the contrary, one can only advance in the Dharma if one is respectful and reverential towards one's teachers. One should never be obstinate, proud, or arrogant towards anyone, least of all towards the person one regards as one's guide to the understanding and practice of the Dharma. The practice of the Dharma aims at subduing the ego, the false sense of self, and to act in ways that inflate the sense of self is to defeat one's very purpose in following the Dharma.

The relationship between student and teacher provides an ideal field for both to work at tackling the importunate demands of the ego. The student gains this opportunity by developing a respectful attitude towards the teacher and by showing respect in bodily and verbal conduct: for example, by standing up when the teacher enters the room, by making añjali towards him, by speaking to him politely and with a humble demeanour. The teacher also can use the relationship to subdue his own ego: by refusing to adopt an arrogant attitude towards the pupil, by treating the pupil with kindness and consideration, by sharing his knowledge with the pupil.

One quality that the Buddha considered essential in a qualified student is

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called (in Pali) *suvaṇṇa*, which means being “easy to speak to.” A student who is “easy to speak to” is ready to listen to his or her teacher and to accept the teacher’s advice without resentment, without vindictiveness, without arguing back, without complaints. Spiritual growth in the Dharma is a process of abandoning one’s faults and replacing them with the opposing virtues. Yet too often we are blind to our own faults, unable or unwilling to see them.

A skilful teacher is like a mirror: he shows us our faults clearly, insistently, without deception, reminding us of the faults we continually strive to hide from ourselves. For it is only when we are willing to see our faults that we can correct them. If we go on denying these faults, insisting that we are perfect, then we will continue to wallow in them, like a buffalo in the mud. But when we open up to the teacher and show a willingness to see our own faults, to subdue our self-will, we then take the first major step in the direction of correcting them. It is through this consistent, continu-

ous process of removing our faults, of subduing our egocentric tendencies, that we move in the direction that the Buddha is pointing us, the direction taken by all the noble ones of the past. It is in this way that we can collect the precious jewels of the noble virtues and embed them in our own hearts and minds, so that we shine resplendent in the world. For this reason, the Dhammapada says that when the teacher points out a student’s faults and tries to correct them, the student should feel as though the teacher were pointing out hidden treasure.

"This is the entire holy life, Ananda, that is, good friendship, good companionship, good comradeship. When a bhikkhu has a good friend, a good companion, a good comrade, it is to be expected that he will develop and cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path.

And how, Ananda, does a bhikkhu who has a good friend ..., develop and cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path? Here, Ananda, a bhikkhu develops right view, which is based

upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. He develops right intention ... right speech ... right action ... right livelihood ... right effort ... right mindfulness ... right concentration, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. It is in this way, Ananda, that a bhikkhu who has a good friend, a good companion, a good comrade, develops and cultivates the Noble Eightfold Path.

By the following method too, Ananda, it may be understood how the entire holy life is good friendship, good companionship, good comradeship: by relying upon me as a good friend, Ananda, beings subject to birth are freed from birth; beings subject to ageing are freed from ageing; beings subject to death are freed from death; beings subject to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair are freed from sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair." (SN 45:2)

*BPS News Letter No. 57, 2007*

## 15th Annual Blood Donation Campaign at the Vihara on Sunday 4 June 2017

Donating blood is the highest form of noble giving and a meritorious deed. Since 2002, volunteers of the London Buddhist Vihara have successfully worked with the NHS Blood and Transplant to organise an annual blood donation session at the Vihara. This year marks the 15th anniversary which is organised as part of Vesak celebrations. During the last 15 years, over 1500 people have participated in this event, of whom over 500 have been new volunteers giving blood for the first time.

This is one of the main events organised by the Vihara for the local community in Chiswick, West London. There is an enormous amount of effort that goes into marketing this session to the devotees and local community. A dedicated group of volunteers ensure that all donors and

their families are well looked after by providing food and drinks during the day.

NHS Blood and Transplant need to collect 1.6 million units of blood each year to meet the needs of patients across England. Anyone aged between 17-65, weighing more than 50 kg (7 stone 12lbs) and in general good health could potentially start saving lives by becoming a blood donor. There is no upper age limit for donors who have donated in the last two years. To book an appointment call the Donor Line on 0300 123 23 23 or visit [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk).

