



# THE MODEL FOR BUDDHIST TRAINING

SB 303E



# **SB 303E**

---

**The Master Plan  
For the Buddhist Training**

**Translated by  
Dr. Anunya Methmanus  
June 2558 B.E.**



## Preface

The course SB303E or the Master Plan for the Buddhist Training enables the student to learn about the self-training process of the Buddhist monk for the purpose of penetrating the Path of Nibbana.

The course material has been garnered from two main sources, namely, the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta. These Suttas provide step-by-step details about the training of the Buddhist monk. This course material provides both the Buddhist monk and the householder with the theoretical and practical knowledge of the subject matter. The knowledge gained can be directly applied in the case of the Buddhist monk and can be applied with some modification in the case of the householder.

The Committee hopes that this course material will help the student to learn about the Master Plan for the Buddhist training such that he can apply what he has learnt to further his accumulation of merit and pursuit of Perfections.

The Committee  
June 2549 B.E.

## Contents

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| <b>Preface</b>   | <b>(3)</b>    |
| <b>Chapter 1 The Buddhist Training</b>                               | <b>1</b>      |
| 1.1 Prefaces to the Buddhist Training                                | 4             |
| 1.2 The Role Model of Self-Training                                  | 5             |
| 1.3 Self-Training  | 6             |
| 1.4 The Lord Buddha's Teaching Methods                               | 12            |
| 1.5 The Master Plan for Buddhist Training                            | 14            |
| 1.6 The Master Plan for the Buddhist Training and<br>the Householder | 20            |
| <br><b>Chapter 2 The Ganakamoggallana Sutta</b>                      | <br><b>23</b> |
| 2.1 Entering the Monkhood  | 26            |
| 2.2 Relevant Suttas  | 27            |
| 2.3 The Ganakamoggallana Sutta                                       | 27            |
| 2.4 Steps toward the Quiet and Still Mind                            | 47            |
| 2.5 The Role of the Dhammannu Sutta                                  | 54            |
| 2.6 The Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Householder                   | 54            |
| <br><b>Chapter 3 The First Step: Dhammannu</b>                       | <br><b>57</b> |
| 3.1 The Dhammannu Sutta  | 60            |
| 3.2 The First Step Is Called Dhammannu                               | 64            |
| 3.3 Why Must One Study the Dhamma?                                   | 67            |
| 3.4 How to Study the Dhamma  | 68            |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 3.5 The Search for Wisdom                    | 70 |
| 3.6 How to Be Dhammannu                      | 73 |
| 3.7 Dhammannu and the Ganakamoggallana Sutta | 74 |
| 3.8 Dhamma Study and the Householder         | 74 |

#### **Chapter 4 The Second Step: Atthannu 77**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 4.1 Being Atthannu                              | 80 |
| 4.2 The Meaning of Atthannu                     | 80 |
| 4.3 The Main Points of Atthannu                 | 80 |
| 4.4 The Importance of Atthannu                  | 81 |
| 4.5 Learning to Be Atthannu                     | 88 |
| 4.6 Conclusion                                  | 91 |
| 4.7 Learning to Be Atthannu for the Householder | 92 |

#### **Chapter 5 The Third Step: Attannu 97**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 5.1 What is Attannu?                   | 101 |
| 5.2 What Is Virtue?                    | 102 |
| 5.3 How to Evaluate One's Virtue       | 103 |
| 5.4 The Six Criteria                   | 107 |
| 5.5 The Importance of the Six Criteria | 119 |
| 5.6 Applying the Six Criteria          | 120 |
| 5.7 Comparative Evaluation             | 127 |
| 5.8 Conclusion                         | 128 |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Chapter 6 The Fourth Step: Mattannu</b>                       | <b>129</b>     |
| 6.1 The Meaning of Mattannu                                      | 133            |
| 6.2 The Four Requisites  | 134            |
| 6.3 The Four Requisites Allowed by the Lord Buddha               | 135            |
| 6.4 The Four Requisites and Habits                               | 140            |
| 6.5 Attitudes toward the Four Requisites                         | 142            |
| 6.6 The Four Requisites and Self-Training                        | 143            |
| 6.7 The Four Requisites' Cycle                                   | 146            |
| 6.8 Receiving the Four Requisites                                | 148            |
| 6.9 Exercising Moderation  | 152            |
| 6.10 Conclusion  | 155            |
| 6.11 Mattannu and the Ganakamoggallana Sutta                     | 156            |
| 6.12 The Householder and the Four Requisites                     | 156            |
| <br><b>Chapter 7 The Fifth Step: Kalannu</b>                     | <br><b>159</b> |
| 7.1 To Be Kalannu  | 162            |
| 7.2 The Meaning of Kalannu                                       | 163            |
| 7.3 Time and Life  | 163            |
| 7.4 Buddhist Attitudes toward Time and Life                      | 168            |
| 7.5 The Four Activities and the Buddhist Monk's<br>Self-Training | 171            |
| 7.6 Time Management  | 177            |
| 7.7 Self-Training from the Dhammannu Step to<br>the Kalannu Step | 184            |

|                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 7.8 Conclusion                  | 184 |
| 7.9 Kalannu and the Householder | 185 |

## **Chapter 8 The Sixth Step: Parisannu 187**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 8.1 To Be Parisannu                      | 191 |
| 8.2 The Meaning of Parisannu             | 192 |
| 8.3 Why is it important to be Parisannu? | 193 |
| 8.4 The Four Groups of People            | 193 |
| 8.5 Their Traditions and Customs         | 199 |
| 8.6 Social Etiquette                     | 207 |
| 8.7 Conclusion                           | 212 |
| 8.8 Parisannu and the Householder        | 213 |

## **Chapter 9 The Seventh Step: Puggalaparaparannu 215**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 9.1 Knowing the Audience                    | 219 |
| 9.2 To Be Puggalaparaparannu                | 220 |
| 9.3 Choosing a Dhamma Topic                 | 228 |
| 9.4 How to Give a Dhamma Lecture            | 233 |
| 9.5 Useful tips for Giving a Dhamma Lecture | 236 |
| 9.6 Evaluation                              | 239 |
| 9.7 Conclusion                              | 242 |
| 9.8 Puggalaparaparannu and the Householder  | 242 |
| 9.9 The Dhammannu Sutta and Self-Training   | 243 |



|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Chapter 10 The Relationship Between the Ganakamog-</b>   |            |
| <b>gallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta</b>                | <b>247</b> |
| 10.1 Becoming One's Own Virtuous Friend                     | 251        |
| 10.2 Cultivating Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha | 251        |
| 10.3 Getting Started  | 259        |
| 10.4 Becoming a Virtuous Friend to All Humanity             | 260        |
| 10.5 Dana, Sila, Bhavana, and the Dhammannu Sutta           | 261        |

-----

# Chapter 1

---

## The Buddhist Training

## **Chapter 1**

# **The Buddhist Training**

### **Contents**

---

#### **1.1 Prefaces to the Buddhist Training**

#### **1.2 The Role Model of Self-Training**

#### **1.3 Self-Training**

##### **1.3.1 The Stepwise Self-Training**

##### **1.3.2 The Buddhist Education**

#### **1.4 The Lord Buddha's Teaching Methods**

#### **1.5 The Master Plan for the Buddhist Training**

##### **1.5.1 The Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta**

##### **1.5.2 The Relationship between the Two Suttas**

##### **1.5.3 The Two Suttas as the Master Plan for the Buddhist Training**

#### **1.6 The Master Plan for the Buddhist Training and the Householder**

## Concepts

---

1. The Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta are the Suttas which provide step-by-step details about the self-training of the Buddhist monk.
2. The Buddhist monk who practices according to what is prescribed in these two Suttas is on his way to become a true monk and a virtuous friend to all humanity.
3. The householder can apply what he has learnt from these two Suttas in his daily life for the purpose of cultivating virtues and forming good habits.

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to gain an understanding about the Buddhist training.
2. To enable the student to learn about what is prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta especially where it applies to the self-training of the Buddhist monk.
3. To enable the householder to apply what he has learnt in his daily life.

# Chapter 1

## The Buddhist Training

### 1.1 Prefaces to the Buddhist Training

Buddhism has to do with the Lord Buddha's Teachings. The Lord Buddha teaches us to be our own refuge when it comes to accumulating wholesome deeds for the purpose of fulfilling life's ultimate goal which is the attainment of the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

Most people in this world feel themselves very fortunate if they have a happy family life and meet with success in their work. But there are a very few people who have chosen to leave the householder's life in order to enter the monkhood so that they can spend the rest of their lives working on purifying themselves by adhering to the Disciplinary Rules and practicing meditation. Of these two groups of people, it is the latter that is working directly toward life's ultimate goal, which is the attainment of the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

However, the work toward the attainment of the Path and Fruit of Nibbana takes countless existences to achieve as seen in the cases of the Lord Buddha and the Arahats. In the case of our Lord Buddha, He started working toward life's ultimate goal twenty Asankheyya Kappa and 100,000 additional Kappa ago. He started out by setting for Himself three different levels of life-goal as follows.

1. The life-goal of the current existence or the life-goal on earth: This level of life-goal has to do with financial success in that one is able to more than adequately support one's self and one's family.

2. The life-goal of the future existence or the life-goal in the sky: This level of life-goal calls for a person to make provisions for his future existences by accumulating as much merit as possible so that he can spend his hereafter in the States of Happiness.
3. The ultimate life-goal or the life-goal above the sky: This level of life-goal calls for a person to extinguish all defilements from his mind so that he can attain Arahatsip and end his round of rebirth.

For the householders, they must endeavor to achieve the first two levels of life-goal as best as they can. For the Buddhist monks, they must endeavor to achieve the third level of life-goal as best as they can.

Each person must endeavor to earn right livelihood and accumulate as much merit as he can. No one else can do it for him.

In terms of achieving all three levels of life-goal, no one serves as a better role model for us than the Lord Buddha Himself.

## **1.2 The Role Model of Self-Training**

As a Bodhisatta, our Lord Buddha had endeavored to achieve all three levels of life-goal as best as he could all throughout his countless existences. In many existences, our Bodhisatta was a righteous king who practiced the Ten Sovereign Virtues. In many existences, our Bodhisatta was a fabulously wealthy man who practiced generosity to an extraordinary degree. For countless existences, our Bodhisatta had consistently and repeatedly achieved the first two levels of life-goal. It was not until his final existence that he could attain Self-Enlightenment and become the Lord Buddha, thereby, achieving the third level of life-goal. And as the Buddha, He has taught a huge number of people to achieve all three levels of life-goal.

The Lord Buddha has always taught by focusing on His audience, which differs in terms of background, intelligence, etc. But His aim is always the same in that He motivates people to keep their body, speech, and mind clean and pure. He motivates householders to accumulate merit by giving alms, keeping the Precepts, and practicing meditation. For His disciples who were ready to embark upon the Path and Fruit of Nibbana, He enabled them to learn about higher morality (Adhisila), higher mental discipline (Adhicitta), and higher insight (Adhipanna).<sup>1</sup>

The Lord Buddha's disciples had first to endeavor to practice morality, mental discipline, and insight in order to gradually purify their body, speech, and mind. With time and effort, they would one day be able to extinguish defilements and attain Emancipation.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.3 Self-Training

Before embarking upon the study of higher morality, higher mental discipline, and higher insight, the Buddhist monk must first endeavor to practice morality (Sila), mental discipline (Samadhi), and insight (Panna) until he can achieve a certain level of purity.

It can be said that the Buddhist education has to do with practicing the Lord Buddha's Teachings so diligently and earnestly that one's body, speech, and mind can be gradually scrubbed clean and pure.

---

<sup>1</sup> These are called Sikkhattaya or the threefold training

<sup>2</sup> ***Accayika Sutta Āṅguttaranikāya Tikanipāṭa***. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 34, no. 532, p. 474

### 1.3.1 The Stepwise Self-Training

In studying the history of some of the Arahats, one realizes that each Arahata had his own way of self-training and the speed with which each Arahata attained Arahataship was also different. For example, in the case of Venerable Sivali, he attained Arahataship the minute the shaving of his head was completed. In the case of Venerable Ananda who had been the Lord Buddha's Personal Assistant for more than twenty-five years, he did not attain Arahataship until after the Lord Buddha's attainment of Complete Nibbana. Some Arahats attained Arahataship easily. For example, Venerable Sariputra attained Arahataship while fanning the Lord Buddha while He was giving a wandering religious mendicant a Dhamma lecture. Others attained Arahataship with difficulty. For example, Venerable Sonakolivisa did walking meditation until his feet chafed and bled. It was not until the Lord Buddha had kindly given him advice on his meditation practice that he could attain Arahataship.

These differences stem from the differences in the way these Arahats had accumulated merit and pursued Perfections in their previous existences. In other words, they were the results of the differences in their self-training. The Lord Buddha's Saying on this subject can be summarized as follows.

***“Behold, monks, to attend Arahataship, one must study and practice in a stepwise fashion. The Buddhist monk listens to a Dhamma lecture, memorizes its contents, contemplates them, and finds them to make complete sense. His belief in the teaching gives him the inspiration to continue practicing meditation until he can attain Arahataship.”<sup>3</sup>***

---

<sup>3</sup> ***Kiṭṭagiri Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Majjhimapaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 20, no. 238, p. 428



The Lord Buddha made it clear in the above Saying that training must progress in a stepwise fashion. In other words, the manner with which one attains Arahatsip depends on how correctly one has undertaken self-training.

### 1.3.2 The Buddhist Education

Since the Lord Buddha's time, the Buddhist education is divided into two main categories: Ganthadhura and Vipassanadhura.

1. Ganthadhura: It means theoretical learning or the learning of the Dhamma as taught by the Lord Buddha. During the Lord Buddha's time, this is carried out by listening and memorizing the Dhamma lessons taught by the Preceptor or the teaching monk. The Lord Buddha's Teachings had been passed down through the oral tradition until they were written down.

2. Vipassanadhura: It means practical learning or meditation practice.

The Buddhist monk can choose to undertake either Ganthadhura or Vipassanadhura or both depending on his personal preference. The conversation between Venerable Cakkhupala and the Lord Buddha was recorded in the Commentary as follows.<sup>4</sup>

***“Most Exalted One, how many duties does a Buddhist monk have?”***

***The Lord Buddha answered, “A Buddhist monk has only two duties, namely, Ganthadhura and Vipassanadhura.”***

---

<sup>4</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Gāthā-Dhammapada.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 40, p. 14

***Venerable Cakkhupala asked, “Most Exalted One, what is Ganthadhura? And what is Vipassanadhura?”***

***The Lord Buddha answered, “Ganthadhura is the study of the Lord Buddha’s Teachings as contained in the Tipitaka. The practice of meditation for the attainment of Arahatsip is called Vipassanadhura.”***

***Venerable Cakkhupala said, “Most Exalted One, now that I have entered the monkhood, I will undertake Vipassanadhura now before I become too old to practice meditation effectively. May it please the Most Exalted One to teach me how to meditate!”***

Ganthadhura is beneficial in that it ensures that the Lord Buddha’s Sayings are well-preserved. The accomplished learner can then practice what he has learnt and pass the knowledge on to others. Vipassanadhura allows the practitioner to quickly extinguish defilements through elevated meditative attainments.

Whatever duty a Buddhist monk chooses to undertake, he must be able to apply what he has learnt to his own mental development and spiritual advancement. The Lord Buddha places the utmost importance on meditation practice. It is known that on occasions the Lord Buddha did admonish the Buddhist monks who were learnt in the Lord Buddha’s Sayings and experts in giving Dhamma lectures but paid no attention whatsoever to meditation practice.<sup>5</sup>

Conversely, the Lord Buddha praised the Buddhist monks who were not only learnt in the Lord Buddha’s Sayings but also practiced meditation earnestly.

---

<sup>5</sup> ***Paṭhamadhammavihārika Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta.***  
Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 73,  
p. 168

The Lord Buddha deems meditation practice for the purpose of extinguishing all defilements to be at the heart of Buddhism as shown in the following case study.

### **The Story of Two Buddhist Monks<sup>6</sup>**

---

During the Lord Buddha's time, two close friends decided to enter the monkhood after they had had the opportunity to listen to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lecture. Soon afterward they learnt from the Lord Buddha about the two duties of the Buddhist monk. One of them decided to undertake Ganthadhura first while the other decided to undertake Vipassanadhura.

The name of the Buddhist monk who undertook Ganthadhura was Venerable Ganthika. He became learnt in the Lord Buddha's Sayings and he was the teacher of 500 Buddhist monks. The name of the other Buddhist monk who undertook Vipassanadhura was Venerable Vipassaka. He had practiced meditation until he was able to attain Arahatsip and had subsequently taught many Buddhist monks to attain Arahatsip.

Sometime later, many of Venerable Vipassaka's students made the trip to visit the Lord Buddha so Venerable Vipassaka asked his students to pay a visit to Venerable Ganthika for him. In time, Venerable Ganthika could not help but wonder why Venerable Vipassaka had so many students when he did nothing but went into the forest to practice meditation. Venerable Ganthika had in mind that he wanted to ask his friend some Dhamma questions if he should ever come to visit him.

---

<sup>6</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Gāthā-Dhammapada.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 40, p. 209

Sometime later, Venerable Vipassaka came to visit the Lord Buddha and the two Buddhist monks finally met up with each other again. The Lord Buddha knew that Venerable Ganthika wished to humiliate Venerable Vipassaka with his Dhamma questions. Since Venerable Vipassaka was already an Arahant, Venerable Ganthika's action would incur grave retribution which would cause him to be reborn in the Hell Realm. Therefore, the Lord Buddha went to see them.