In addition to the donors, the resident monks and the volunteers who have helped since 2002 have contributed immensely to the success of this event.  
*by Atula Abeysekera*

### CLASSES FOR THE YEAR 2017

#### BUDDHISM FOR BEGINNERS

**8 meetings starting:  
Monday 5th June 2017,  
7.00pm**

**Venue:** London Buddhist Vihara

**Fees:** Free (*donations are welcome*)

**Tutor:** Mr Richard Jones

**How to join:** Enrol at the class on first day of attendance.

**SUTTA NIPATHA  
8 meetings starting:  
Thursday 1st June 2017,  
7.00pm**

**Venue:** London Buddhist Vihara

**Fees:** Free (*donations are welcome*)

**Tutor:** Mr Richard Jones

**How to join:** Enrol at the class on first day of attendance.

## 90th Anniversary of the London Buddhist Vihara 1926 -2016



To mark both the 90th anniversary of the London Buddhist Vihara and 152nd birthday of Anagarika Dharmapala, founder of the London Buddhist Vihara, a week-long pictorial exhibition and a special religious programme was held at the Vihara on 10 - 17 September 2016.

Opening ceremony, chief guest Lord Bourne, Secretary of State at the department for communities, faith and local government. Respectively the chief guests were Dr. Patricia Walker, Mayor of Ealing council, HE Amari Wijewardena, Dr. Desmond Biddulph, Chairman of the Buddhist Society, Vice Admiral Anthony Johnstone-Burt, Master of the Royal Household and Mrs. Pat Smith. Ananda, Nalanda, Mahinda Dharmaraja OBAs, Devi Balika, St Pauls', Milagiriya PPAs and coordinators and Sunday Dhamma School sponsored these different dates.

This year the Dharmapala memorial lecture was delivered by Mr Sugeeshwara Gunaratna, the Deputy High Commissioner of Sri Lanka. A Bodhi Puja was held in the early evening which was followed by Paritta Chanting from 7.30 p.m. till midnight by members of the Sangha from many Sri Lankan Buddhist temples in the UK. On the following morning, Dana was offered to the Sangha and the merits were transferred to Anagarika Dharmapala and all those who have helped in the LBV's development over the last ninety years. (Photos by Tissa Madawela)

## The Queen's 90th Birthday Blessings Ceremony at London Buddhist Vihara



A special Blessing Ceremony to celebrate the 90th birth anniversary of the British Monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, was held at the London Buddhist Vihara on Tuesday the 7th June 2016. Representing Her Majesty the Queen, Master of the Household at Buckingham Palace, Vice Admiral Anthony Johnstone-Burt, CB,OBE, participated as the Chief Guest. Vice Admiral Johnstone-Burt's party included 8 other senior members from the Household Department at the Palace.

## Vesak Celebrations - 2016



On the 21st and 22nd May 2016 Vesak celebrations were held at the Vihara. On 21st May, Children's Vesak Day, over 150 children observed eight precepts. On 22nd May, the programme started with hoisting the Buddhist flag by Mr. Sugeeshwara Gunaratna, the Acting High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in the UK and lighting the oil lamp by representatives of the Vihara Management Committee. The guest speaker was Professor Geoffrey Hunt, Professor of Philosophy at St Mary's University College, Twickenham. Ven. Upananda, Ven. Seelawimala, Ven. Bandula, Ven. Ariyaratana, Dotetsuzenji, Iranian Zen Monk, and Ven. Kassapa also gave sermons. At the end, the parents of the Dhamma School presented a programme of devotional songs. (Photo by Tissa Madawela)

## World Buddhist Sangha Council - Taiwan 2016



*World Buddhist Sangha council was held in Taipei in Taiwan between 6-10 November 2016. Ven. Seelawimala Nayaka Thera attended the conference as he is a vice president.*

## Interfaith Event - 2016



*As a part of the Interfaith Week of the Interfaith Network for the United Kingdom, an event was held at the London Buddhist Vihara on Saturday 19 November 2016. The theme of the event was 'Living Well Together'. The chief guest was Dr Harriet Crabtree OBE, Director of the Inter Faith Network. (Photos by Tissa Madawela)*



## Rahula Dhamma Day - 2016



## LBV donated medical Equipments



*LBV donated medical equipment to Kebithigoolawa Govt Hospital in Sri Lanka. Ven. Seelawimala Nayaka Thera handed over the equipment to Dr Charin De Silva the DMO of the hospital on 24 June 2016.*



*Annual Sunday Dhamma School prize giving and Variety Show (Rahula Dhamma Day Programme) was held at the Vihara on 3rd April 2016. The Chief Guest was Mr. Sugeeshwara Gunaratna, Acting High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in the UK.*

*(Photos by Tissa Madawela)*

## Kathina Celebrations - 2016

*The Kathina Ceremony last year was held at the London Buddhist Vihara on Sunday, 6 November, attended by many hundreds of devotees.*



*The Kathina ceremony was sponsored by Mr Priyantha & Mrs Vishaka Botejues with family members and friends. (Photos by Tissa Madawela)*



# BUDDHIST ETHICS, MORAL PERFECTION AND MODERN SOCIETY

*Professor P D Pemasiri*

Criteria of rationality laid down in the methods of modern science and the materialist outlook associated with it are the most dominant influences on the intellectual life of modern man. A large section of modern intellectuals subjected to these influences have rejected metaphysics and dogmatic religion along with a host of traditional moral values. Scientific rationality has undoubtedly resulted in tremendous material progress. It cannot, however, be claimed that human beings in the modern world live more contented lives, feeling safe and secure, and that their interests will not be unjustly harmed by fellow human beings. Armed conflicts are rampant in the modern world. Acts of terrorism, violation of human rights, racial and other types of discrimination, violence against innocent human beings are some of the horrendous moral crimes that we frequently witness in many parts of the world. Poverty and destitution are not uncommon. In Buddhist terms scientific and technological progress has in no way resulted in the reduction of the unwholesome roots of human behaviour, namely, greed, hatred and delusion. As long as these roots of unwholesome behaviour are not drastically reduced or are kept within reasonable limits, it would not be possible to think of peace, harmony, happiness and contentment in society. The relevance of Buddhism to the modern social context lies in the fact that it offers a philosophical middle way that recognises in principle the norms of scientific rationality, while rejecting both the extreme materialist world-view of modern science and the metaphysical and dogmatic fundamentalism of traditional religion.

Modern science does not provide us with the knowledge of what is morally right or wrong, good or bad.

When human beings are not concerned with such knowledge, and do not care to pursue the principles of a morally good life, social interaction among humans is not likely to become very different from that among brutes. One of the most important features that distinguishes life among humans from life among brutes is that human beings desire not only to live, but also to live well. They search for meaning in life, and seek to attain rationally justifiable moral ideals and goals. In this respect Buddhist morality has much to offer to modern man.

Buddhism can be considered as a path of moral perfection. The entire path is comprised of gradual stages of ethical purification. This is the reason why it was traditionally described as a *visuddhimagga*. The goal of Buddhism is a modification of a person's behaviour and a transformation of a person's emotive and cognitive constitution. The consequence of this modification and transformation is that the person concerned overcomes the ills of existence and ceases to produce suffering to others. The goal of Buddhism is defined purely in psychological terms. It is not merging with God or Brahman or surviving to eternity in some incomprehensible realm of Being, but becoming free from greed, hatred and delusion.

The ethical teaching of Buddhism advocates an ideal of moral perfection as its ultimate goal. Moral perfection is attained when the unwholesome psychological roots of human behaviour, namely, greed, hatred and delusion are eradicated. They are described as unwholesome roots (*akusalamula*) because it is through their influence that people are motivated to commit unethical acts such as destruction of life, causing harm or injury to other liv-

ing beings, misappropriation of the belongings of others, indulgence in sexual misconduct and the wrongful enjoyment of sense pleasures, the use of false, harsh, frivolous and slanderous speech, etc. Buddhism recognises a valid basis for the distinctions people make between what is morally right or wrong and good or bad. According to the Buddhist teachings, a valid basis for making moral judgements has to be discovered with reference to human experience, but not with reference to any metaphysical reality. The conditions under which human beings become happy and contented and the conditions under which they find life miserable are generally the same. Factual information about those conditions are directly relevant to our moral life. They are to be discovered by means of observation and experience. To live morally is to live paying due regard to the moral point of view, which involves the avoidance of the creation of misery to oneself and others as well as the alleviation of the suffering of others. As long as people pay attention to human experience itself they need not lose faith in the importance of morality. To be concerned with morality is to be concerned with human good and harm, happiness and unhappiness, ill and well-being.