Having sat down, the Lord Buddha proceeded to ask Venerable Ganthika questions about meditation practice from the First Jhana, The Form Jhana, the Non-Form Jhana, and the Fruit of Sotapanna all the way to the Fruit of Arahantship. Venerable Ganthika could not answer any of the Lord Buddha's questions so He turned and asked Venerable Vipassaka the same questions. It turned out that Venerable Vipassaka could answer all of the Lord Buddha's questions.

The Lord Buddha rejoiced in Venerable Vipassaka's accomplishment by saying, "Sadhu!" At the same time, all of the celestial beings from earth sprites to Brahma beings also said "Sadhu!"

Venerable Ganthika's students did not understand why the Lord Buddha should rejoice in Venerable Vipassaka's accomplishment when he knew nothing about the Lord Buddha's Sayings. In their mind, they believed that the Lord Buddha should rejoice instead in their teacher's accomplishment, for he could memorize all of the Lord Buddha's Sayings.

The Lord Buddha said to them to the effect that however much a person can memorize the Lord Buddha's Sayings, if he does not practice them, he cannot participate in the Samannaphala.<sup>7</sup> He is like a cowherd that counts other

---

<sup>7</sup> Samannaphala means the fruits of monkhood.

people's cows but have nothing to do with the Pancagorasa.<sup>8</sup> But a person who may not know much about the Lord Buddha's Sayings but who practices meditation until he can be far removed from greed, anger, and illusion, he can fully participate in the Samannaphala.

This story shows clearly how it is so much more important to practice whatever one has learnt about the Lord Buddha's Teachings. Practicing the Lord Buddha's Teachings is the only way that can help one to gradually purify one's body, speech, and mind.

This story also shows how our Lord Buddha knows exactly when and how to teach a person.

#### 1.4 The Lord Buddha's Teaching Methods

The Lord Buddha once told a horse-trainer the different methods He used in teaching and training people. This story appears in the Kesi Sutta as follows.<sup>9</sup> On one occasion, the Lord Buddha asked the horse-trainer, Kesi, how he went about training a horse. Kesi said that for some horses, he would use a gentle method but for other horses he would use a rough method, and for other horses he would use a combination of both methods.

The Lord Buddha then asked Kesi that if the horse could not be trained by any of these means, what he would do with it. Kesi answered that the horse would be put down. Then Kesi asked the Lord Buddha how He went about training people. The Lord Buddha answered,

---

<sup>8</sup> Pancagorasa includes milk, yogurt, cow bone marrow oil, butter and cheese.

<sup>9</sup> **Kesī Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Catukakanipāta.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 35, no. 111, p. 298

1. Some are trained using the gentle method in that I teach them about how one performs wholesome deeds with one's body, speech, and mind. I also tell them about the different fruits of wholesome deeds such as rebirth in the Celestial Realm. And they are inspired to continue performing wholesome deeds.
2. Some are trained using the rough method in that I tell them about how one commits misdeeds with one's body, speech, and mind. I also tell them about the different consequences of unwholesome deeds such as rebirth in the Animal Realm or in the state of loss and woe. And they feel so fearful and ashamed of unwholesome deeds that they do not dare commit them.
3. Some are trained using a combination of both methods.
4. For those who are untrainable, they are put down in that I will not teach them anything at all. According to the Ariya tradition, putting someone down means not teaching him anything at all.

The Lord Buddha not only uses different methods to teach and train people, He also earnestly and without bias teaches those who can be taught and trained. The Lord Buddha said to Venerable Ananda that He would not coddle His disciples the way a potter coddles unglazed pottery but He would tell them about the positive and negative aspects of things. And whoever practices meditation earnestly will be able to attain Nibbana.<sup>10</sup>

The Lord Buddha does not overindulge anyone but He teaches often. He praises good, correct, and wholesome deeds and He encourages more of them to be performed. Anything that is evil and unwholesome, He will say it is blameworthy. He forbids such an act. The Lord Buddha's

---

<sup>10</sup> ***Mahāsuññata Sutta. Majjhimanikāya. Uparipannāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 23, no. 355, p. 25

methods of teaching are exactly what are needed by those who are determined to embark upon the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

Such persons include the Buddhist monks whose life-goal is the attainment of the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. They enter the monkhood because they can see clearly that life in the round of rebirth is plagued with all forms of pain and suffering. They want to earnestly undertake self-training by practicing the Lord Buddha's Teachings to the fullest extent.

As the Buddhist monk whose life-goal is to attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana, self-training must assume priority for the rest of his life.

### **1.5 The Master Plan for the Buddhist Training**

For forty-five years, our Lord Buddha had taught a myriad of living beings to attain Enlightenment. His many teachings result from the fact that He has different methods for teaching different people to attain Enlightenment. The Lord Buddha's Teachings comprise 84,000 topics. Today, these are contained in the sacred text called the Tipitaka. There are three parts to the Tipitaka: The Vinayapitaka, the Sutatantapitaka, and the Abhidhammapitaka.

Our Lord Buddha's students possessed different levels of accumulated merit. Some could attain Enlightenment in a short time with just a short Dhamma verse. For others, it took longer and elaborate Dhamma lectures were needed. In yet other cases, they had to listen to the same Dhamma lecture over and over again before they could embark upon the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

The Lord Buddha's short Dhamma verses are much too difficult for most of us to follow because they are meant for those who are on the verge of attaining Enlightenment. Elaborate Dhamma lectures are many because they had been

given to different people at different times. As a result, it is not easy to locate the Dhamma lectures which are directly relevant to the Buddhist training. An exhaustive search into the Tipitaka found that two Suttas stand out as being appropriate in providing the master plan for the Buddhist training. These include:

1. The Ganakamoggallana Sutta
2. The Dhammannu Sutta

### **1.5.1 The Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta**

An overview of these Suttas is presented as follows.

#### **➤ The Ganakamoggallana Sutta**

The Lord Buddha gave this teaching as a result of the question from the Brahmin, Ganakamoggallana. This Brahmin was a mathematician. He made the comment that secular education, whether it is civil engineering or warfare, requires a stepwise method. In studying mathematics, one has to begin with counting one, two, three, etc. He asked the Lord Buddha if the Buddhist education could proceed clearly and step-by-step in the same way that secular education could.

The Lord Buddha answered in the affirmative and told the Brahmin about the six steps in the Buddhist education as follows.

- Step 1** The Buddhist monk must observe the Fundamental Precepts (The Patimokkha) and practice self-restraint according to them.
- Step 2** The Buddhist monk must restrain his sense-faculties, namely, his eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind



- Step 3** The Buddhist monk must exercise moderation in terms of food consumption.
- Step 4** The Buddhist monk must practice wakefulness in order to constantly purify his mind.
- Step 5** The Buddhist monk must cultivate mindfulness and self-possession.
- Step 6** The Buddhist monk must have a penchant for solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest.

The Lord Buddha said that if the Buddhist monk practices these different steps, he will reap the fruits of monkhood to the extent of his endeavor. He will be able to keep his mind quiet and still. He will be able to remove the Five Hindrances (Nivara-5).<sup>11</sup> He will attain the First Jhana, the Second Jhana..... all the way to the attainment of Arahatsip.

### ➤ The Dhammannu Sutta

In this Sutta, the Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk about how to study His Teachings (the Dhamma) and how to practice them for the sakes of self-training and being a virtuous friend to all humanity. There are seven steps as follows.

1. The Buddhist monk must be learnt in the Dhamma. This step is called "Dhammannu".
2. The Buddhist monk must be learnt in the details of the Dhamma. This step is called "Atthannu".
3. The Buddhist monk must possess self-knowledge. This step is called "Attannu".
4. The Buddhist monk must exercise moderation in terms of receiving the four requisites. This step is called "Mattannu".

---

<sup>11</sup> The Five Hindrances include sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and skepticism.

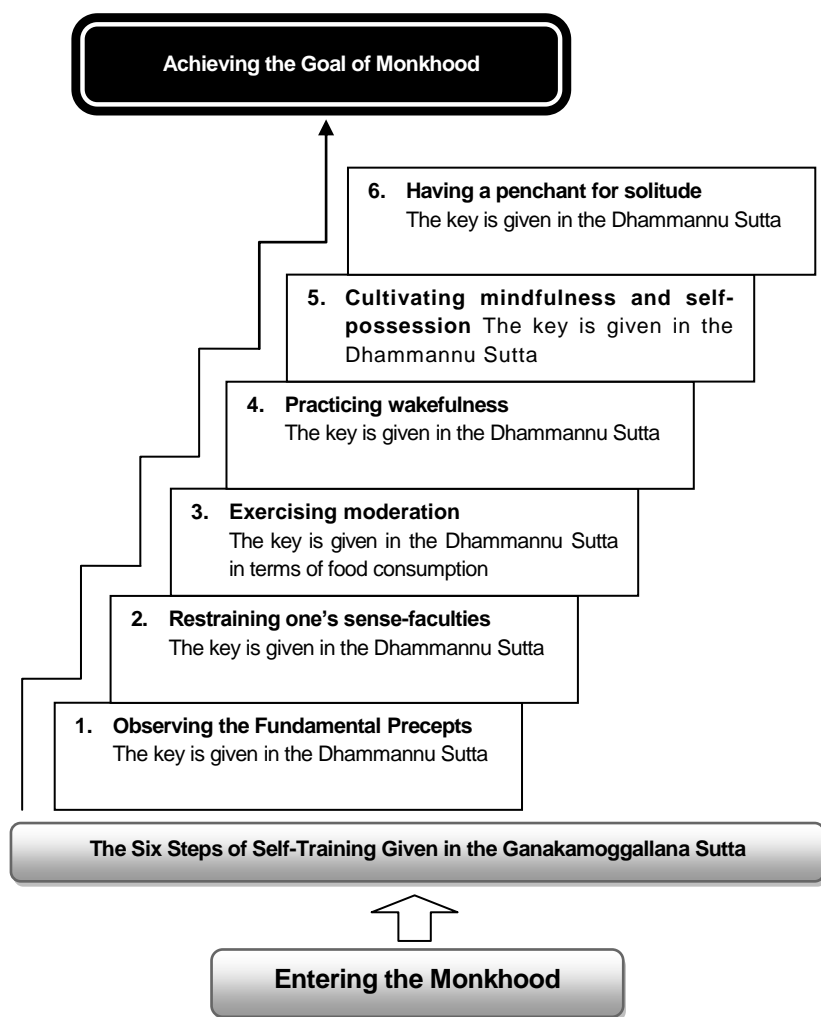
5. The Buddhist monk must be able to manage his time effectively. This step is called “Kalannu”.
6. The Buddhist monk must know the different groups of people. This step is called “Parisannu”.
7. The Buddhist monk must be able to appraise people. This step is called “Puggalaparoparannu”.

### **1.5.2 The Relationship between the Two Suttas**

The steps of self-training given in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta must be undertaken by every Buddhist monk in a stepwise fashion from the first step to the sixth step. The first step calls for the Buddhist monk to practice self-restraint according to the Fundamental Precepts. If he has not yet undertaken this step, he will not be able to restrain his sense-faculties. Therefore, the steps given in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta are like the six steps of a stair where the first step leads to the second step, the second step leads to the third step, so on and so forth.

The Dhammannu Sutta provides the key to self-training. It comprises several steps where the first step leads to the second step, the second step leads to the third step, so on and so forth.

The Ganakamoggallana Sutta provides the steps for self-training whereas the Dhammannu Sutta provides the key to self-training at each of the steps. The following flow chart illustrates the relationship between these two Suttas.



The above flow chart shows the relationship between the steps given in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the key given in the Dhammannu Sutta. When a Buddhist monk begins the first step of observing the Fundamental Precepts, he does so by employing the key provided in the Dhammannu Sutta as follows.

1. Being learnt in the Dhamma: One learns about the Fundamental Precepts.
  2. Being learnt in the details of the Dhamma: One gains an understanding about different aspects of the Fundamental Precepts and how to observe them.
  3. Possessing self-knowledge: One begins to appraise one's observation of the Fundamental Precepts so that one will know how well one is observing them, which area needs improving, etc.
- Etc.

### **1.5.3 The Two Suttas as the Master Plan for the Buddhist Training**

These two Suttas are particularly suitable as the master plan for the Buddhist training because...

1. They have just the right length and their contents can be readily memorized.
2. They provide the steps necessary for self-training.
3. Each step leads to the next step in a progressive fashion.
4. Their contents are easy to understand.
5. They can be readily practiced by every Buddhist monk.

## **1.6 The Master Plan for the Buddhist Training and the Householder**

Although these two Suttas are meant for the self-training of the Buddhist monks, it does not mean that householders cannot benefit from them. Every teaching of the Lord Buddha aims to help its practitioners to put an end to pain and suffering.

The attainment of the Path and Fruit of Nibbana is every human being's ultimate life-goal. This ultimate life-goal requires dedicated and persistent effort in terms of merit accumulation and Perfections pursuit. Every human being, regardless of his situation in life, needs to set for himself the three levels of life-goal for the purpose of purifying his body, speech, and mind.

For the Buddhist monk, his chief aim is to undertake self-training for the purpose of putting an end to pain and suffering. It is for this reason that the Lord Buddha advises him to learn about higher morality (Adhisila), higher mental discipline (Adhicitta), and higher insight (Adhipanna).

The study and practice of higher morality (Adhisila) is for the purpose of using the Fundamental Precepts to help control one's body and speech so as to prevent any evil or unwholesomeness from occurring. The practice of higher morality causes the body and mind to become increasingly purer. It also helps the mind to become quiet and still.

The study and practice of higher mental discipline (Adhicitta) is for the purpose of training the mind through meditation practice so as to control the mind and prevent any evil or unwholesomeness from occurring. The practice of higher mental discipline causes the mind to be clean and pure, thereby, keeping defilements at bay.

The study and practice of higher insight (Adhipanna) is for the purpose of developing supernormal insight which enables one to extinguish defilements and ignorance (Avijja) so that

one can attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. The Most Venerable Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro) has the following to say about this subject.

***“Silaparibhavito***

*Morality which has been developed*

***Samadhimahapphalo***

*Gives rise to concentration.*

***Samadhiparibhavita***

*Concentration which has been developed*

***Panna mahapphala hoti mahanisansa***

*Gives rise to insight.*

***Pannaparibhavitān Cittaṇ Sammadeva asavehi Vimuccati***

*Insight which has been developed causes all defilements to be removed from the mind.”<sup>12</sup>*

It can be said that the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta contain the steps required in practicing higher morality, higher mental discipline, and higher insight for the purpose of purifying one's body, speech, and mind and for the removal of defilements.

***The Daily Practice of Alms-giving (Dana), Precepts Observation (Sila), and Meditation Practice (Bhavana)***

Most householders are confined to the first and second levels of the human life-goal. Nonetheless, they share the same goal as the Buddhist monks in that ultimately they must undertake self-training for the purpose of purifying their body, speech, and mind. Given the limitations and obligations

---

<sup>12</sup> Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro)'s Dhamma Lectures, “Siludadesa”, given on November 3, 2497 B.E., page 578

of the householder's life, the teachings contained in these two Suttas need to be modified somewhat. It is best that he applies the teachings to his Dana, Sila, and Bhavana practices.

In the area of Dana practice or alms-giving, he can choose to offer food to the Buddhist monk(s) every morning while bearing in mind that he practices Dana in order to remove greed (Lobha), one family of defilements.

In the area of Sila practice or Precepts observation, he can choose to observe the Five Precepts or the Eight Precepts daily while bearing in mind that he practices Sila in order to remove anger (Dosa), another family of defilements.

In the area of Bhavana practice or meditation practice, he can choose to practice meditation regularly while bearing in mind that he practices Bhavana in order to remove ignorance (Moha), the third family of defilements.

If the householder can undertake these practices for the purification of his body, speech, and mind, he will be able to achieve satisfactory results.

## ASSIGNMENTS

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook before proceeding to the next chapter.

# Chapter 2

---

## The Ganakamoggallana Sutta



## **Chapter 2**

### **The Ganakamoggallana Sutta**

#### **Contents**

---

#### **2.1 Entering the Monkhood**

#### **2.2 Relevant Suttas**

#### **2.3 The Ganakamoggallana Sutta**

2.3.1 Step 1: Exercising Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha

2.3.2 Step 2: Restraining the Sense-Faculties

2.3.3 Step 3: Exercising Moderation in Terms of Food Consumption

2.3.4 Step 4: Practicing Wakefulness

2.3.5 Step 5: Cultivating Mindfulness and Self-Possession

2.3.6 Step 6: Having a Penchant for Solitude

#### **2.4 Steps toward the Quiet and Still Mind**

2.4.1 Step 1: Exercising Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha

2.4.2 Step 2: Restraining the Sense-Faculties

2.4.3 Step 3: Exercising Moderation in Terms of Food Consumption

2.4.4 Step 4: Practicing Wakefulness

2.4.5 Step 5: Cultivating Mindfulness and Self-Possession

2.4.6 Step 6: Having a Penchant for Solitude

2.4.7 The Five Hindrances (Nivara-5)

#### **2.5 The Role of the Dhammannu Sutta**

#### **2.6 The Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Householder**

## Concepts

---

1. The Ganakamoggallana Sutta provides the steps required for the Buddhist monk's self-training. With earnest practice, one can succeed in coaxing one's mind to return to its original dwelling such that it can be brought to a standstill, hence, devoid of the Five Hindrances or Nivara-5. Such continuous and persistent self-training can lead one to extinguish all defilements and attain Nibbana.
2. To each step of the self-training process prescribed by the Ganakamoggallana Sutta, the training method as prescribed by the Dhammannu Sutta can be applied in order to bring about success.
3. The householder can also derive benefits from undertaking the stepwise self-training process as prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta.

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to learn about the stepwise self-training process as prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta.
2. To enable the student to learn about each of the steps required in the process of self-training.
3. To enable the student to learn that the stepwise self-training process is necessary for making clear the path of Nibbana.
4. To enable the student to apply what he has learnt to his own self-training.