The significance of Buddhism to modern society is that it does not seek to determine the issue of what is right and wrong by tying the moral life to a set of metaphysical dogmas from which moral precepts are derived, or to the moral commandments of a sectarian God. People who have given up metaphysics and religious dogma in preference to the modern scientific, materialist and deterministic view of existence have moved towards a sceptical stance on the nature of moral values. They

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tend to associate morality with metaphysics and religion. The consequence of this attitude is the creation of a moral vacuum in their lives. Under such circumstances greed, hatred and delusion become the motivating forces of their behaviour.

The materialist and determinist ideology associated with modern science, which is seeking to displace metaphysics and religious dogma, attempts to transform society by effecting changes in the material conditions of living. The scientific world-view attaches no significance to the importance of morality. Morality is considered as a matter of attitudes and emotions. Moral values are considered to be relative and subjective. According to this view, only empirical facts have objectivity. Man is considered merely as a stimulus-response mechanism. Man's capacity to understand and control the inner motivational roots of behaviour appears to gain little recognition in terms of the mechanistic world view of material science. Human behaviour is explained in terms of the external conditions that determine it. If external factors alone determine human behaviour, people cannot be responsible for their moral failings. They cannot be blamed for what they do. Such a view of the nature of human action encourages the renunciation of personal responsibility for what people do.

The problems of modern society may be explained from the Buddhist standpoint as a consequence of the separation of scientific knowledge and technological skill from moral wisdom. There is ample evidence of the proliferation of greed and hatred at all levels of social interaction in modern society. It has created economic disparity, poverty and destitution. The lack of concern for the cultivation of sympathetic concern for the well-being of others is leading to increased social conflict and tension. The ultimate goal of the Buddhist way of life is the eradication of greed, hatred and delusion. If much of the psychological insanity that produces moral crises in modern society is the consequence of

the proliferation of greed, hatred and delusion, then the Buddhist ideal of moral perfection can be said to be directly relevant to the social life of modern man.

BPS News Letter No. 49, 2002

#### THE HIGHEST GAIN

*Insignificant, O monks, is the loss of relatives, wealth and fame; the loss of wisdom is the greatest loss.*

*Insignificant, O monks, is the increase of relatives, wealth and fame; the increase of wisdom is the highest gain.*

*Therefore, O monks, you should train yourselves thus; "We will grow in the increase of wisdom." Thus, O monks, should you train yourselves. (Anguttara Nikaya)*



#### OBITUARY

With heavy hearts and deep sorrow we announce the passing away of the following devotees:-

Mr Bhayga Nimantha Peiris  
Mr Desmond Dasanayaka  
Mrs P W Ekanayaka .  
Mrs BhadraDharma Ransi  
Dr George Dias  
Mr Ransinghe  
Dr Kithsiri De Alwis  
Mr Liyana Wduge Warnapala  
Dr A R Amarasinghe  
Mr Sumitra De Silva  
Mrs Padma Amarasinghe  
Mr Stanley Samarasinghe  
Dr Esme Fernando  
Mr P K Perera  
Mr Nanda Wijayatilake  
Mrs Zeeta Eccles  
Mr H. A Podi Appuhamy  
Mrs Irene Nimala Jayasinghe  
Mrs Indira Jayasuriya Dicker  
Mrs Doreen Algama  
Mr Ariyadasa Samararatna

**May they all attain the bliss of Nibbana!**

## AN A - Z OF BUDDHISM

**KĀMA-RĀGA** - Kama-raga means the desire for the pleasures of the senses. This is the norm of the Kama world. The world of the senses. You find existence, you find birth in this Kama world due to this desire for the pleasures of the senses. When one uproots this desire for the pleasures of the senses completely, one no longer finds birth in the world of senses or in the Kama Worlds.