## Chapter 2

### The Ganakamoggallana Sutta

#### 2.1 Entering the Monkhood

For a person to enter the Monkhood during the Lord Buddha's time, he had to have already gained a certain level of wisdom from having listened to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lectures and from having practiced them to a certain extent. He had to have understood that the householder's life was narrow, fraught with the dangers of defilements, and tainted with impurity. He had to have understood that the life of a Buddhist monk was expansive and free.<sup>1</sup>

The word "narrow" here means that the householder's daily life is spent chiefly on earning a living with little time left to spend on accumulating merit. Some householders do not even have the time to pay homage to the Triple Gem and chant, left alone having the time to study the Lord Buddha's Teachings. Some householders are wealthy but they are more interested in gratifying their senses than accumulating merit.

The phrase "fraught with the dangers of defilements and tainted with impurity" here means that the householder's environment is filled with acts of greed, anger, and ignorance. Such an environment can be compared to a dumpsite.

The sentence "the life of a monk is expansive and free" here means that a person decides to enter the monkhood because he wishes to live in an environment which is conducive to the practice of the Lord Buddha's Teachings for the purification of his body, speech, and mind.

---

<sup>1</sup> ***Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Mūlapaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 18, no. 332, p. 477

## 2.2 Relevant Suttas

During the Ordination Ceremony, the ordinand must request the Preceptor to ordain him in order to show his sincere intention to leave the householder's life and enter the monkhood for the purpose of embarking upon the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

***“Sabbadukkhanissarananibbanasacchikaranatthaya***

***Iman kasavan gahetava pabbajetha man bhante***

***Venerable Preceptor, please take this saffron robe and ordain me so that I can earnestly put an end to suffering and make clear the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.”***

Since the objective of entering the monkhood is to make clear the Path and Fruit of Nibbana, the Buddhist monk must earnestly practice the Lord Buddha's Teachings especially those contained in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta. Details of the Ganakamoggallana Sutta are as follows.

## 2.3 The Ganakamoggallana Sutta

The Lord Buddha told the Brahmin, Ganakamoggallana, that the self-training process of the Buddhist monk comprises six different steps.

1. He must exercise self-restraint according to the Patimokkha (Patimokkha means The Fundamental Precepts).
2. He must restrain his sense-faculties.
3. He must exercise moderation in terms of food consumption.
4. He must practice wakefulness.
5. He must cultivate mindfulness and self-possession.
6. He must have a penchant for solitude.

### **2.3.1 Step 1: Exercising Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha**

It means that the Buddhist monk must practice self-restraint in order to ensure that his body, speech, and mind are wholesome so that he can penetrate the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

For this step of the self-training process, there are three factors altogether.

- 1) Conduct (Acara) and haunts (Gocara)
- 2) Not overlooking the slightest offence
- 3) Adhering to (Samadana) all of the Disciplinary Rules (Sikkhapada)

#### **1) Conduct (Acara) and Haunts (Gocara)**

There are two kinds of conduct (Acara): Good conduct and bad conduct.

Good Conduct means observing the Fundamental Precepts immaculately. It also includes a neat appearance, faith-inspiring mannerism and respect for the Lord Buddha and the senior monks.

Bad Conduct means transgressing the Fundamental Precepts. It also includes the kind of conduct deemed unfitting for a Buddhist monk. Examples include covering one's head while sitting down, blocking a senior monk's view during a meeting, swinging one's arms back and forth while talking to a senior monk, not paying respect to a senior monk. A Buddhist monk who stoops to fawning for the sake of material gain is said to be earning wrong livelihood. It is considered to be a bad conduct.

**Haunts (Gocara)** mean persons or places that a Buddhist monk should be seen with or in. Examples of Gocara include a place or a person that encourages learning and researching information concerning a Buddhist monk's chastity practice, approaching the Preceptor for Dhamma lessons, etc.

The word that has an opposite meaning to Gocara is Agocara. Agocara means persons or places that a Buddhist monk should not be seen with or in. These persons and places can be divided into three categories as follows.<sup>2</sup>

1. There are six types of forbidden persons and places: Prostitutes, widows, old maids, gays or lesbians, female monks and forbidden places which include bars, pubs, gambling dens, and other dens of iniquity.
2. Keeping the company of heretical teachers or their followers, etc.
3. Keeping the company of families that do not believe in Buddhism or families that frequently vilify the Triple Gem.

Today, there are other places that are considered to be Agocara. These include entertainment centers, department stores, etc. Such places are filled with items that promote sensual indulgence.

Nonetheless, a Buddhist monk is allowed to be in such places if he is invited there to conduct a Buddhist ceremony. Even so, the Buddhist monk must take care to conduct himself properly and according to the Vinaya (the code of monastic discipline).

A Buddhist monk who has conducted himself according to Acara and Gocara can be said to conduct himself properly.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Sarīputta-suttaniddes. Aṭṭhakathā-Khuddaka-nikāya Mahāniddes.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 66, p. 652

## 2) Not Overlooking the Slightest Offence

An offence, however small it may be, is still an offence. To overlook a slight offence is like underestimating the harm of a small amount of snake venom as shown in the following story.

### **The Story of the Phya Naga Called Erakapata<sup>3</sup>**

---

During the time of the Lord Kassapa Buddha, this Phya Naga was reborn in the Human Realm and later ordained as a Buddhist monk. On one occasion, he committed an offence by holding on to a bunch of water lemongrass and uprooting it once the boat he was in started moving.

At the time, he considered it to be a minor offence so he did not confess it to a fellow monk. He had practiced meditation in the forest for 20,000 years. On his deathbed, he felt as though he was being choked by the water lemongrass and had the strong wish to confess the offence. Unfortunately, there was no other Buddhist monk where he was, and he died thinking that he had not observed the Fundamental Precepts immaculately. Consequently, he was reborn a Phya Naga called Erakapata.

As a Phya Naga, he had the opportunity to listen to our Lord Gotama Buddha's Dhamma lecture but he could not attain any of the stages of Ariyahood because Phya Nagas belong to the Animal Realm. If he had not overlooked the minor offence of uprooting the water lemongrass as a Buddhist monk one Buddha-Eon ago, things might have turned out very differently for him.

It behooves every Buddhist monk to observe the Fundamental Precepts immaculately. Should he make even the slightest mistake, he should take care never to do it again. He should do his best not to commit even the slightest offence.

---

<sup>3</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Gāthā-Dhammapada.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 42, p. 25

The Lord Buddha said, ***“A person should not underestimate that a small amount of demerit will not bear fruit. A water vessel can become full with drop after drop of water. Likewise, whoever accumulates demerit a little at a time will eventually be filled with demerit.”***<sup>4</sup>

### 3) Adhering to (Samadana) all of the Disciplinary Rules (Sikkhapada)

The word **“Samadana”** means to adhere to. The word **“Sikkhapada”** means each disciplinary rule.

Generally, a man can ordain as a Buddhist monk only with the approval of the chapter of Buddhist monks assembled at the ordination. This process is called Natticatutathakamma.<sup>5</sup> It means that the ordained monk has already vowed to adhere to all of the Disciplinary Rules. Therefore, he does not have to routinely pledge the Disciplinary Rules the way a householder routinely pledges the Five Precepts or the Eight Precepts.

For the Buddhist monk, adhering to all of the Disciplinary Rules means studying, understanding, and memorizing each of the Disciplinary Rules in such a way that he can practice it earnestly. On this subject, this is what the Most Venerable Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro) has to say,<sup>6</sup>

***“Adhering to all of the Disciplinary Rules means not deviating by a hair’s breadth from them. It means adhering to the Vinaya (the code of monastic discipline).”***

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 25

<sup>5</sup> Natticatutathakamma means voting three times after a motion has been made to allow the chapter of Buddhist monks assembled, in this case, at an ordination enough time to contemplate the issue at hand.

<sup>6</sup> Phramonkolthepmuni’s Dhamma Lectures on the subject of “Ratana” given on May 23, 2497 B.E.



***Like the water in the ocean, it never overflows its shores no matter how much water is in it. The Buddhist monk adheres to the Vinaya. He conducts himself within the framework of morality. He does not deviate from morality.”***

The Buddhist monk, who practices Acara and Gocara, does not overlook the slightest offence, and adheres to all of the Disciplinary Rules, is said to be practicing self-restraint according to the Patimokkha. Having thus practiced, he automatically knows what is forbidden and what is allowed by the Lord Buddha. In exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha, the Buddhist monk's body and speech are being scrubbed clean and made ready to cultivate higher virtues

### **2.3.2 Step 2: The Buddhist Monk Must Restrain His Sense-Faculties**

Once the Buddhist monk has exercised self-restraint according to the Patimokkha, the next step for him to take is to restrain his sense-faculties. The Lord Buddha said,

***“Behold, monks, you are to restrain your sense-faculties. When you see a physical form with your eyes, do not pay attention to its details in terms of Nimit and Anubyanjana. Otherwise, you will be dominated by unwholesomeness in the forms of Abhijja and Domanassa. You must restrain your Cakkhunadriya. Likewise, you must restrain your ears, your nose, your tongue, your body and your mind, lest you become dominated by unwholesomeness in the forms of Abhijja and Domanassa.”***

Sense-faculties here mean the sense object of consciousness which includes the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind.

Sense-faculties are the portals to external stimuli in the forms of physical form, sound, smell, taste, touch and emotion.

**Seeing a physical form with the eyes:** There are three factors involved in seeing, namely, the eyes, the physical form, and the mind in that the mind must acknowledge that the eyes are seeing the physical form for the process of “seeing” to be complete.

The same three factors are involved in other sense perceptions. For example, to hear, the mind must acknowledge that the ears are hearing a sound.

**Paying no attention to Nimit** means not being interested in what one is perceiving. For example, one pays no attention to what one is seeing. One does not care if it is a man or a woman, if he or she is handsome or beautiful, etc. It means exercising self-restraint by not thinking anything further about what one sees.

**Paying no attention to Anubyanjana** means not paying attention to the details of what one sees; for example, what the hand, foot, face, etc., look like. It means exercising self-restraint by not thinking anything further about the details of what one sees.

**Exercising restraint in terms of Cakkhunadriya** means that while one is seeing a physical form, it may be a person, an animal, or a thing, one does not think anything further about what one sees. One does not form an opinion about what one sees in terms of looks, etc. Otherwise, one runs the risk of incurring unwholesomeness, namely, Abhijja and Domanassa.

**Abhijja** means covetousness or wanting to take for oneself something or someone that belongs to another person.

**Domanassa** means displeasure, grief.

Covetousness leads to pain and suffering. A thing that is obtained in a dishonest manner is considered impure. One may feel happy to have obtained it but the happiness is fleeting and superficial. Even if one obtains something in an honest manner, one may guard it jealously. But if one cannot obtain what one wants at all, one feels disappointed and unhappy.

The rest of the sense perceptions need to be likewise restrained; otherwise, they can lead to pain and suffering. It is up to one to exercise self-restraint in terms of sense perceptions. The lack of self-restraint can give rise to Abhijjha and Domanassa, which cause the mind to become restless. On this subject, this is what the Most Venerable Phramonkolthepmuni has to say.

***“The lack of self-restraint is harmful. It harms the mind because it allows the mind to be dominated by Abhijjha making one glad or sad. If a loved one should die, one will shed many tears. One’s mind is being dominated by Abhijjha and Domanassa.”<sup>77</sup>***

It behooves every Buddhist monk to exercise self-restraint by controlling his mind so that it will not be dominated by defilements. The Lord Buddha says,

***“Defilements are one’s enemy, and there is no such thing as an insignificant enemy because an enemy is always looking for the chance to destroy one. A small amount of defilements, once arisen, can multiply to the point of causing huge damage.”<sup>8</sup>***

---

<sup>7</sup> Phramonkolthepmuni’s Dhamma Lectures on the subject of “**Samvara gatha**” given on May 23, 2497 B.E.

<sup>8</sup> **Sigāla- Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā- Jātaka Ekanipāta**. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 56, p. 593

The following story was told by the Lord Buddha to the Buddhist monks to warn them against being dominated by greed.

### **The Sigala Jataka**

---

Once upon a time when King Brahmadatta was the ruler of the city of Varanasi, our Bodhisatta was born a fox living on the riverbank at the edge of the forest.

At one point, an old elephant was lying dead on the bank of the Ganges. When the fox happened upon it, it was happy to have found such an abundant supply of food. It began feeding on the elephant by taking a bite of its trunk but it was like biting into a ploughshare. When it took a bite of its tusk, it was like biting into a pole. A bite of its ear was like biting into the rim of a basket. A bite of its abdomen was like biting into a granary. A bite of its foot was like biting into a mortar. A bite of its tail was like biting into a pestle. But a bite of its anus was like biting into a soft cake. So the fox started to feed on the elephant by eating its way inside the elephant starting at the anus and into the abdomen. It ate the liver, the heart, etc. When it was thirsty, it drank the elephant's blood. When it was sleepy, it laid down inside the elephant's carcass.

The fox thought that the elephant's carcass was like a home because it was comfortable and there was plenty of food for it to eat. It refused to go anywhere else.

With the approach of the dry season, the sun and the wind caused the carcass to shrink and the meat and blood to dry up. The fox found itself trapped inside the carcass where all was dark. It could not find its way out so it started to frantically bite its way out but to no avail.

Three days went by. Finally, there was a heavy rain, and the rain caused the dried up carcass to swell until there was a small opening. The fox saw the opening and moved toward

the head of the elephant. It then started to run and used its head to push its way out. But since it had become emaciated, all of its hair stuck to the opening.

The fox felt startled by its hairlessness. It thought,  
***“The suffering I experience is brought about by my own self and my own greed. From now on, I will not be dominated by greed. And an elephant’s carcass will not draw me near it again.”***

After telling this story to His disciples, the Lord Buddha said,

***“Behold monks, defilements inside the mind must never be allowed to increase but must be quelled immediately.”***

Restraining one’s sense-faculties does not mean not employing one’s sense-faculties but it means endeavoring to prevent unwholesomeness from occurring as a result of them. It also means that the Buddhist monk must exercise good judgment in terms of what he ought or ought not to see, hear, etc. The Lord Buddha said to Venerable Sariputra,

***“Behold, Sariputra, whatever physical form causes unwholesomeness to grow and wholesomeness to diminish should not be looked at.***

***Behold, Sariputra, whatever physical form causes unwholesomeness to diminish and wholesomeness to grow should be looked at.***

***The same principle applies to the ears, nose, tongue, body and mind.”<sup>9</sup>***

The criteria used to evaluate if one should or should not think, say, or do something are as follows.

---

<sup>9</sup> ***Sevitabbāsevitabba Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Uparipannāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 22, no. 229, p. 271

1. If something is thought, said or done and it brings about an increase in wholesomeness and a decrease in unwholesomeness, then it should be thought, said or done.
2. If something is thought, said or done and it brings about a decrease in wholesomeness and an increase in unwholesomeness, then it should not be thought, said or done.

### 2.3.3 Step 3: Exercising Moderation in Terms of Food Consumption

Once the Buddhist monk has learnt to restrain his sense-faculties, the next step is to exercise moderation in terms of food consumption. The Lord Buddha said,

***“Behold monks, you must exercise moderation in terms of food consumption. Before eating, you should realize that you are not eating for fun, for self-indulgence, for beauty or for vanity. But you eat in order to sustain your body, to assuage hunger, and to aid chastity practice. In this way, you can prevent old sensation from returning and new sensation from arising so that you can live the life of harmlessness and comfort.”***

The Lord Buddha has given the Buddhist monk four different advices on how to exercise moderation in terms of food consumption for the purpose of removing bad habits and preventing defilements from rearing their ugly heads.

**The First Advice** - One must not consume food for the sake of fun: It means that one does not eat in order to have the energy to go out and play like children or engage in other activities which require extra energy such as boxing. This exercise helps to prevent ignorance and anger.

**The Second Advice** – One must not consume food as a form of self-indulgence: It means that one does not eat because something tastes good. This exercise prevents one from being concerned with taste which is a form of greed.

**The Third Advice** – One must not consume food for the sake of beauty: It means that one does not eat in order to look attractive as in the case of prostitutes, dancers, etc. This exercise prevents one from being concerned with one's beauty.

**The Fourth Way** – One must not consume food in order to feed one's vanity: It means that one does not eat in order to gain good complexion as in the case of actors, actresses, etc. This exercise prevents one from being concerned with one's appearance.

The first two advices prevent one's mind from being contaminated. The latter two advices prevent one's mind and other people's minds from being contaminated.

➤ **The Lord Buddha teaches that there are four purposes for eating.**

**The First Purpose:**      **To sustain the body**

(so that it will not die)

**The Second Purpose:**      **To allow life to continue**

**The Third Purpose:**      **To assuage hunger**

**The Fourth Purpose:**      **To aid chastity practice**

(such that one has the energy to accumulate good deeds)

The Lord Buddha teaches these things to promote a healthy body which is devoid of hunger or the discomfort of over-indulgence so that it can be used to practice meditation and chastity. It is obvious that a Buddhist monk, who does not exercise moderation in terms of food consumption, will come to much harm as shown in the following story.

### **The Suka Jataka<sup>10</sup>**

---

Once upon a time when King Brahmadatta was the ruler of the city of Varanasi, our Bodhisatta was born a red-breasted parakeet living in the Himavanta Forest by the shore of the ocean. He was the head of several thousand parakeets. He had a chick and by the time the chick grew up, our Bodhisatta became blind. The junior parakeet told its parents to remain in the nest while it went out to feed and bring back food for them.

One day, as the junior parakeet was feeding at the top of the mountain, it looked across to an island filled with mango trees and ripe, golden mangoes. The next morning, it flew to the island to eat some mango before bringing some back to its parents. Our Bodhisatta recognized the taste of the mango so he asked the junior parakeet,

“Son, did you get the mango from the island?”

“Yes, I did, Dad.”