The world of senses not only means the human world, but it also covers all those states of torment like the animal world, the petha world, the hells, the world of "asuras". Then we also have the divine worlds, various planes of the existence of the devas. All those are the world of senses. So one of the main conditions for the existence or for arising or for finding a foothold in the Kama world is this desire for the pleasures of the senses which arise in the mind.

**KĀMĀSAVA** - The canker of sense-desire

**KĀMA-SUKHALLIKHĀNUYOGA** - One of the causes of our suffering according to Buddhism is our craving for sensual pleasure.

**KĀMA-TANHĀ** - Sense craving, 'craving', is the chief root of suffering, and of the ever-continuing cycle of rebirths.

"What, o monks, is the origin of suffering? It is that craving which gives rise to ever-fresh rebirth and, bound up with pleasure and lust, now here, now there, finds ever fresh delight."

Corresponding to the 6 sense-objects, there are 6 kinds of craving craving for visible objects, for sounds, odours, tastes, bodily impressions, mental impressions (*rūpa-sadda-, gandha-, rasa-, photthabba-, dhamma-tanhā*).

# VIHARA ACTIVITIES - 2016

**VS = Ven. Seelawimala. VB = Ven. Bandula.  
VA = Ven. Ariyaratana. VK = Ven. Kassapa.**

## January

- 1 Blessing ceremony for the new year.
- 3 English Dhamma talk by Dr Upali Abeysiri
- 8 Special Bodhi Puja was organised by Sri Lankan High Commission to confer blessings on the SL government and the country
- 16 Dhammasavana Sinhala sermon by VS
- 23 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera
- 24 VS attended annual chanting ceremony at the Redbridge Vihara

## February

- 4 Sri Lankan Independence Day at the Sri Lankan High Commission. Ven. Seelawimala conducted the Buddhist service
- 6 Monthly English Dhamma talk was given by Dr Sumana Perera
- 6 The funeral service for the late Mr Dilruk Mulirigama at the Kingston Crematorium was conducted by Ven. Seelawimala
- 8 Interfaith Network monthly meeting at SOAS University. Ven. Seelawimala attended.
- 13 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera
- 20 Navam Poya Programme
- 20 Dhammasavana Sinhala sermon was given by Ven. Bandula
- 22-23 Ven. Ariyaratana went to Ireland to participate in a Dana ceremony
- 26 Ven. Bandula went to Sri Lanka to attend his mother's funeral. The funeral took place at Kurunegala on Sunday 28 Feb

## March

- 5 Monthly dhamma talk given by Ven Denuppiti Upananda
- 12 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera
- 4 & 11 & 18 - Talks given Ven Ariyaratana to Strand-on-the-Green junior school, Chiswick
- 18 VS attended the Commonwealth Day service for the 90th birthday of HM The Queen Elizabeth at the Westminster Abbey.
- 19 Dhammasavana Sinhala sermon given by Ven. K. Kassapa.
- 30 VA attended an Interfaith meeting organised by Heavenly Culture, World Peace Restoration of Light, London

## April

- 3 Rahula Dhamma Day annual event of the Sunday Dhamma School, chief guest Mr Sugeeshwara Gunaratne, the Acting High Commissioner for Sri Lanka
- 13 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera
- 16 Dhammasavana Sinhala Sermon given by Ven. Muruthamure Pannaloka
- 22 VA gave a talk at the school visit of St Augustine Priory School
- 25 VA gave a talk at the school visit of Dunstan

House School

30 VA gave a talk at the Sambodhi Cultural Centre

## May

- 3 Special exhibition and talk on 'Ola leaf writing' held at the Vihara for a group of students of SOAS University. Talk given by VS
- 18 Pirith Chanting Ceremony at Sri Lanka High Commission. All the monks attended
- 19 VA gave a talk to John Ball Primary School
- 21 Sunday School Children's Vesak Programme
- 21 VS conducted a Vesak Programme at the Buddhist Society, Victoria.
- 22 Vesak Programme at the LBV. Keynote Speech given by Prof. Geoffrey Hunt. At the end of the day there was a Bhakti Geetha devotional song Programme
- 29 Annual Blood Donation event

## June

- 4 Dana ceremony in memory of the mother of VB
- 7 Special Blessing Ceremony held at the LBV for HM the Queen's 90th Birthday with the participation of 8 members of Buckingham Palace staff headed by Vice-Admiral Johnston Burt, the Chief of Household
- 11 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera

19 Posen Poya Programme. "Modern Gene Technology Reveals the Beauty of the Dhamma" by Professor Athula Perera, Emeritus Professor, University of Peradeniya, Director, Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya

- 21 Ven. monks attended the funeral of Dr Kithsiri de Alwis at Oxford Crematorium
- 25 VB attended the funeral of Mr L W Warnapala at Chilterns Crematorium
- 26 YMBA Exam for Sunday Dhamma School

15-28 VS visited Sri Lanka. He went to Kebithigollawe Basic hospital on 24th and handed over the medical equipment donated by the LBV

## July

- 2 VB and VK attended a chanting ceremony at Lumbini Vihara, East Ham
- 3 OM DAY, an Interfaith event for the Indogenic Religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Jainism. Faith leaders addressed the gathering
- 4 VA gave a talk to children from Strand on the Green School
- 6 VA gave a talk to children from Strand on the Green School
- 9 VB and VK attended the chanting ceremony at Thames Buddhist Vihara
- 9 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera

17 Esala Poya full day programme. All the resident monks contributed to the event. At the end

of the day Dayakas made the Vas Aradhana and all the monks observed the Rainy Retreat

18 VS conducted the funeral service of Mr. Gerry Rawlingson at Golders Green Crematorium

23 Dhammasavana Sinhala sermon given by Ven. Ariyaratana

27 VA attended an Interfaith meeting organised by Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration Light

## August

- 2 A group of monks from Amaravathi Monastery visited the Vihara
- 4 Senior Thai Buddhist Group visited the Vihara
- 10 VB and VK attended the funeral service of Mr. Stanley Samarasinghe, and Mrs Padma Amarasinghe, Putney Vale Crematorium
- 10 VS attended the Theravada Buddhist Sangha UK meeting at Oxford Vihara

13 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera

17 VS and VB attended the funeral service of Dr. Esme Fernando, Maidstone Crematorium

18 VB and VK attended the funeral service of Mr. P. K. Perera at Ruislip Crematorium

22 VB attended the funeral service of Mr Sumitra De Silva

25 Special meeting of the organising committee for the 90th Anniversary of LBV

26 VA gave a talk to school children from De Salis Studio College, Hayes End

27 Dhammasavana Sinhala sermon given by Ven. Kalawane Ananda Nayaka Thera

31 A group of monks from Chithurst Monastery visited the Vihara

31 VA attended an Interfaith meeting organised by Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration Light

## September

- 2 VB attended the funeral service of Mr. Nanda Wijayatilake at Amersham Crematorium
- 3 VS and VB attended the chanting ceremony at Sri Saddhatissa International Buddhist Centre, Kingsbury
- 3 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera
- 3 Dhammasavana Sinhala sermon given by Ven. Prof. Wilegodha Ariyadewa
- 10-16 Pictorial Exhibition to mark the 90th anniversary of LBV

10 Opening ceremony, chief guest Lord Bourne, Secretary of State at the department for communities, faith and local government. Respectively the chief guests were Dr. Patricia Walker, Mayor of Ealing council, HE Amari Wijewardena, Dr. Desmond Biddulph, Chairman of the Buddhist Society, Sir Jonathan Bert, Master of the Royal Household and Mrs. Pat Smith