“Son, the parakeets that go to feed in that island are putting their lives at risk. You should not go there again.”

But the junior parakeet did not pay heed to its father’s advice and continued to feed on the mangoes in the island and bring some back to its parents. One day, while it was flying home over the ocean, it was overtaken by drowsiness and

---

<sup>10</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Tikanipāta Jātaka.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 58, p. 40-42



fell asleep. The mango in its beak fell out and before long, it too fell into the ocean and became food for one particular fish.

When the junior parakeet did not return, our Bodhisatta knew that it had fallen into the ocean. Without food, our Bodhisatta finally starved to death.

The Lord Buddha revealed that the Buddhist monk who recently died as a result of not exercising moderation in terms of food consumption was in that existence the junior parakeet.

This true story attests to the fact that when one does not exercise moderation in terms of food consumption, the result may be death and one will no longer have the opportunity to accumulate merit and pursue Perfections. One will not be able to live the Holy Life to the fullest extent as a Buddhist monk and may even have to be reborn in the state of loss and woe. The Lord Buddha said,

***“Exercising moderation in terms of food consumption and not being attached to food is a virtue. Not exercising moderation in terms of food consumption can lead one to be reborn in the state of loss and woe.”<sup>11</sup> But those who exercise moderation will not be reborn in the state of loss and woe.”<sup>12</sup>***

### 2.3.4 Step 4: Practicing Wakefulness

Once the Buddhist monk has exercised moderation in terms of food consumption, the Lord Buddha teaches him to undertake further self-training by practicing wakefulness.

---

<sup>11</sup> ***Suka Jātaka . Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Tikanipāta Jātaka.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 58, no. 366, p. 40

<sup>12</sup> The state of loss and woe includes the Hell Realm, the Asurakaya Realm, the Peta Realm, and the Animal Realm

“Behold, monk, you are to frequently practice wakefulness by keeping your mind free from mental hindrances, and by doing walking meditation and sitting meditation all day long. Keep your mind free from mental hindrances by doing walking meditation and sitting meditation during the first watch of the night. When you lie down during the second watch, lie on your right side with your feet together one above the other and keep in mind that you will wake at the beginning of the third watch. When the third watch arrives, get up and keep your mind free from mental hindrances by doing walking meditation and sitting meditation all throughout the third watch.”

The Lord Buddha wishes the Buddhist monk to know how to manage his time so that he can practice as much meditation as possible and keep defilements at bay. The Lord Buddha advises the Buddhist monk to schedule time for practicing walking meditation and sitting meditation as follows.

1. During the day (06.00 – 18.00 hours)
2. During the first watch of the night (18.00 – 22.00 hours)
3. The second watch of the night (22.00 – 02.00 hours) is reserved for sleep.
4. During the third watch of the night (02.00 – 06.00 hours)

It is obvious that the Lord Buddha wishes the Buddhist monk to spend as much time as possible practicing meditation in order to purify his mind and keep his mind bright and clear at all times as demonstrated in the following story.

### Venerable Katiyana Thera's Story<sup>13</sup>

---

Venerable Katiyana had been practicing sitting meditation at night before getting up to do walking meditation to dispel drowsiness. While doing walking meditation, he dropped to the ground and fell fast asleep.

The Lord Buddha saw the entire event with His supernormal insight and went to stand in the air above the sleeping monk. He called out the monk's name, and the monk immediately got up to pay homage to the Lord Buddha. He could not help but feel ashamed of his condition. The Lord Buddha said to him,

***“Get up, Katiyana, practice heedfulness in the beginning and the end. Endeavor to practice meditation. Do not give in to drowsiness. Endeavor to attain the Jhanas and overcome defilements, Katiyana.”***

Venerable Katiyana kept his mind on the Lord Buddha's voice and by the end of the teaching, he was able to attain Arahathship.

In the Kalingara Sutta, the Lord Buddha praised the Buddhist monk who endeavored to practice meditation often as follows.<sup>14</sup>

***“Behold, monks, the Buddhist monk, who lays his head and feet on a log, is being heedful. He is constantly endeavoring to keep watch over his mind such that Mara cannot harm him. But the Buddhist monk, who is used to physical comfort, who lies down on a soft pillow and a soft and thick mattress until sunrise is allowing Mara to harm him. Therefore, let all of you lay your head***

---

<sup>13</sup> ***Katiyana-theraggāthā. Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Theraggāthā.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 52, p. 188

<sup>14</sup> ***Kaliṅgara Sutta. Samyuttanikāya Nidānavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 26, no. 676, p. 742

***and feet on a log and endeavor to keep watch over your mind at all times.”***

### **2.3.5 Step 5: Cultivating Mindfulness (Sati) and Self-Possession (Sampajanna)**

Once the Buddhist monk has practiced wakefulness, the Lord Buddha teaches him to undertake further self-training by cultivating mindfulness and self-possession.

“Behold, monks, you are to cultivate mindfulness and self-possession when you are taking a step forward or backward, when you are folding or extending your arm, when you are putting on your robe, when you are holding your alms-bowl, when you are eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting something, when you are defecating and urinating, when you are walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, waking up, speaking, and not speaking.”

The word “**Sati**” means mindfulness. It is the opposite of mindlessness or forgetfulness.

In Buddhism, “Sati” or mindfulness is an important virtue because it prevents any damage which can occur as a result of forgetfulness. More importantly, Sati is the foundation of meditation practice for the purpose of purifying one’s mind and making clear the path of Nibbana.

The word “**Sampajanna**” means self-possession in that one is clearly conscious of what one is thinking, saying, or doing.

“Sampajanna” is another important virtue in Buddhism and it is used together with the word “Sati”. Sati precedes a thought, a word, or an action whereas Sampajanna occurs when one is thinking, saying, or doing something. These two virtues must occur together.

The cultivation of Sati or mindfulness and Sampajanna or self-possession is good for the mind because it prevents the mind

from falling under the dictate of defilements, namely, greed, anger, and ignorance. Therefore, the mind is kept expansive, light, free and happy such that it is ready to cultivate higher virtues especially the ultimate virtue of making clear the path of Nibbana as taught by the Most Venerable Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro).

***“When one is mindful, one can be heedful in all things. Heedfulness can lead to Nibbana. This is the core teaching of Buddhism.”<sup>15</sup>***

The following is a story of a monk who attained Arahatsip as a result of having earnestly practiced mindfulness and self-possession.

### **The Story of Venerable Mahapussadeva Thera<sup>16</sup>**

After entering the monkhood, Venerable Mahapussadeva Thera and his fellow monks were of the same mind in that they did not enter the monkhood because they were in debt, in danger, or destitute but because they wanted to put an end to pain and suffering. Therefore, all of them decided to practice Gatapaccagatikavatta.<sup>17</sup> They practiced mindfulness and self-possession while they were walking so that they could keep defilements at bay. In fact, they cultivated mindfulness and self-possession at all times.

As they went on their alms-round in the morning, they continued to cultivate mindfulness and self-possession. Should any monk fall under the power of defilements in terms of an unchaste thought, he would instantly quell it. Should any monk be unable to do so, he would stand still and

<sup>15</sup> The Dhamma Lectures of Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro), “Abstaining Completely from Deeds of Demerit”, April 18, 2497 B.E.

<sup>16</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-Majjhimanikāya. Mūlapaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 17, p. 697

<sup>17</sup> Practicing mindfulness and self-possession while doing walking meditation

the monks following behind him would also stop walking. The said monk would practice meditation immediately. If he was still unable to quell the unchaste thought, he would sit down and all the other monks would also sit down with him until the monk was able to quell the unchaste thought. Such was the way that these Buddhist monks cultivated mindfulness and self-possession.

They had cultivated mindfulness and self-possession in this manner for nineteen years altogether. Finally, in the twentieth year, all of them were able to attain Arahatsip.

### 2.3.6 Step 6: Having a Penchant for Solitude

The next and last step of the Buddhist monk's self-training is having a penchant for solitude. The Lord Buddha said,

***“Behold, monks, you are to have a penchant for solitude by staying in the forest, under a tree, in a mountain, in a gorge, in a cave, in a graveyard, in an open area, or beside a haystack.”***

This last step of self-training requires the Buddhist monk who wishes to make clear the path of Nibbana to stay in a quiet place far away from people. It means that the Buddhist monk must spend time practicing meditation to the fullest extent in a place that is conducive to such practice in order to achieve elevated meditative attainments and extinguish all defilements.

The Lord Buddha and all the Arahats praised solitude because it is in line with the simple and quiet life of the Buddhist monk. It is also the model lifestyle for future generations.<sup>18</sup> The best example of having a penchant for solitude is shown in the case of Venerable Kassapa Thera who was recognized by the Lord Buddha as being foremost in

<sup>18</sup> ***Manorothpurani. Aṭṭhakathā. Aṅguttaranikāya. Dukkanipāta.***  
Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 33, no. 274,  
p. 352

the area of Dhutanga Practice or Austerity Practice. Even when he was advanced in years, he still took delight in solitude by living in the forest, etc.

### **The Story of Venerable Kassapa Thera<sup>19</sup>**

---

At the time when the Lord Buddha was staying at the Veluvanna Temple, Venerable Kassapa Thera came to pay Him a visit. Having paid homage to the Lord Buddha, Venerable Kassapa Thera sat himself down in a suitable place. The Lord Buddha said to him,

***“Kassapa, you are now advanced in years. The robe you made out of a discarded cloth is heavy. You should wear the robe offered by the laity. You should eat the food at their houses. And you should stay here with me.”***

***Venerable Kassapa Thera said to the Lord Buddha, “Most Exalted One, I have taken to staying in the forest for a long time now and I praise the virtue of staying in the forest. I have gone on an alms-round and I praise the virtue of going on an alms-round.....”***

***“Behold, Kassapa, why are you doing these things?”***

***“Most Exalted One, I have done these things for two reasons.***

***One, for my own happiness here and now;***

***Two, for the benefit of future generations in that they can follow the example of the Lord Buddha***

---

<sup>19</sup> ***Jiṇṇa Sutta. Samyuttanikāya Nidānvagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 26, no. 478, p. 561

***and His disciples in living in the forest and praising the virtue of living in the forest.”***

***“Well done, Kassapa! Your practices have benefited the masses, humans and celestial beings alike. Behold, Kassapa, in that case, pray continue to wear your heavy robe, go on an alms-round, and live in the forest...”***

Living in solitude allows the Buddhist monk to review the way he has been observing the Fundamental Precepts and the Dhamma knowledge that he has learnt. He will then have the opportunity to make improvement in an area where he feels improvement is needed such that he can truly gain the fruits of monkhood to the fullest extent.

A Buddhist monk who does not have a penchant for solitude is not giving himself the opportunity to review the way he has been observing the Fundamental Precepts and the Dhamma knowledge that he has learnt. Therefore, it will be difficult for him to make clear the path of Nibbana.

## **2.4 Steps toward the Quiet and Still Mind**

The six-step self-training process described above proceeds with increasing difficulty and aims to help the Buddhist monk train his mind to be completely quiet and still so that elevated meditative attainments can be achieved. Elevated meditative attainments give rise to supernormal insight where the truth about reality can be penetrated.

How this six-step self-training process can bring about supernormal insight can be explained as follows.



### 2.4.1 Step 1: Exercising Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha

This step allows the Buddhist monk to control his speech and action such that he does not commit what is unwholesome. Sila or morality is the foundation of Samadhi or concentration. Without Sila, it will be difficult to keep the mind normal, quiet and still. In the Hiri Sutta<sup>20</sup>, the Lord Buddha says,

***“Without Sila, Sammasamadhi (right concentration) cannot happen. Without Sammasamadhi, the supernormal insight needed to penetrate the truth about reality cannot be developed...”***

### 2.4.2 Step 2: Restraining the Sense-Faculties

Once the Buddhist monk can control his speech and action, he can now learn to keep his mind from constantly darting here and there. In the Gumabiya Jataka<sup>21</sup>, the Lord Buddha says, “Sensual pleasure lures the mind and keeps it in bondage to it.” Sensual pleasure, which is derived from the physical form, sound, smell, taste, and touch, sends the mind outside the body and causes it to roam.

When the sense-faculties can be restrained, the mind can then be prevented from becoming attached to the physical form, sound, smell, taste, and touch. Such attachment leads to unwholesomeness. Once the mind is prevented from wandering off, it can return to its original dwelling inside the body.

<sup>20</sup> **Hiri Sutta. Aṭṭhakathā-Aṅguttaranikāya Saṭṭakanipāta.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 37, no. 62, p. 212

<sup>21</sup> **Gumbiya Jātaka. Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Catutakanipāta-Jātaka.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 58, no. 781, p. 820

### 2.4.3 Step 3: Exercising Moderation in Terms of Food Consumption

Food has a direct impact on the body. Overindulgence causes discomfort, indigestion, and drowsiness. Too little food causes uneasiness and anxiety. On this subject, this is what the Lord Buddha has to say.

***“Behold, monks, I have just one meal a day. This practice keeps my body healthy, light, strong, and happy with few ailments.”<sup>22</sup>***

Eating just enough food keeps the body healthy and well-suited for meditation practice. One knows what one should or should not eat. Venerable Sariputra gave the Buddhist monk the following advice on the subject of food consumption.

***“When a Buddhist monk eats fresh or dry food, he should not pay too much attention to its taste. He should be mindful of how much he eats. He should stop eating four to five bites before feeling full and ends the meal by drinking some water. This will keep him feeling comfortable.”<sup>23</sup>***

### 2.4.4 Step 4: Practicing Wakefulness

This step calls for the Buddhist monk to keep his mind at the center of his body which is called the seventh base. It is the mind's original dwelling.<sup>24</sup> This is located two fingers' width from the navel. The Buddhist monk is to practice meditation by **keeping his mind quiet and still at the center of his body as often as possible.**

<sup>22</sup> ***Bhaddāli Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Mūlapaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 20, no. 160, p. 321

<sup>23</sup> ***Sariputta-theragāthā. Khuddaka-nikāya. Theragāthā.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 53, no. 396, p. 229

<sup>24</sup> Phrabhavanaviriya Khun (Padet Dattajeevo), *The Buddha-Virtues, the Dhamma-Virtues, and the Sangha-Virtues*

This is a difficult step because the mind is used to scattering and roaming. Like everything else, practice makes perfect. On this subject, this is what the Lord Buddha has to say.

***“...Behold, monks, if a Buddhist monk does not regularly practice meditation, no amount of wishing can prevent his mind from being dominated by defilements...***

***...It is like a hen that has laid eight, ten, or twelve eggs but does not bother to sit on them regularly, they cannot hatch however much the hen may wish them to.***<sup>25</sup>

Practicing wakefulness is important because it prevents the Buddhist monk from oversleeping; and it gives him more time to practice meditation.

#### **2.4.5 Step 5: Cultivating Mindfulness and Self-Possession**

This step requires the Buddhist monk to be fully aware of what he is doing at all times. It means that he is to keep his mind at the center of his body at all times as shown in the Dhamma lecture given by the Most Venerable Phramonkolthepmuni as follows.

***“One must never be mindless. One must rest one’s mind at the center of the Dhamma Sphere. It is the Dhamma Sphere that gives rise to the human body. One must keep one’s mind still. One must endeavor to keep one’s mind still no matter what.***

***Such endeavor is the very essence of Bojjhanga (the Seven Constituents of Enlightenment). Keep***

---

<sup>25</sup> ***Bhāvanā Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Sattakanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 37, no. 68, p. 252

***the mind absolutely still at the very center of the Dhamma Sphere.<sup>126</sup>***

#### **2.4.6 Step 6: Having a Penchant for Solitude**

The Lord Buddha tells His disciples to practice sitting meditation in a suitable place after returning from their alms-round. Once the body has been adequately fed, it is now conducive to meditation practice.

It is for this reason that the Lord Buddha's disciples had all the time they needed in order to keep their mind quiet and still at the center of their body. With daily practice, they were able to bring their mind to a complete standstill. Their mind became bright and clear and in time they were able to completely extinguish all defilements from their mind. The Lord Buddha says,

***“After returning from your alms-round and after having your meal, sit in a half-lotus position and maintain full awareness.***

***Abstain from Abhijjha (covetousness) and rid your mind of Abhijjha.***

***Abstain from Byapada (ill-will). One who does not harbor ill-will and is kind and helpful to all living beings will be able to rid one's mind of Byapada.***

***Abstain from Thinamiddha (sloth and torpor) and rid your mind of Thinamiddha.***

***Abstain from Uddhaccakukkucca (restlessness and worry) and rid your mind of Uddhaccakukkucca.***

***Abstain from Vicikiccha (doubt) and rid your mind of Vicikiccha.”***

---

<sup>26</sup> The Dhamma Lectures of Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro), “Bojjhangaparitta”, June 24, 2497 B.E., page 448

### 2.4.7 Nivara-5 (The Five Hindrances)

Nivara is the defilement that prevents the mind from achieving meditative attainments. It causes the mind to waver and scatter. Nivara consists of five parts and these include:

1. **Kamachanda or sensual desire:** It means indulging in the sensual pleasure derived from desirable physical form, taste, smell, sound, and touch. A mind that still indulges in sensual pleasure cannot be brought to a standstill.
2. **Byapada or ill-will:** It means vindictiveness and such feelings as annoyance, frustration, dissatisfaction, anger, etc. These negative feelings cause the mind to waver and scatter.
3. **Thinamiddha or sloth and torpor:** It means feeling depressed, drowsy, lonely, discouraged, hopeless, and unmotivated. These negative feelings cause the mind to waver and scatter.
4. **Uddhaccakukkucca or restlessness and worry:** Restlessness and worry cause the mind to waver and scatter.
5. **Vicikiccha or doubt:** It means being given to doubt and questions such as having doubt about the Triple Gem. Doubt causes the mind to waver and scatter.

**Kamachanda** or sensual desire causes one to endeavor to have everything one wants. When one cannot have what one wants, one becomes frustrated and dissatisfied. What follows is **Byapada** or ill-will. Should one get what one wants, one becomes jealous and possessive of it. Should it be taken away or stolen, ill-will is the result. When one indulges in ill-will, **Thinamiddha** follows because one feels depressed and demotivated. What follows is **Uddhaccakukkucca** because one becomes restless and worried. At the same time, one begins to have doubt about the reality of life or **Vicikiccha**. These five hindrances obstruct virtues and goodness; and they propel one to think, say, and do things

that are unwholesome. Moreover, they cause the mind to waver and scatter.

The Buddhist monk's six-step self-training process as prescribed in the Ganagamoggallana Sutta can not only prevent him from being obstructed by Nivara-5 or the Five Hindrances but will also help him to eventually remove it altogether. Without Nivara-5, one will be able to control one's mind, bring it to a standstill, and attain the First Jhana, the Second Jhana, the Third Jhana, the Fourth Jhana, and eventually Arahatsip. In the Ganagamoggallana Sutta, the Lord Buddha says,

***“Once you can remove Nivara-5 which causes the mind to be gloomy, you will be distant from sense-desire and unwholesomeness. You will be able to attain the First Jhana and experience Vitaka (thought), Vicara (discrimination), Piti (joy), and Sukha (happiness).***

***When you attain the Second Jhana, your mind will be bright and clear from having achieved the state of one-pointedness. Vitaka and Vicara are removed leaving only Piti and Sukha.***

***When you attain the Third Jhana, only Sukha is left.***

***When you attain the Fourth Jhana, the only thing left is equanimity.”***

The six-step self-training process described in the Ganagamoggallana Sutta enables the Buddhist monk to bring his mind to a complete standstill and achieve the supernormal insight required to extinguish all defilements and attain Nibbana.

## 2.5 The Role of the Dhammanu Sutta

Once the Buddhist monk is ready to put the six-step self-training process into practice, it does not mean that he will be able to do so immediately. For example, to begin putting the first step into practice, he first needs answers to such questions as

How can I exercise self-restraint according to the Patimokkha (or the Fundamental Precepts)?

How many Precepts are there altogether?

What are the details of each of the Precepts?

How can I correctly interpret them?

How can each of the Precepts be put into practice?

How can I evaluate the result of my practice?

The answers to these questions provide the key to putting each step of the self-training process into practice. This key is given in the Dhammannu Sutta and it will be presented in detail in the next chapter.

## 2.6 The Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Householder

Although the Ganakamoggallana Sutta applies directly to the Buddhist monk, it can be applied to the householder as well with some modification, since the steps required in training one's mind and bringing it to a standstill at the center of the body are the same. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the householder can undertake basic self-training by giving alms, observing the Precepts, and practicing meditation. He can then put the six-steps self-training process into practice for the purpose of controlling his body, speech, and mind as follows.

Exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha is the technique used to control one's body and speech.

Restraining the Sense-Faculties is the technique used to control and guard one's mind.

Exercising moderation in terms of food consumption is the technique used to prepare the body for meditation practice.

Practicing wakefulness, cultivating mindfulness and self-possession, and having a penchant for solitude are also the techniques used for meditation practice.

For the householder, observing the Precepts means observing the Five Precepts or the Eight Precepts immaculately.

In terms of meditation practice, the householder does whatever is needed to keep his mind quiet and still. This includes restraining his sense-faculties, exercising moderation in terms of food consumption, practicing wakefulness, cultivating mindfulness and self-possession. In addition, he takes the opportunity to practice meditation in earnest by joining a meditation retreat whenever he can.

In terms of alms-giving, the householder is learning to release his attachment to all things material and rid his mind of miserliness. Alms-giving forms the foundation for Precepts observation and meditation practice. For the householder, the key provided in the Dhammannu Sutta equally applies albeit with some modifications.



## ASSIGNMENTS

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook before proceeding to the next chapter.

# Chapter 3

---

## The First Step: Dhammannu

## **Chapter 3**

### **The First Step: Dhammannu**

#### **Contents**

---

#### **3.1 The Dhammannu Sutta**

3.1.1 The Fruits of Being Dhammannu

3.1.2 The Importance of the Five Fruits of Being Dhammannu

#### **3.2 The First Step Is Called Dhammannu**

3.2.1 Being Dhammannu

3.2.2 The Meaning of Dhammannu

3.2.3 Navangasatthusasana

#### **3.3 Why Must One Study the Dhamma?**

#### **3.4 How to Study the Dhamma**

#### **3.5 The Search for Wisdom**

#### **3.6 How to Be Dhammannu**

#### **3.7 Dhammannu and the Ganakamoggallana Sutta**

#### **3.8 Dhamma Study and the Householder**

3.8.1 The Objectives of Dhamma Study

3.8.2 Examples of the Dhamma Principles to Be Studied

3.8.3 How to Study the Dhamma

## Concepts

---

1. The six-step self-training process described in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta requires the techniques given in the Dhammannu Sutta for the self-training process to be successfully implemented.
2. The first technique is called Dhammannu. It is a very important technique because to be Dhammannu means to be knowledgeable in the Lord Buddha's Teachings such that one can cultivate Right View and has the necessary commitment and willpower to practice the Lord Buddha's Teachings.
3. It is important for the householder to be Dhammannu because being knowledgeable in the Lord Buddha's Teachings enables one not only to live life correctly but to also cultivate the necessary Buddhist virtues quickly.

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to gain an overview of the Dhammannu Sutta.
2. To enable the student to learn how the Dhammannu Sutta is important to the Buddhist monk's self-training.
3. To enable the student to learn how to be Dhammannu.
4. To enable the householder to apply what he has learnt in his daily life.

## Chapter 3

### The First Step: Dhammannu

Now that the student has learnt about the six-step self-training process described in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta, the next subject concerns the means by which the six-step self-training process can be successfully implemented. Its details are given in the Dhammannu Sutta as follows.

#### 3.1 The Dhammannu Sutta

In this Sutta, the Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk how to study His Teachings (the Dhamma) and how to practice them for the purposes of self-training as well as being a virtuous friend to all mankind. There are seven steps as follows.

1. The Buddhist monk must be learnt in the Dhamma. This step is called **“Dhammannu”**.
2. The Buddhist monk must be learnt in the details of each Dhamma topic such that he can interpret the teaching correctly. This step is called **“Atthannu”**.
3. The Buddhist monk must possess self-knowledge. This step is called **“Attannu”**.
4. The Buddhist monk must exercise moderation in terms of receiving the four requisites. This step is called **“Mattannu”**.
5. The Buddhist monk must be able to manage his time effectively. This step is called **“Kalannu”**.
6. The Buddhist monk must know the different groups of people. This step is called **“Parisannu”**.

7. The Buddhist monk must be able to appraise people. This step is called **“Puggalaparoparannu”**.

### 3.1.1 The Fruits of Being Dhammannu

The Lord Buddha told His disciples that they could expect to receive the following fruits as a result of having become Dhammannu.

1. Being worthy of respect
2. Being worthy of hospitality
3. Being worthy of alms
4. Being worthy of Reverence (Namaskar)
5. Being an incomparable field of merit

The Lord Buddha says in the beginning of the Dhammannu Sutta:

***“Behold monks, the Buddhist monk who has practiced these seven steps is worthy of respect, hospitality, alms, and reverence. Such a Buddhist monk represents an incomparable field of merit.***

***These seven steps include Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, Mattannu, Kalannu, Parisannu, and Puggalaparoparannu.”***

The five fruits of being Dhammannu can be elaborated as follows.

1. **Being worthy of respect** (*Ahuneyyo*) means the Buddhist monk who has practiced according to the Dhammannu Sutta is worthy of respect and should be offered fine-quality requisites.
2. **Being worthy of hospitality** (*Pahuneyyo*) means he should be welcome in a manner better than any distinguished guest in terms of food, water, etc.

3. **Being worthy of alms** (*Dakkhineyyo*) means that he is worthy of all the articles prepared for merit-making purposes and dedicating the merit earned to departed loved ones. Such a Buddhist monk is the source of merit. He is replete with virtue and goodness.
4. **Being worthy of Reverence** (*Anjalikaraniyo*) means he is worthy of the show of deep respect (Namaskar) because he is part of the Triple Gem.
5. **Being an incomparable field of merit** (*Anuttaran Punnakkhettan Lokassa*) means he is the most excellent field of merit because he has earnestly practiced the Lord Buddha's Teachings until his body, speech, and mind are clean and pure. He is the source of a tremendous amount of merit. To offer alms to such a Buddhist monk is like sowing rice seeds in a fertile paddy, the yield will be great.

When a layperson treats a Buddhist monk in these ways, he stands to gain much more besides a tremendous amount of merit. For example, the Buddhist monk is more inclined to give him a Dhamma lesson and valuable advice. Having learnt the Dhamma from the Buddhist monk, the layperson's devotion to Buddhism can only deepen.

### 3.1.2 The Importance of the Five Fruits of Being Dhammannu

According to the Lord Buddha, to receive the five fruits of being Dhammannu, the Buddhist monk must be:

1. **Supatipanno** : It means adhering strictly to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma-Vinaya (the monastic code of conduct). It means practicing according to the Middle Way.
2. **Ujupatipanno** : It means abandoning everything unwholesome physically, verbally, and mentally in order to work solely toward the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.
3. **Nayapatipanno**: It means practicing meditation in order to attain the Dhammakaya for the purpose of extinguishing all

defilements which are the root causes of all pain and suffering.

4. **Samicipatipanno:** It means endeavoring to adhere to the Dhamma-Vinaya to the point of being willing to give up one's life in order to observe all of the disciplinary rules in spite of difficulties.

Such practices enable the Buddhist monk to attain the Dhammakaya and become an Ariya personage. There are four pairs or eight Ariya personages. These include

- 1) Dhammakaya-sotapattimagga,
- 2) Dhammakaya-sotapattiphala,
- 3) Dhammakaya-sakadagamimagga,
- 4) Dhammakaya-sakadagamiphala,
- 5) Dhammakaya-anagamimagga,
- 6) Dhammakaya-anagamiphala,
- 7) Dhammakaya-arahattamagga,
- 8) Dhammakaya-arahattaphala.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the Buddhist monks deserving of the five fruits as described above are necessarily Ariya personages. Even so, any Buddhist monk, who practices the seven steps according to the Dhammannu Sutta, is still worthy of these five fruits. There are two reasons for this.

1. Any Buddhist monk who can earnestly practice according to the Dhammannu Sutta's seven steps will be able to keep his body, speech, and mind clean. He will definitely be able to attain any of the different stages of Ariyahood.

---

<sup>1</sup> Phrabhavanaviriyakhun (Padet Dattajeevo), The Buddha-Virtues, the Dhamma-Virtues, the Sangha-Virtues (Bangkok: Naruemit Sol Press), 2546 B.E., page 233



2. Any Buddhist monk who has endeavored to practice the Dhammannu Sutta's seven steps is said to be Supatipanno, Ujupatipanno, Nayapatipanno, and Samicipatipanno. As such, the Lord Buddha says that he is worthy of the five fruits described above even though he may not yet attain any stage of Ariyahood.

### 3.2 The First Step Is Called "Dhammannu"

This first step has to do with how to become a Dhammannu person.

#### 3.2.1 Being Dhammannu

*The Lord Buddha says, "Behold, monks, how does a Buddhist monk become Dhammannu? A Buddhist monk becomes Dhammanu because he knows the Dhamma, i.e. the Sutta, the Geyya, the Veyyakarana, the Gatha, the Udana, the Itivuttaka, the Jataka, the Abbhutadhamma, and the Vedalla.*

*If the Buddhist monk does not know the Dhamma, i.e. the Sutta, the Geyya, the Veyyakarana, the Gatha, the Udana, the Itivuttaka, the Jataka, the Abbhutadhamma, and the Vedalla, he cannot be said to be Dhammannu.*

*But only the Buddhist monk who knows the Dhamma, i.e. the Sutta, the Geyya, the Veyyakarana, the Gatha, the Udana, the Itivuttaka, the Jataka, the Abbhutadhamma, and the Vedalla, can be said to be Dhammannu."*

### 3.2.2 The Meaning of Dhammannu

“**Dhammannu**” means one who knows the Dhamma.

The word “**Dhamma**” here has two meanings.

1. It means goodness, correctness, justice<sup>2</sup>
2. It means reality, i.e. birth, aging, death, etc.

In Buddhism, the word “Dhamma” is derived from the Pali word “Dhara” which means to sustain. Therefore, Dhamma means sustaining a thing’s natural state. There are three kinds of Dhamma.

1. **Kusaladhamma**: It means sustaining the state of merit, i.e. non-greed, non-anger, non-ignorance.
2. **Akusaladhamma**: It means sustaining the state of demerit, i.e. greed, anger, ignorance.
3. **Abyakatadhamma**: It means sustaining the neutral state of neither merit nor demerit, i.e. sleep.

Kusaladhamma sustains wholesomeness and prevents it from turning into unwholesomeness. Akusaladhamma sustains unwholesomeness and prevents it from turning into wholesomeness. Abyakatadhamma sustains neutrality and prevents it from turning into neither wholesomeness nor unwholesomeness.

The Dhamma taught by the Lord Buddha is called Kusaladhamma. It is the pure nature which dwells inside every human being. Whoever can attain Kusaladhamma will be able to purify his body, speech, and mind such that he can extinguish defilements and attain Nibbana.

The Lord Buddha calls this pure nature, “**Saccadhamma**”. The knowledge of Truth attained through the Lord Buddha’s Self-Enlightenment and was later taught to the people is called “**Desanadhamma**”. When the people practice

---

<sup>2</sup> Royal Institute Dictionary, 2542 B.E. (Bangkok, Nanmee Book Publication), page 553

the Lord Buddha's Teachings to such an extent that they adore morality, truth, and merit but abhor demerit, this state is called "**Siladhamma**".

**To know the Dhamma according to the Dhammannu Sutta means knowing Desanadhamma.** The Lord Buddha's Dhamma lectures are numerous and varied because His audiences were numerous and varied in terms of their background, habits, etc. When the questions were asked in prose and verses, the Lord Buddha would answer them in prose and verses as well. At times the Lord Buddha decreed a disciplinary rule called the Vinaya. At other times, He recounted stories of His previous lives to His disciples. There are altogether nine different ways in which the Lord Buddha delivers His Dhamma lectures. These include the Sutta, the Geyya, the Veyyakarana, the Gatha, the Udana, the Itivuttaka, the Jataka, the Abbhutadhamma, and the Vedalla.

### 3.2.3 Navangasatthusasana

These nine different types of Dhamma lectures are called "Navangasatthusasana". And they had been passed down by the Buddhist monks through the oral tradition since the Lord Buddha's time until they were written down to form the body of the Tipitaka. There are three parts to the Tipitaka as follows.

1. The Vinaya Pitaka: It is a compilation of the male and female monks' disciplinary rules, part of which belongs to the "Sutta".
2. The Suttantapitaka: It is a compilation of Dhamma lectures. It includes the Sutta, the Veyyakarana, the Geyya, the Gatha, the Udana, the Itivuttaka, the Jataka, the Abbhutadhamma, and the Vedalla.
3. The Abhidhammapitaka: It is a compilation of Paramatthadhamma (Dhamma lectures about the Absolute Truth). All of it belongs to the Veyyakarana.

Therefore, knowing the Dhamma means knowing the Lord Buddha's Teachings as contained in the Tipitaka.

### 3.3 Why Must One Study the Dhamma?

When we learn about the Lord Buddha's Teachings as contained in the Tipitaka, we can apply what we have learnt in our daily life so that we can live our life correctly. At the very least, we can accumulate merit, pursue Perfections, and perform all kinds of wholesome deeds. We will know to stay away from all forms of unwholesomeness.

The Buddhist monk who has earnestly studied the Tipitaka should be able to summarize what he has learnt into categories as follows.

1. **Knowledge and Understanding about the Reality of Life and the World:** Everything and every living being come into being, exist for a time, and disappear because everything and every living being are governed by the Three Characteristics. (These include impermanence, the inability to remain the same, and the absence of true selfhood). This fact should behoove one to remove attachment to people, animals and things. One is then motivated to perform wholesome deeds in earnest knowing that one's time on earth is limited.
2. **Knowledge and Understanding about the Law of Kamma:** One reaps what one sows. Good deeds beget good consequences. Evil deeds beget evil consequences. Lessons about the Law of Kamma are taught by the Lord Buddha by way of the Jataka stories which are the stories about the Lord Buddha's previous lives. Knowledge and understanding about the Law of Kamma causes one to be repelled by evil and fearful of the ill consequences of evil deeds. One is motivated to perform only wholesome deeds and avoid all forms of unwholesomeness.

3. **Knowledge and Understanding about the Four Noble Truths:** Pain and suffering is caused by aging, sickness, death, sadness, grief, frustration, etc. The root causes of pain and suffering are defilements and craving. The Lord Buddha tells us that defilements can be successfully extinguished by practicing according to the Middle Way (Majjhimapatipada). The practice gives rise to Sila (morality), Samadhi (concentration), and Panna (supernormal insight).
4. **Knowledge and Understanding about the Lord Buddha's Pursuit of Perfections:** The Dhamma lectures concerning the Lord Buddha's pursuit of Perfections are given in the "Jataka", the "Apadana", the "Buddhavongsa", the Cariyapitaka, etc. From these teachings, one gains a good understanding of how one can go about pursuing all Ten Perfections<sup>3</sup> to the fullest extent.

It can be said that the Buddhist monk studies the Dhamma so that he can not only learn about the Lord Buddha's Teachings but also practice them.

### 3.4 How to Study the Dhamma

The Dhamma can be learnt in two ways as follows.