10 VB gave a sermon at Samadhi Meditation Centre, Edmonton

13 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera

21 VB attended the funeral of Mrs Zita Eccles, Guildford

*Continued on page 11*

Continued from page 10

21 VA attended an Interfaith Meeting organised by Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration Light

#### October

6 VA gave a talk for the students of Greenford High School

8 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera

15 VB and VA attended the Kathina ceremony at Letchworth Buddhist Vihara

16 VB and VK attended the Kathina ceremony at Lumbini Vihara, East Ham

16 VA attended for the Kathina ceremony at Jethvana Vihara, Birmingham

17 All the resident monks attended the funeral service of Mr. H A Podi Appuhamy at Mortlake Crematorium

21 VS and VB attended the funeral of Mrs. Doreen Algama at Croydon Crematorium

22 VS, VB and VK attended the Kathina Ceremony at Samadhi Meditation Centre, Edmonton

23 VB and VA attended the Kathina Ceremony at Leicester Buddhist Vihara

29 Monthly Retreat was conducted by Bhante Kovida

30 VS attended the Kathina Ceremony at Redbridge Buddhist Vihara

30 VA attended the Kathina Ceremony at Shanti Vihara Nottingham

#### November

1 VB attended the Kathina Ceremony at Roma Buddhist Vihara, Roma, Italy

7-10 VS attended a meeting of the World Buddhist Sangha Council in Taipei, Taiwan

10 VA attended a meeting at the House of Commons

11 Amaradeva Memorial Event at the LBV

12 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera

13 VB and VA attended the Kathina at Stockholm Buddhist Vihara, Sweden

13 VS attended the Remembrance Day State Ceremony at the Cenotaph

14 VK attended the Guru Nanak birth anniversary at the Gurdvara, Hounslow

18 Annual Interfaith ceremony at the LBV with Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh religious leaders. All the monks at LBV participated

19 Dhammasavana Sinhala sermon given by Ven. Kanthale Wijithawansa, Thames Buddhist Vihara

23 VA gave a talk for the students of Roehampton University

26 VS participated in the 92nd anniversary celebrations of the Buddhist Society, Victoria

26 Fund-raising dinner organised by the Sunday Dhamma School at LBV

#### December

3 Meditation class of Dr Sumana Perera

3 Dhammasavana Sinhala Sermon given by Ven. D. Upananda Nayaka Thera

8 VS attended a reception at Buckingham Palace

10 Sinhala Sermon in memory of Ven. Gangodawila Soma by Ven. Padalangala Dhammadeva sponsored by Isipathana Vidyalaya PPA

18 Sanghamitta Day programme and 10th anniversary Dana ceremony in memory of late Dr Medagama Vajiragnana Nayaka Thera

27 Nov-27 Dec VB visited Sri Lanka

#### LONDON BUDDHIST VIHARA

#### "Dam sabha Mandapaya" Buddhist Forum - 2016

A discussion based upon selected sermons of the Buddha leading to the Enlightenment of his disciples was held on  
14th August  
28th August  
25th September  
16th October

This forum was held during the rainy season retreat. In addition, the rainy season retreat was marked by chanting the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta in the evenings.

#### DHAMMA SAVANA SINHALA SERMON - 2016

In 2016 Vihara organised monthly Sinhala sermon programme for the benefit of the dayakas and dayikas who wanted to listen to the Dhamma in Sinhala language. This was appreciated by many.

16 January	Ven. B. Seelawimala Nayaka Thera
20 February	Ven. T. Bandula
19 March	Ven. K. Kassapa
16 April	Ven. Murutamure Pannaloka, Sri Lanka
23 July	Ven. K. Ariyaratana
27 August	Ven. Kalawane Ananada Nayaka Thera, Redbridge Vihara
03 September	Ven. Prof. Wilegoda Ariyadewa, Sri Lanka
22 October	Ven. Madugalle Mahanama, Sri Sambodhi Vihara
19 November	Ven. Kantale Vijithawansa, Thames Buddhist Vihara
03 December	Ven. Dedunupitiye Upananda Nayaka Thera, USA