1. **During the Lord Buddha's Time:** The Buddhist monk learnt the Dhamma by listening to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lectures and memorizing them. The teachings were then passed down by the oral tradition. This method required that the Buddhist monk see the Lord Buddha regularly. But if he lived elsewhere and away from the Lord Buddha, he had to learn the Lord Buddha's Teachings from his Preceptor, his Dhamma teachers or his fellow monks.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Ten Perfections include Generosity Perfection, Morality Perfection, Renunciation Perfection, Wisdom Perfection, Endeavor Perfection, Patience Perfection, Truthfulness Perfection, Resolution Perfection, Loving-Kindness Perfection, and Equanimity Perfection.

- 2. Today:** The Buddhist monk learns the Dhamma by studying the Tipitaka or by reading relevant texts. To learn the Dhamma quickly and effectively by reading the Tipitaka, the following techniques can be applied.
1. One should endeavor to read the Tipitaka regularly and continuously.
  2. One should look up the meaning of different words in the dictionary because the larger one's Pali vocabulary is, the easier and faster it will be for one to learn the Dhamma.
  3. One should summarize what one has read to make it easier to memorize.
  4. At times one may wish to compare the Thai version with the Pali version or one Thai version with another Thai version in order to gain a clearer understanding of a certain topic or settle a question.
  5. One should at times consult with an expert in the field about what one has learnt.
  6. One should practice meditation to keep one's mind calm and quiet before reading the Dhamma, since the Lord Buddha's Teachings are profound.

However, the best way to learn the Dhamma is by listening to it. Read as much of the Dhamma as one wishes, but one must still find opportunities to listen to valuable Dhamma lectures from those who are truly learnt in the Dhamma.

### 3.5 The Search for Wisdom

Listening to Dhamma lectures is one way to increase one's wisdom. In the Pannavuddhi Sutta<sup>4</sup>, the Lord Buddha says,

**“Behold, monks, these four practices encourage the growth of wisdom. These include:**

- (1) Sappurisasansevo** Keep the company of a righteous person.
- (2) Saddhammassavanan** Listen to the Dhamma.
- (3) Yonisomanasikaro** Cultivate analytical reflection.
- (4) Dhammanudhammapatipatti** Practice the Dhamma.

To make the most of one's study, one must follow these four practices.

**1. Keep the Company of a Righteous Person:** It means finding a good and righteous teacher.

A good and righteous teacher is instrumental to one's learning because he is there to teach one and guide one. He can give one answers to any questions one may have about what one is studying. He enables one to make progress in one's study and develop virtues through one's self-training in a timely manner. He is a role model of wholesomeness. And he is there to encourage one and support one in one's endeavor.

Keeping the company of a good and righteous teacher is important to one's self-training. The Lord Buddha knows the importance of righteous teachers. He decrees that newly ordained Buddhist monks (Navaka) or the Buddhist monks who have been in the monkhood for less than five years to be under the close supervision of their Preceptor. It is

---

<sup>4</sup> *Paññāvuḍḍhi Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Catukakanipāta.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 35, no. 248, p. 613

the Preceptor who sees to it that the new Buddhist monk practices accordingly in order to become a true monk.

Having found a good and righteous teacher, it is important that one seeks him out and asks him questions about the Dhamma. In other words, one diligently learns from one's teacher.

**2. Listen to the Dhamma:** It means believing in what the teacher has to teach. Having sought out the righteous teacher and listened to his teaching, one must be able to summarize what is being taught.

To be a good student, one must practice as follows.

1. One must not think the Dhamma topic being taught as being too simple.
2. One must not underestimate the teacher's ability.
3. One must not think oneself too stupid to learn the Dhamma.
4. One must be attentive during lessons.
5. One must cultivate analytical reflection.

The following story is about having respect for education.<sup>5</sup>

On one occasion, the Lord Buddha gave a Dhamma lecture on the benefits of learning the Vinaya (the code of monastic discipline). During the lecture, He also praised Venerable Upali for being foremost in the area of the Vinaya. As a result, all the new, not so new as well as senior monks wanted to learn the Vinaya from Venerable Upali.

During the lesson, Venerable Upali did not sit down out of respect for the senior monks. The senior monks did not sit

---

<sup>5</sup> *Vinaya-kathā Vinayapiṭaka Cullavagga. Part II.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 9, p. 148



down out of respect for the Dhamma that Venerable Upali was teaching. With more lessons, both the teacher and the learners became quite tired and achy. When the situation became known to the Lord Buddha, He allowed the Dhamma teacher to sit on a cushion at the same or at a higher level than the learners. At the same time, the learners were allowed to sit on a cushion at the same or at a lower level than the teacher.

When we have respect for education, our mind will be receptive to what is being taught and our respect for education will motivate the teacher to freely pass on his knowledge to us. The learner makes himself like an empty vessel where water from a higher level can flow into it.

**3. Cultivate Analytical Reflection:** It is the “why” of the learning process. It means reflecting upon what one has learnt.

In contemplating the cause and effect of what is being taught, one gains a deeper understanding of what one is learning; hence, one becomes wiser. On this subject, this is what Venerable Ananda had to say to Venerable Sariputra.

***“Behold, Sariputra, the Buddhist monk is good at knowing the meaning in that***

***(1) He is good at knowing the Dhamma topics***

***(2) He is good at knowing the alphabets***

***(3) He is good at knowing how to use the language***

***(4) He is good at knowing the Dhamma from beginning to end (5).***

***For these reasons, the Buddhist monk can quickly contemplate all the Dhamma topics. He is a good***

***and effective learner. And he does not forget anything that he has learnt.”<sup>6</sup>***

- 4. Practice the Dhamma:** It is the “how” of the learning process. It means practicing what is being taught in one’s daily life.

These four methods of cultivating wisdom show clearly that one needs to have one’s teachers as one’s virtuous friends. Although our Lord Buddha and the Arahats have already attained Nibbana, there remain His disciples who can act as our teachers and virtuous friends. It remains for us to seek them out, learn the Dhamma from them, and apply our selves accordingly.

### **3.6 How to Be Dhammannu**

To be Dhammannu, the Buddhist monk must practice as follows.

1. He must study or read the Tipitaka in its entirety.
2. After having studied each topic, for example, the Law of Kamma, the Lord Buddha’s Perfections pursuit, etc., he must be able to summarize what he has learnt.
3. He must have Right View and his belief in the Lord Buddha’s self-enlightened knowledge must also grow.

Only after the Buddhist monk has practiced these things that the Lord Buddha will say that he is “Dhammannu”.

---

<sup>6</sup> ***Nisanti Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 169, p. 362

### **3.7 Dhammannu and the Ganakamoggallana Sutta**

Each of the six steps of the self-training process described in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta begins by deploying the first step described in the Dhammannu Sutta. For example, the first step of the Ganakamoggallana Sutta is exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha. The Buddhist monk must begin this step by undertaking a thorough study of the subject at hand through reading and/or listening. This process must be repeated for the rest of the six steps. In other words, every step of the training process must begin with being Dhammannu.

### **3.8 Dhamma Study and the Householder**

#### **3.8.1 The Objective of Dhamma Study**

Although the householder's life is filled with many secular obligations, he must still find time to study some relevant Dhamma topics.

As a householder, there are two levels to his life objective. One is achieving success here and now. And the other is making provisions for one's life in the hereafter. The householder must be able to practice the Lord Buddha's Teachings in his daily life so that he can accumulate merit while spending time earning a living and fulfilling other obligations. He regularly gives alms to rid his mind of miserliness. He regularly observes the Five Precepts to rid his mind of anger. He regularly practices meditation to rid his mind of ignorance. These three practices are instrumental in preventing the householder's mind from being dominated by defilements and keeping his body, speech, and mind clean.

### **3.8.2 Examples of the Dhamma Principles to Be Studied**

Given the limitations of the householder's life, the householder should still endeavor to study certain topics befitting a practicing Buddhist. Some of these topics include:

1. Dana (Alms-Giving), Sila (Morality), and Bhavana (Meditation Practice)
2. The History of the Lord Buddha's Perfections Pursuit
3. Right View
4. The Law of Kamma

One studies these Dhamma topics so that one can understand them and practice them earnestly for one's success and happiness here and now as well as in future existences. One endeavors to emulate our Lord Buddha as best as possible especially in regards to His pursuit of Perfections. One realizes that one reaps what one sows. Therefore, one endeavors to perform only wholesome deeds with one's body, speech, and mind. At the same time, one endeavors to abstain completely from anything unwholesome.

As time and opportunity allow, the householder should endeavor to study other Dhamma topics as well.

### **3.8.3 How to Study the Dhamma**

Today, there are several ways by which one can learn the Dhamma. One can read the Tipitaka. One can listen to Dhamma lectures on CDs or MP3s. One can watch Dhamma programs on television or DVDs.

In addition, the search for wisdom as taught in the Pannaviddhidhamma Sutta also applies in the case of the householder.

1. **Finding a Good and Righteous Teacher:** The householder should make time to attend the temple and listen to Dhamma lectures from the monks who practice righteousness according to the Dhamma-Vinaya. He can also take courses in Buddhist Studies. Etc.
2. **Listening Attentively to What Is Being Taught:** The householder should pay close attention to what is being taught so that he can understand it and memorize it. He should also ask a question if he cannot understand something.
3. **Contemplating What He Has Learnt:** The householder does this to increase his understanding of the topic and its details.
4. **Practicing What He Has Learnt:** This applies especially to alms-giving, Precepts observation and meditation practice in that one must practice them daily.

## ASSIGNMENTS

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook before proceeding to the next chapter.

# Chapter 4

---

## The Second Step: Atthannu

## **Chapter 4**

### **Step 2: Atthannu**

#### **Contents**

---

- 4.1 Being Atthannu**
- 4.2 The Meaning of Atthannu**
- 4.3 The Main Points of Atthannu**
- 4.4 The Importance of Atthannu**
  - 4.4.1 The Correct Interpretation of the Lord Buddha's Sayings
  - 4.4.2 The Benefit of Correct Interpretation
  - 4.4.3 The Harm of Misinterpretation
  - 4.4.4 How to Prevent Misinterpretation from Happening
- 4.5 Learning to Be Atthannu**
  - 4.5.1 Interpreting the Dhamma
  - 4.5.2 Putting the Dhamma into Practice
- 4.6 Conclusion**
- 4.7 Learning to be Atthannu for the Householder**
  - 4.7.1 Interpreting the Dhamma
  - 4.7.2 Putting the Dhamma into Practice

## Concepts

---

1. Being Atthannu means being knowledgeable in the Lord Buddha's Teachings. A Buddhist monk must learn to be Dhammannu before he can learn to be Atthannu. He must be able to correctly interpret the Teachings so that he knows how to go about putting what he has learnt into practice in order to continue making progress in his cultivation of virtues.
2. For the householder, it is also important that he interprets the Dhamma correctly so that he can apply what he has learnt in his daily life in order to continue making progress in his cultivation of virtues.

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to learn about the meaning and importance of "Atthannu".
2. To enable the student to know how to correctly interpret the Lord Buddha's Teachings and how a Buddhist monk can apply the Teachings to his self-training.
3. To enable the student to know how the householder can apply what he has learnt in his daily life through such practices as alms-giving, Precepts observation, and meditation practice.



## Chapter 4

### Step 2: Atthannu

#### 4.1 Being Atthannu

The step following Dhammannu is called Atthannu. Now that the Buddhist monk has studied the Lord Buddha's Teachings, the next thing he needs to do is to correctly interpret them. In the process of learning to be Atthannu, the Buddhist monk will be inspired to apply what he has learnt to his self-training so that he can make good progress.

The Lord Buddha wishes the Buddhist monk not only to study His Teachings but to also correctly interpret them.

#### 4.2 The Meaning of Atthannu

The word "Atthannu" means being knowledgeable in the Lord Buddha's Teachings through diligent listening, memorizing, reciting, and contemplating. He can then practice what he has learnt through his action, word, and thought.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4.3 The Main Points of Atthannu

According to the Lord Buddha, the Buddhist monk cannot learn to be Atthannu unless he has already learnt to be Dhammannu. The reasons are:

1. In learning to be Dhammannu, the Buddhist monk will have already learnt about the Lord Buddha's Teachings. This knowledge will help him to correctly interpret them during the second step called Atthannu.

---

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the "Dhammanukrom" by the Supreme Patriarch, Kromluangvachirayannavong, 2527 B.E., pages 205-206

2. Having become knowledgeable in the different Dhamma topics, the Buddhist monk is in the position to contemplate all that he has learnt to make sure that his interpretation of the teaching in each topic is correct.

Therefore, to be Dhammannu, the Buddhist monk must study all of the Lord Buddha's Teachings such that he can summarize them and memorize them to a good extent. He can then learn to be Atthannu by:

1. Contemplating what he has learnt until he can understand how to correctly interpret the different teachings.
2. Applying what he has learnt to his self-training for the purpose of cultivating higher virtues.

In actual fact, no Buddhist monk waits until he has studied the entire Tipitaka before putting the teachings into practice. Chances are that he begins by earnestly studying as much of the Lord Buddha's Teachings as possible. Having understood what he has learnt, he can begin to put these teachings into practice with the help of a Dhamma teacher or the Preceptor. In other words, he puts into practice what he has learnt under the guidance of a Dhamma teacher. At the same time, he continues to learn more and more of the Lord Buddha's Teachings. In this way, his "Dhammannu" and "Atthannu" can improve alongside each other.

#### **4.4 The Importance of Atthannu**

##### **4.4.1 The Correct Interpretation of the Lord Buddha's Sayings**

Soon after His Self-Enlightenment, the Lord Buddha had the following thought.

***"Now is not yet the time to teach the Truth which I have attained with difficulty. Living beings that are dominated by greed, anger, and ignorance cannot***

***easily attain the Truth called Nibbana because it is profound, refined, and goes against the current of defilements.***<sup>2</sup>

This saying of the Lord Buddha shows that the Truth or the Dhamma is much too refined and too profound to be attained by living beings on their own. It is like an ocean which is so vast and so deep that an animal like a mouse or a rabbit cannot possibly fathom it.

Even so, the Lord Buddha has made it possible for one to learn and understand the Dhamma through His ingenious teaching method. However, one must never make the mistake of thinking that the Dhamma is simple because in its simplicity there may lay great profundity. At one point, Venerable Ananda remarked that the Paticcasamuppada or the Law of Causation is easy to understand but the Lord Buddha cautioned him against saying such a thing.<sup>3</sup>

Generally, what the Lord Buddha says can have different meanings depending on the text, the objective, the incident or the person involved. For example, the word “stop” used by the Lord Buddha in the case of Ongulimala has three different meanings altogether.

On one occasion, the Lord Buddha was staying at the Jetavanna Temple built by the wealthy man, Anathapindika, in the city of Savatthi. At the time, there was an outlaw called Ongulimala. He had already killed a large number of people and had made a necklace out of the index finger of each of his victims.

The Lord Buddha saw with His supernormal insight that Ongulimala had adequate accumulated merit to attain

---

<sup>2</sup> ***Anacchariyagāthā Vinayapiṭaka Mahāvagga. Part I.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 6, p. 30

<sup>3</sup> ***Nidāna Sutta Samyuttanikāya Nidānavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 26, no. 224-229, p. 270-272

Arahatship. Therefore, He went to the place where Ongulimala was waiting to ambush his next victim. Ongulimala saw the Lord Buddha and began to chase after Him with a raised sword. The Lord Buddha employed His supernormal powers to keep Ongulimala behind Him however fast he was trying to run. Meanwhile, the Lord Buddha was walking normally. Finally, Ongulimala stopped running and said to the Lord Buddha,

***“Stop, monk, stop.”***

The Lord Buddha said to Ongulimala, ***“I have stopped, Ongulimala. It is now time for you to stop.”***

The Lord Buddha’s answer puzzled Ongulimala. He knew the Lord Buddha, being a monk, to be speaking the truth. But he did not understand why the Lord Buddha said that He had stopped while he was still walking and told him to stop when he had already stopped running. Ongulimala asked the Lord Buddha to explain His remark.

The Lord Buddha said that He had stopped killing and injuring others but Ongulimala had not. Ongulimala suddenly realized the true meaning of the Lord Buddha’s words and put down his sword. He then asked to be ordained. As a Buddhist monk, he endeavored to practice meditation until soon afterward he was able to extinguish all defilements and became an Arahat.<sup>4</sup>

One can see that the word “stop” as understood by Ongulimala has a different meaning than what the Lord Buddha had intended. Ongulimala understood the word to mean stop moving while the Lord Buddha used the word to mean stop performing evil deeds physically, verbally, and mentally. Ongulimala also came to understand the word to mean “bringing the mind to a standstill” when he had

---

<sup>4</sup> ***Angulimala Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Majjhimpāṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 21, no. 521, p. 141

successfully practiced meditation until he was able to attain Arahatsip. In meditation practice, the word “stop” can be interpreted according to the Most Venerable Phramonkolthepmuni as follows.<sup>5</sup>

***“The Lord Buddha completely subdued Ongulimala with the words, ‘I have already stopped but you have not.’ These words are true because once one has brought one’s mind to a standstill, one does not retreat from it but one continues to achieve an increasingly greater level of stillness until Arahatsip can be attained.”***

From this example alone, one can appreciate how the same word can have different meanings altogether. Therefore, it behooves one to correctly interpret the Lord Buddha’s words so that one can practice them correctly.

#### **4.4.2 The Benefit of Correct Interpretation**

Since the same word can have different meanings, it is important that one learns to interpret each Dhamma topic as correctly as possible. Correct interpretation can make a huge difference in the time it takes for one to attain the different stages of Ariyahood as demonstrated by Venerable Sonakolivisa. He had endeavored to practice meditation for a long while but since he had not practiced it correctly, he could not attain Ariyahood. Once the Lord Buddha made it clear to him the correct way to practice meditation, he did attain Arahatsip easily and fairly quickly afterward.

---

<sup>5</sup> The Dhamma Lecture Given by Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro) on the subject of “Mangalagatha”, September 20, 2496 B.E., page 90

### Venerable Sonakolivisa's Story<sup>6</sup>

---

While Venerable Sonakolivisa was staying in the Sitavanna Forest, he exerted too much physical effort by doing walking meditation until both his feet chafed and bled. But however hard he had tried, he could not attain Ariyahood. He was convinced that he did not lack in endeavor; and yet, his effort yielded nothing. Therefore, he was contemplating leaving the monkhood altogether to become a lay supporter of Buddhism, since he came from a very wealthy family. The Lord Buddha knew Venerable Sonakolivisa's thought and went to see him immediately.

Behold, Sonakolivisa, why entertaining such a thought? When you were a householder, you were familiar with the way the strings of a harp are strung, were you not?"

"I was, Most Exalted One."

"Now, Sona, can you play the harp when its strings are strung too tightly?"

"No, Most Exalted One."

"Sona, can you play the harp when its strings are strung too loosely?"

"No, Most Exalted One."

"Sona, can you play the harp when its strings are strung at just the right tension?"

"Yes, Most Exalted One."

"Well, then Sona, too much effort gives rise to runaway thoughts whereas too little effort gives rise to laziness. You should regularly apply just the right amount of effort instead."

---

<sup>6</sup> ***Vinayapiṭaka Mahāvagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 7, no. 2, p. 5

Venerable Sonakolivisa understood the Lord Buddha's words and spent time in solitude practicing them. Soon afterward, he was able to attain Arahatsip.

Venerable Sonakolivisa came close to leaving the monkhood because he did not know how to practice meditation correctly. But having correctly understood the Lord Buddha's advice and practiced it, he was able to attain Arahatsip finally.

#### 4.4.3 The Harm of Misinterpretation

Misinterpretation of the Lord Buddha's words can have a deleterious effect on one's self-training. At times, misinterpretation can lead to misunderstanding and causes one to commit a misdeed instead. This is demonstrated in the case of Venerable Arittha as follow.

#### **Venerable Arittha's Story<sup>7</sup>**

---

On one occasion, the Lord Buddha was staying at the Jetavana Temple built by the wealthy man, Anathapindika, in the city of Savatthi. Venerable Arittha was under the conviction that he knew all about the Lord Buddha's Teachings. He believed that what the Lord Buddha said to be harmful was not really so. He had this misunderstanding because he saw how the householders, albeit having attained Ariyahood as a Sotappana, a Sakadagami, or an Anagami were still enjoying sensual pleasures. He also saw how the Buddhist monks continued to enjoy lovely forms, lovely sounds, and lovely scents. They still enjoyed delicious food, soft and comfortable clothing and soft seat cushions. As a result, he concluded on his own that it was not wrong for him to touch a woman.

---

<sup>7</sup> ***Vinayapiṭaka Mahavibhaṅg.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 4, no. 662, p. 714

His thinking became known to his fellow monks and they tried to warn him. Finally, the Lord Buddha had Venerable Arittha fetched and said to him,

“You find fault with my words as a result of your own misunderstanding. You are harming yourself. What you are thinking, saying, and doing gives rise to demerit not merit, the result of which is everlasting suffering. Your action cannot convert non-believers into believers. Neither can it deepen a believers’ faith.”

Venerable Arittha decided to disrobe soon after having been chastised by the Lord Buddha and ended whatever opportunity he might have had to accumulate merit and pursue Perfections as a Buddhist monk.

It is clear how the misinterpretation of the Lord Buddha’s words can bring about demerit. It can have a negative effect on non-believers and believers alike. Ultimately, it can have a deleterious effect on Buddhism.

#### **4.4.4 How to Prevent Misinterpretation from Happening**

The best way to prevent misinterpretation from happening is to communicate often with a qualified Dhamma teacher who has undertaken self-training to the point where he practices righteousness and is truly learnt in the Lord Buddha’s Teachings. Such a teacher can also serve as the Buddhist monk’s virtuous friend.

Having easy access to such a teacher enables the Buddhist monk to cultivate virtues more quickly for two reasons: the availability of the teacher’s Dhamma knowledge and having the teacher as a role model. His teacher can be a role model for him in terms of time management, monastic duties, monastic practices according to the monastic code of discipline, proper monastic manners, etc. The Buddhist monk has the opportunity to develop good habits which will enable



him to reap the fruits of monkhood to the fullest extent. His teacher's encouragement will also allow him to stay the course. The Lord Buddha stresses the importance of having a good teacher in the Mahasunnata Sutta<sup>8</sup> to the effect that one's teacher is one's role model in terms of righteous practices. For the Buddhist monk who is already learnt in the Dhamma, he will then have the opportunity to better understand what he has learnt by practicing it. Equipped with both the theoretical and practical parts of the Dhamma, he is in a better position to learn a great deal more from his teacher. And he feels encouraged and motivated to continue improving himself.

## 4.5 Learning to Be Atthannu

There are two steps involved in this process.

1. Interpreting the Dhamma
2. Putting the Dhamma into practice

### 4.5.1 Interpreting the Dhamma

Having gone through the process of Dhammannu, the Buddhist monk has already understood the Dhamma to a certain extent. However, he still has no idea how well he has understood it until he can put it into practice. There are several ways to help the Buddhist monk to add to his Dhamma knowledge as follows.

1. Consider all of the Dhamma that one has learnt and try to gain some basic understanding of it.

---

<sup>8</sup> *Mahāsuññayata Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Uparipannāsa*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 23, no. 351, p. 21

2. Experiment by putting the Dhamma one has learnt into practice based on one's understanding of it. One should carry out the experiment under his teacher's supervision.
3. Compare what one is practicing with how his teacher has practiced it.
4. Be sure to ask one's teacher any question one may have about certain Dhamma topics.
5. Summarize all the Dhamma topics according to one's understanding of them so that one can gain a framework in which to undertake one's self-training.

The correct interpretation of the Lord Buddha's Sayings requires that one be very knowledgeable in them. Otherwise, one will not be able to see clearly how one should put them into practice. Even then, one still has need of a good teacher to help guide him in his practice and to further explain the Dhamma to him. It requires more than just thinking for the Dhamma knowledge to crystallize.

#### 4.5.2 Putting the Dhamma into Practice

Once the interpretation has been correctly carried out, the next step is to practice it earnestly. One must also pay close attention to the way one is practicing it so that one can formulate the method that is best suited to one's personal traits and surroundings. Nonetheless, for the Buddhist monk, all the practicing is carried out in his daily routine which includes:

1. **Religious Routine:** It includes chanting, meditation practice, going on an alms-round, cleaning the monastery, etc.
2. **Activities:** These are the special assignments given to the Buddhist monk by the monastic community and they may include maintenance work, accounting, etc.

In learning to be Atthannu, one is progressing along another step given in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta. The first step involves practicing restraint according to the Patimokkha (the Fundamental Precepts). The Buddhist monk begins by studying the Patimokkha according to the Dhammanu process until he has learnt all about the Patimokkha. The next step is to practice the Patimokkha according to the Atthannu process by correctly interpreting the Patimokkha before putting it into practice.

One example is the religious routine of going on an alms-round and how the practice involves the Patimokkha. The Buddhist monk must have knowledge of the Fundamental Precepts under the category of “Sekhiyavatta”, which involves going on an alms-round. The Lord Buddha decrees that ***the Buddhist monk know how to wear the robe properly.***<sup>9</sup> He must understand that as a Buddhist monk, he must represent an inspirational image. Therefore, he must know how to wear the robe properly. When he goes on his alms-round, he must bear in mind that he must play his part as a role model and a merit-field for the laity. Therefore, his body, speech, and mind must reflect who and what he is.

Having planned out the route of the alms-round, he must bear in mind another Fundamental Precept which says that ***the Buddhist monk must be composed as he goes to the houses.***<sup>10</sup> It means that the Buddhist monk must walk in a composed manner. He does not sway his body as he walks. He must keep his eyes on the ground about two meters ahead. He must not look about him. And he should also practice walking meditation.

After the alms-round, it is time to have his meal. The Buddhist monk should arrange whatever he needs in their proper places. During the meal, he should sit with his back straight.

<sup>9</sup> ***Vinayapiṭaka Mahavibhaṅg.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 4, p. 882

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 885

He should be composed and not look about him. He should carefully pick up just the right amount of food with his fork and spoon. The remaining food on the plate or in the alms-bowl should be gently pushed to the middle. He should not drop any rice and he should not extend his face and open his mouth toward the spoon. He should eat with mindfulness. He should not talk with food in his mouth. He should not chew his food loudly. He should not stick his tongue out to lick his lips. He should make sure that he does not make any noise with his fork, spoon, plate or bowl. These table manners are in line with the Fundamental Precepts which say, ***“The Buddhist monk who is eating should pay attention to his bowl; the Buddhist monk should make sure that his spoon is not too full of rice; the Buddhist monk should make sure not to make any noise while he is eating; etc.”***<sup>11</sup>

The earnest and diligent practice according to the Sekhiyavatta of the Patimokkha can help the Buddhist monk to form good habits and improve his personality. He will have conducted himself properly in the way he wears his robe, the way he walks, stands, sits, eats, etc., such that he correctly represents the image of a Buddhist monk. As a true monk, he also serves as an inspiration to his fellow monks and the laity. Such virtues have been successfully cultivated through the study, the correct interpretation and the correct practice of the Lord Buddha's Sayings.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

It can be concluded that to become Atthannu, the Buddhist monk must:

1. Be able to correctly interpret the Lord Buddha's Sayings

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 885

2. Be able to practice the Teachings until his body, speech, and mind become purer and purer.

Only after the Buddhist monk has met these requirements that ***the Lord Buddha considers him to be Dhammannu and Atthannu.***

#### **4.7 Learning to Be Atthannu for the Householder**

The process involved in becoming Atthannu for the householder is similar to that for the Buddhist monk except that it is not as strict.

##### **4.7.1 Interpreting the Dhamma**

The ability to correctly interpret the Lord Buddha's Sayings cannot happen without the assistance of a righteous teacher or a righteous monk who is learnt in the Lord Buddha's Sayings and has also practiced them for a long while. Therefore, learning to become Atthannu for the householder requires that he attend the temple to listen to Dhamma lectures regularly. He must also study the Dhamma and learn to interpret it correctly under the guidance of a Dhamma teacher. Having learnt to correctly interpret the Teachings, he must also put them into practice.

The earnest and daily practice of the Dhamma allows one to learn from one's own experiences. This allows him to address any problem or question that may arise. In consulting his Dhamma teacher with the problems or questions, he will have the opportunity to gain a more profound knowledge of the Dhamma.

It does not matter whether one is a Buddhist monk or a householder; every human being's ultimate life-goal is the attainment of Nibbana. Naturally, the lifestyle and practices of a Buddhist monk differ from those of a householder.

Nonetheless, everyone's ultimate life-goal is the extinguishment of the three families of defilements, namely, greed, anger, and ignorance.

The best way for the householder to keep defilements at bay is to practice the things that run counter to the three families of defilements. One counteracts greed by giving alms (Dana). One counteracts anger by observing the Precepts (Sila). And one counteracts ignorance by practicing meditation (Bhavana).

#### **Dana means to give.**

It means that one willingly shares what one has with others. What one has may be material things. It may be secular knowledge or Dhamma knowledge. One willingly shares what one has with others in order to benefit them. It is best that one practices Dana in order to lessen one's miserliness. It means that one should give without expecting anything in return except for merit and spiritual fulfillment.

#### **Sila means normalcy.**

It means the human norm. A normal person is a person who observes the Five Precepts. Normalcy keeps everything and everyone functioning normally. On the contrary, abnormality wreaks havoc. When the rain comes during the rainy season, farmers can grow and plant normally. But when the rain does not come during the rainy season, the result is food shortage. The farmers suffer and everyone in the community suffers.

#### **Bhavana is a mind-training technique.**

The aim of meditation practice is to keep the mind quiet and still. A mind that has been brought to a complete standstill is devoid of the Five Hindrances (Nivara-5) and defilements.

### 4.7.2 Putting the Dhamma into Practice

Once the householder understands that he can chip away the three families of defilements by giving alms, observing the Precepts, and practicing meditation, he should earnestly practice them daily while he fulfills other obligations in life. The rule of thumb is as follows.<sup>12</sup>

1. In the morning, one does not have breakfast unless one has already given alms.
2. One does not leave the house unless one is determined to observe the Five Precepts.
3. At night, one does not go to sleep unless one has already chanted and practiced meditation.

When it comes to self-training and the accumulation of wholesome deeds, one must endeavor to persist despite obstacles. On this subject, this is what the Lord Buddha has to say:

***“One drop of water at a time can fill the water container to the brim. Likewise, a small amount of merit when accumulated often can cause the person to be replete with merit.”<sup>13</sup>***

It is important that the householder gives alms, observes the Precepts, and practice meditation regularly because it is the Buddhist way of life.

1. **Alms-Giving:** Everyone can learn to give without expecting anything in return. A child may share a snack or a toy with its friend. An adult may share a special dish with a neighbor or bring it into work to share with his or her coworkers. Everyone can contribute when it is

---

<sup>12</sup> Venerable Somchai Thanavuddho, *Life's Blessings for the Dhammayads* (Bangkok: Tankarnpim, 2542 B.E.), page 49

<sup>13</sup> *Khuddaka-nikāya Gāthā-Dhammapada*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 42, p. 2

a communal activity by helping with the cleaning, cooking, etc. One may also share one's secular and Dhamma knowledge with other people. One can practice forgiveness. One can release life animals and fish. Etc.

The alms offered to the Buddhist monks who practice righteousness according to the Dhamma-Vinaya earn one a tremendous amount of merit. One may offer food every morning to the monk or novice monk who is on his alms-round. Or one may put some money aside each day and at the end of the week make an offering of the money saved to the monks and novice monks at the temple. One should also find the opportunity to make an offering to the monastic community as a whole or invite the monks to have a meal at one's house on such special occasions as the Buddhist Holy Day, a house-warming ceremony, a birthday anniversary, etc.

2. **Precepts Observation:** One is determined to keep every living being safe by not killing anything or anyone. One is determined to keep other people's belongings safe by not stealing. One is determined to keep other people's family members safe by not committing sexual misconduct. One is determined to keep the trust of other people by not lying. Moreover, one practices endearing speech. One is determined to maintain mindfulness by not consuming alcohol or other addictive substances.
3. **Meditation Practice:** One can begin by closing one's eyes and keeping one's mind quiet for a moment before spreading loving-kindness to all living beings. During lunch break, one may close one's eyes for five to ten minutes or more. One can do the same thing at bedtime. One should endeavor to practice meditation this way until it becomes a habit and a daily routine. On weekends or a holiday, one can attend the temple and practice meditation for longer periods. One should also take a few days off work to attend a meditation retreat whenever one can.



Alms-giving, Precepts observation, and meditation practice can be performed daily. On certain days, one may wish to give alms by offering food to all the monks at the temple. One may wish to observe the Eight Precepts. Or one may wish to practice meditation for a long period such as all night long by doing a combination of sitting meditation, standing meditation, and walking meditation. This is called “Nesajjikangan”. These wholesome activities help chip away greed, anger, and ignorance and make the body, speech, and mind increasingly pure.

These earnest practices enable one to progress from Dhammnu to Atthannu as higher virtues are cultivated. Dhammannu and Atthannu can continue to be developed further and further without end. The end results are higher virtues, elevated meditative attainments, calmness, composure, grace, attractiveness, and admirability.

## ASSIGNMENTS

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook before proceeding to the next chapter.

# Chapter 5

---

## The Third Step: Attannu

## **Chapter 5**

### **The Third Step: Attannu**

#### **Contents**

---

- 5.1 What Is Attannu?**
- 5.2 What Is Virtue?**
- 5.3 How to Evaluate One's Virtue**
- 5.4 The Six Criteria**
  - 5.4.1 Saddha (Faith)
  - 5.4.2 Sila (Morality)
  - 5.4.3 Suta (Learning by Listening)
  - 5.4.4 Caga (Charity)
  - 5.4.5 Panna (Wisdom)
  - 5.4.6 Patibhana (Sagacity)
- 5.5 The Importance of the Six Criteria**
- 5.6 Applying the Six Criteria**
  - 5.6.1 Evaluating One's Saddha
  - 5.6.2 Evaluating One's Sila
  - 5.6.3 Evaluating One's Suta
  - 5.6.4 Evaluating One's Caga
  - 5.6.5 Evaluating One's Panna
  - 5.6.6 Evaluating One's Patibhana
- 5.7 Comparative Evaluation**
- 5.8 Conclusion**

## Concepts

---

1. The step following Dhammannu and Atthannu is called “Attannu”. It is the process used for self-evaluation. In measuring or evaluating something, one needs a measuring tool. It can be a measuring tape, a scale, etc. Likewise, to evaluate one’s virtue, the Lord Buddha has given us a tool called the six criteria. These include Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhana (sagacity). Regular self-evaluation protects one from arrogance and degradation but encourages one to continue cultivating higher virtues. Self-evaluation allows the Buddhist monk to grow and prosper in the Dhamma and becomes a quality merit-field for the laity.
2. The householder can also apply these six criteria to evaluate his own virtue through such activities as alms-giving, Precepts observation, and meditation practice. After all, it is every living being’s ultimate goal to work toward the Path and Fruit of Nibbana

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to learn about the importance of self-evaluation.
2. To enable the student to learn about the six criteria and how they are related to each other.
3. To enable the student to apply the six criteria to his self-evaluation.