#### VISITORS TO THE VIHARA - 2016

Most Ven. Napana Pemasiri Mahanayaka Thera, Ramannaya Nikaya  
Ven. Dimbulkumbure Sri Saranankara Wimaladhamma Anunayaka Thera  
Ven. Professor Bellanwila Wimalaratana Anunayaka Thero  
Ven. Wendaruwe Upali Anunayaka Thera, Asgiri Maha Viharaya  
Ven. Akuretiya Nanda, Vidyalyoka Pirivena Viharaya, Galle  
Ven. Balangoda Sobhita, Principal Vidyodaya Pirivena, Colombo  
Ven. Daranagama Kusalahamma, Sri Sambodhi Viharaya, Colombo  
Ven. Hureekaduwe Panngnasekara, Secretary of Mahanayaka Thera, Ramannaya Nikaya  
Ven. Uduwe Dhammaloka, Alan Methiniyaramaya  
Ven. Professor Wilegoda Ariyadeva, Sri Vijayaramaya Ambalangoda  
Ven. Khemadhammo from Warwick  
Ajahn Amaro Bhikkhu, Abbot of Amaravathi Monastery  
Ajahn Brahmavanso, Bodhiyana Monastery, West Australia  
Ven Thich Thong Hai, Head of Chann Khong Monastery, Honolulu, Hawaii  
Ven Tapovanaya Suthadhara, Ventura Buddhist Study Centre, Ventura, California, USA  
Bhante Kovida, Canada  
Rev. Nagase, Peace Pagoda Battersea Park, London  
Vice-Admiral Anthony Johnstone-Burt, Master of Royal Household, Buckingham Palace  
H.E. Mrs. Amari Wijewardena, High Commissioner for Sri Lanka  
Dr. Harriet Crabtree, Director of the Interfaith Network UK  
Lord Bourne, House of Lords  
Mark A. Hall, Secretary to Lord Bourne  
Dr Patricia Walker, Mayor of Ealing Council  
Mr Lawrence Walker, Mayor's consort  
Dr and Mrs. Desmond Biddulph, Chairman of the Buddhist Society  
Mr Chris Redgrave of Historic England (English Heritage)  
Prof Kate Crosby, Kings College, London  
Fr. Edward Balow, St Michael's Church, Chiswick  
Mr Ajith Singh, MBE, Hounslow Friends of Faith  
Dr. Nalinda Jayatissa MP, Sri Lanka Parliament

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Colombo - 10 Sri Lanka

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Maha Bodhi Society  
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Bhubaneswar, Orissa

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Srinivasa Ashram,  
Lumbini Road  
Nowgarh

#### LUCKNOW

Maha Bodhi Society,  
Buddha Vihara  
Risaldar Park,  
Lucknow-1, U. P.

## WEEKLY EVENTS

<b>Sundays</b>	1.45-3.00pm 3.30-4.15pm 5.00-6.00pm	Children's Dhamma Classes Children's Sinhala Classes SUNDAY PUJA (Sermon and Pirith chanting)
<b>Mondays</b>	7.00-9.00pm	Introduction to Buddhism (Eight-week course, repeated through the year)
<b>Tuesdays</b>	7.00-8.30pm	Advanced Buddhist Doctrine Class
<b>Wednesdays</b>	7.00-8.30pm	Meditation: Instruction & Practice
<b>Thursdays</b>	7.00-9.00pm	Theravada Buddhism
<b>Saturdays</b>	1.30-8.00pm	Monthly meditation retreat (Last Saturday of every month except August & December)

## 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb 11 Navam Full Moon Day

April 02 Rahula Dhamma Day

May 14 VESAK - Buddha Day

June 04 Blood donation Session

June 11 POSON

July 09 ESALA - Dhamma Day

Sept. 16 FOUNDER'S DAY

Oct. 29 KATHINA

Dec. 03 SANGHAMITTA DAY

## ○ 2017 (FULL MOON) POYA DAYS

January	○	12
February	○	10
March	○	12
April	○	10
May	○	10
June	○	09
July	○	08
August	○	07
September	○	05
October	○	05
November	○	03
December	○	03



10th Memorial service of former Head Monk Most Ven. Dr. M. Vajiragnana Nayaka Thero was held at the Vihara on 18th December 2016.

### PUNYANUMODANA

Ven. B. Seelawimala, Head of the Vihara, wishes to express his sincere gratitude to all Co-ordinators and supporters for their help in making the Vihara's wide programme of activities a success.

May you all be well and happy.

**Data Protection Act:** The mailing list used for SAMADHI is maintained on computer. If you object to your record being kept on our computer file, please write to London Buddhist Vihara, and we will remove it.

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