## Chapter 5

### The Third Step: Attannu

In the business world, a potential employee is usually given a trial work period of one, three or six months before the decision is made to take him on as a permanent employee. Some potential employees fail the process because of health issues, the lack of basic virtues such as discipline, respect, and patience, the lack of adequate ability and knowledge, etc. Even after a person becomes a permanent employee, his performance has to continue to be regularly appraised. Performance appraisal may result in salary adjustment, bonus payment, an increase in medical insurance and life insurance or a promotion.

Likewise, in the Dhamma world, the ultimate goal of the Buddhist monk is to make clear the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. Some Buddhist monks make faster progress than others. A fast progress is made possible by the Buddhist monk's vast amount of merit which had been accumulated in his previous existences. He has undertaken self-training and self-evaluation lifetime after lifetime and had in these previous existences taken the time and effort to constantly improve himself. A slow progress may be a result of ill health or the lack of self-training and self-evaluation.

Every Buddhist monk regardless of the amount of his accumulated merit can make progress if he earnestly undertakes self-training and self-evaluation so that he can be aware of how well he is doing at any point in time. This way he can in a timely manner work on the areas where improvement is needed as he keeps his mind on his ultimate goal which is Nibbana.

## 5.1 What is Attannu?

Now that the Buddhist monk has undertaken self-training in terms of Dhammannu (being learnt in the Dhamma) and Atthannu (being able to correctly interpret the Dhamma), the next step of the process is called Attannu. On the subject of Attannu, this is what the Lord Buddha has to say.

***“To become Attannu, the Buddhist monk must have self-knowledge in terms of Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhana (sagacity).***

***The Buddhist monk who has no self-knowledge in terms of Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhana (sagacity) cannot be said to be Attannu.***

***Only the Buddhist monk who has self-knowledge in terms of Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhana (sagacity) can be said to be Attannu.***

***Such is the way that the Buddhist monk becomes Dhammannu, Atthannu, and Attannu.”***

## The Meaning of Attannu

The word “Atta” means the self, the mind, or the spirit.<sup>1</sup>

An Attannu person is a person who possesses self-knowledge. He knows about his status, his position, his gender, his knowledge, his abilities, his talents, his virtue, etc.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Pali-Thai Dictionary for Students, Improved Edition, the third printing, (Bangkok: Prayooravong Printing, 2538 B.E.), page 14

He knows these things about himself well enough to conduct himself properly and advantageously.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, Attannu means self-knowledge. One knows how many or how few virtues one possesses so that one can continue to improve one's self.

## 5.2 What Is Virtue?

“Virtue” means a morally good behavior, a moral character, a good and moral quality.<sup>3</sup>

Virtue is mental, verbal and physical goodness expressed by a person's thought, word and action. A virtuous person has the ability to control his mind, word and body in that he does not think evil thoughts, say evil words or commit evil deeds. Moreover, a virtuous person sincerely and regularly encourages others to think, say, and do things that are good and moral.

### • What gives rise to virtue?

Once a Buddhist monk is learnt in the Dhamma and can correctly interpret it, he then practices it in order to scrub his mind, word and body clean of defilements. With continuous practice, he naturally loves goodness and abhors evil. This good habit has now become a virtue.

Once virtue has been cultivated, the Buddhist monk must continue to undertake self-training according to the Lord Buddha's Teachings. He can never entertain the thought that he is finished with self-training because for as long as he still

---

<sup>2</sup> The Buddhist Studies Dictionary, the eighth printing, (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Printing Press, 2538 B.E.), page 398

<sup>3</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online

cannot completely extinguish defilements, the work of self-training must continue.

### 5.3 How to Evaluate One's Virtues

It is very important that one regularly evaluates one's virtues to see how one is faring at any point in time in terms of the standard set by the Lord Buddha. One must earnestly wish to make progress continuously. Should one believe that one is not making any progress at all, then one needs to address the cause of the problem. It may be that one is becoming lax. Or it may be one's surroundings, one's health problems, etc. Once the cause has been identified, one can then try to remedy the situation.

Being observant and identifying the cause of the problem enable one to continue with one's self-training and prevent one from becoming reckless. On this subject, this is what the Lord Buddha has to say.<sup>4</sup>

***“Behold, monks, I do not praise the maintenance of wholesome practices. How then can I praise the laxity in wholesome practices? Behold, monks, what I praise is the progress made in wholesome practices.***

***.....Behold, monks, a Buddhist monk whose cultivation of Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhan (sagacity) is lacking or not increasing can be said to be lax where every form of wholesomeness is concerned.”***

---

<sup>4</sup> ***Thiti Sutta. Āṅuttaranikāya Dasakanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 38, no. 53, p. 173



In the Lord Buddha's Saying above, it is clear that:

1. The Lord Buddha does not praise the Buddhist monk whose cultivation of virtues has stagnated.
2. The Lord Buddha does not praise the Buddhist monk whose virtues have deteriorated.
3. The Lord Buddha praises the Buddhist monk whose cultivation of virtues is increasing all the time.

The virtues stated in this teaching include Saddha, Sila, Suta, Caga, Panna, and Patibhan.

### Case Studies on Self-Evaluation

It is important that the Buddhist monk knows how to evaluate his own virtues in order to avoid the pitfalls of self-training as shown in the following story.

#### Venerable Mahatissa Thera's Story<sup>5</sup>

Venerable Mahatissa Thera was able to attain Samapatti-8 (All eight levels of meditative attainments) eight years after he had entered the monkhood. He possessed supernormal powers and could perform supernormal feats. He was also learnt in the Dhamma. He could recite the Lord Buddha's Teachings as well as any Arahāt. Since his meditative attainments enabled him to keep his defilements at bay, he was under the impression that he was an Arahāt. Although he had been in the monkhood for sixty years, he still was not aware that he had not yet attained any stage of the Ariyahood.

One day, one of his students, Venerable Dhammadinna, who was an Arahāt, came to visit him at the temple. Venerable

---

<sup>5</sup> *Aṭṭhakathā-Aṅguttaranikāya Ekanipāta*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 32, p. 67

Dhammadinna could tell that his teacher had not yet attained Arahatsip and felt moved to let him know it. Venerable Dhammadinna decided to hold a Dhamma conversation with Venerable Mahatissathera. Finally, Venerable Dhammadinna asked his teacher, “Sir, when did you attain Arahatsip?”

“Sixty years ago,” answered Venerable Mahatissathera

“Sir, can you perform supernormal feats then?”

“Of course.”

Venerable Dhammadinna asked his teacher to create a large pond, and he did. Then he asked his teacher to create some lotus plants in the pond, and he did. Next, he asked his teacher to create a woman inside one of the lotus blooms, and he did.

Finally, Venerable Dhammadinna asked his teacher to keep his mind on the woman’s body. As Venerable Mahatissathera concentrated on the beauty of the woman’s body, he felt sexual desire stirring inside him. It was then that he realized how he was just an ordinary monk, so he asked Venerable Dhammadinna to help him.

Venerable Dhammadinna told his teacher to consider instead the ugliness of the human body. He then left his teacher alone to practice meditation. As soon as Venerable Dhammadinna was out of sight, Venerable Mahatissathera was able to attain Arahatsip.

This true story attests to the importance of evaluating one’s virtues regularly so that one can avoid making the same kind of mistake as that made by Venerable Mahatissathera and other kinds of mistakes.

However, if the Buddhist monk knows to evaluate his virtues regularly so that he can constantly correct his mistakes and makes improvement, his virtues are certain to develop further and further as shown in the following story.

### Venerable Lakunatakabhaddiya's Story<sup>6</sup>

Venerable Lakunatakabhaddiya came from a wealthy family living in the city of Savatthi. Unfortunately, he had a hunchback and a poor complexion. Altogether his appearance was quite uncomely.

One day, he had the opportunity to listen to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lecture at the Jetavanna Temple. He felt so inspired that he decided to enter the monkhood and learn meditation practice right there at the temple. He had practiced meditation until he was able to attain the Fruit of Sotapanna, the first stage of Ariyahood.

In those days, a large number of Sekha personages<sup>7</sup> came to learn meditation practice from Venerable Sariputra, listen to his Dhamma lectures, and asked for advice so that they could advance further in their meditation practice. With Venerable Sariputra's help, some Sotapanna personages were able to attain the Fruit of Sakadagami. Some Ariya personages were able to attain the Fruit of Anagami. Some were able to attain Arahatsip. Some attained Vijja-3 (the Threefold Knowledge). Some attained Abhinna-6 (the Six Kinds of Higher Knowledge). And some attained Patisambhida-4 (the Four Kinds of Analytical Knowledge).

All of the goings-on were not missed by Venerable Lakunatakabhaddiya. Having attained the Fruit of Sotapanna, he knew that his meditation practice needed further improvement. Therefore, he approached Venerable Sariputra for advice about how to make progress in his meditation practice. And with Venerable Sariputra's help, he was able to eventually attain Arahatsip.

---

<sup>6</sup> *PaṭhamaBhaddiya Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Udāna.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 44, p. 661

<sup>7</sup> Sekha personages are Ariya personages who have not yet attained Arahatsip. These include Sotapanna, Sakadagami, and Anagami personages.

Although Venerable Lakunatakabhaddiya had already attained the Fruit of Sotapanna, he continued to improve himself by being vigilant. The process of self-evaluation led him to believe that he needed to improve on his meditation technique. Having corrected the problem with the help of a righteous teacher, he was finally able to achieve his ultimate goal.

## 5.4 The Six Criteria

A tool is needed when we want to measure something. We need a measuring tape or a ruler to measure length. We need a scale to measure weight. We need a watch to measure time. Etc. Likewise, when we want to measure or evaluate the virtues gained from self-training according to the Lord Buddha's Teachings, we need the following six criteria.

These include Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhan (sagacity).

### 5.4.1 Saddha (*Faith*)

Saddha means belief or faith. In Buddhism, Saddha means believing in what should be believed. It is the kind of belief or faith that comes from reason, confidence in the truth, goodness, what is wholesome and the belief in performing what is wholesome. It is not tainted by current hype or panic-evoking myths. There are four aspects to Saddha: Kammasaddha, Vipakasaddha, Kammasakatasaddha, and Tathagathabodhisaddha.

1. **Kammasaddha:** It is the belief in Kamma (Kamma means a volitional action) in that the Law of Kamma exists.
2. **Vipakasaddha:** It is the belief in the fruit of Kamma in that good Kamma begets good consequences and evil Kamma begets evil consequences.

3. **Kammasakatasaddha:** It is the belief that each living being has its own Kamma. Whatever Kamma one performs, one stands to meet with its consequences.
4. **Tathagatabodhisaddha<sup>8</sup>:** It is the belief in the Self-Enlightenment of the Lord Buddha.
  - 1) One believes in the reality of the Lord Buddha and His Self-Enlightenment.
  - 2) One believes that the Lord Buddha's Teachings (the Dhamma) are good and true and they enable one to grow in wholesomeness.
  - 3) One believes that one can gain good results by practicing the Lord Buddha's Teachings and that the earnest practice of the Lord Buddha's Teachings enables one to extinguish all defilements.

Of these four aspects of Saddha, the last one is the most important because the other aspects of Saddha are derived from the belief in the Lord Buddha's Self-Enlightenment.

In practice, Saddha appears as a bright light inside the mind. Once it is witnessed, it motivates one to perform wholesome deeds physically, verbally, and mentally as shown in the following story.<sup>9</sup>

Before Venerable Sariputra entered the monkhood, he was called "Upatissa". Having grown bored with the householder's life, he decided to join the cult leader by the name of "Sanjaya" as his disciple. At the time, he was joined by his close friend, "Kolita" who later became Venerable Mahamoggallana. After a while, both of them realized that the teachings of their cult leader, Sanjaya, were nonsensical. Therefore, they decided

---

<sup>8</sup> The Buddhist Studies Dictionary, the eighth printing, (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Printing Press, 2538 B.E.), page 323

<sup>9</sup> ***Khuddaka-nikāya. Apadāna.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 70, p. 413

that they would go their separate ways to search for a teacher who could teach them to attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. They had an agreement that whoever found the teacher first would be certain to let the other know about it.

One day, the ascetic Upatissa saw Venerable Assaji out on his alms-round. He was impressed by Venerable Assaji's composure, grace, and dignity and decided to follow the Arahant in the hope that he might learn something from him. Indeed, after having listened to just one phrase of the Dhamma, Upatissa was able to attain the Fruit of Sotapanna.

Now, Upatissa was able to attain the Fruit of Sotapanna because he was hugely impressed by Venerable Assaji's personage. His belief in the Arahant's virtue acts like a gate to goodness. Likewise, whoever believes in the Lord Buddha and His Teachings will most certainly open wide a gate to goodness for himself. On the subject of faith, this is what the Lord Buddha has to say,<sup>10</sup>

***“Behold, monks, a Buddhist monk knows that he has faith because:***

- (1) He seeks the company of good and righteous persons.***
- (2) He seeks Dhamma lectures.***
- (3) His mind is clean because he practices charity and takes delight in giving to others and sharing what he has with others.”***

Those who have already cultivated Saddha (faith) should strive to increase it until it becomes “Acalasaddha”. It is the kind of Saddha that removes all doubts about the Triple Gem. Unshakable faith enables one to continue cultivating higher virtues.

---

<sup>10</sup> ***Thana Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Tikanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 34, no. 481, p. 192

### 5.4.2 Sila (*Morality*)

“**Sila**” means good physical and verbal conduct. It means keeping the body and the word good and moral. It means the practices which keep the body and word good and moral. It means adhering to order and discipline such that one exercises good manners. It means the practices that enable one to abstain from evil. It means the practices that improve one’s physical and verbal conduct. It means physical and verbal truthfulness. It means earning an honest living.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore Sila is the tool used to keep one’s body and speech good and moral. For the Buddhist monk and according to the Commentary, there are four types of Sila called “**Parisuddhisila**”.

1. Patimokkhasanvarasila: It means abstaining from all things forbidden by the Lord Buddha and adhering strictly to all of the disciplinary rules as decreed by the Lord Buddha. Patimokkhasanvarasila consists of three aspects as follows.
  - 1.1 The Buddhist monk has good manners and good conduct.
  - 1.2 The Buddhist monk sees the harm in the slightest offence.
  - 1.3 The Buddhist monk is learnt in all the disciplinary rules.
2. Indriyasanvara: It means restraining one’s six sense-faculties so that one’s mind cannot be dominated by unwholesomeness.
3. Ajivaparisuddhisila: It means Right Livelihood. One does not earn a living by Wrong Livelihood such as deceiving

---

<sup>11</sup> The Buddhist Studies Dictionary, the eighth printing, (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Printing Press, 2538 B.E.), page 292

others, currying favor with others for one's personal gain, etc.

4. Paccayasannisasitasila or Paccavekakkhanasila: It means consuming the four requisites correctly and according to their uses and purposes.

These four types of Sila enable the Buddhist monk to keep his body, word, and mind good and moral by thinking good thoughts, saying good things, and doing good deeds as shown in the following story.

### **The Kancanakhandha Jataka<sup>12</sup>**

During the Lord Buddha's time, a man from a good family decided to enter the monkhood. His Preceptor and his Dhamma teacher had taught him all about the minute details of the Fundamental Precepts. The new Buddhist monk had the impression that Sila was much too refined and profound for him to observe. He felt so discouraged that he asked for permission to disrobe. His Preceptor and his Dhamma teacher took him to see the Lord Buddha. They informed the Lord Buddha the reason for the new monk's wish to disrobe. The Lord Buddha then said to the new monk,

"Monk, why do you need to know in detail about Sila? Can you observe just three things?"

The monks answered, "Yes, I can, Most Exalted One."

The Lord Buddha said, "From now on, you just make sure that you do not commit any unwholesome deed, not with your mind, not with your word, and not with your body. There is no need to disrobe if you can do as I say."

---

<sup>12</sup> *Kaṇṇakhandha- Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā- Jātaka Ekanipāta*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 56, p. 90



The monk was delighted with the Lord Buddha's instruction. Within just a few days of earnest practice, he was able to attain Arahatship.

In point of fact, all of the Fundamental Precepts are meant to help the Buddhist monk keep his body, speech, and mind clean and pure. The reason Sila has so many details is that for most people it is not enough just to be told to keep their body, word, and mind clean and pure. The monk in this story was exceptional because he possessed a vast amount of accumulated merit; therefore, he could understand what the Lord Buddha told him and practiced it accordingly. But for most Buddhist monks, it is still necessary that they learn the Fundamental Precepts in all of their minute details.

#### 5.4.3 Suta (*Learning by listening*)

The word “**Suta**” means having heard or having listened to something. It means education. Normally, one learns by listening and reading. One learns the Dhamma by listening to Dhamma lectures, by researching the Tipitaka and other important texts, by conversing about the Dhamma, and by exchanging Dhamma knowledge with other people.

It can be said that “Suta” means an earnest effort to learn new things. One is always accumulating more Dhamma knowledge. After one has listened to a Dhamma lecture, one takes the time and effort to consider it in depth. Should a question arise, one does not let it rest but makes the effort to clear it up by approaching a Dhamma teacher. A person, who is in the habit of listening to Dhamma lectures, stands to gain in the following ways.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> *Dhammassavana Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 202, p. 448

1. He has the opportunity to listen to what he has not heard before.
2. He can gain a deeper understanding of what he has already heard.
3. He can dispel whatever doubt he may be having.
4. He will be able to see things for what they are in reality.
5. His belief in Buddhism will deepen.

The ultimate consequences of listening to Dhamma lectures include a deeper belief in the Lord Buddha and the inspiration to learn more and more of His Teachings.

One should diligently study the Lord Buddha's Teachings so that one's knowledge and wisdom can continue to increase. The Lord Buddha says,

***“A person who listens (Suta) little grows older like an ox which only increases in flesh but not in wisdom.”<sup>14</sup>***

Therefore, the accumulation of Dhamma knowledge yields good consequences in that it is useful for one's self-training. A person learnt in the Dhamma is also in the position to teach and advise others. Suta helps one to wage war against one's defilements as in the following saying of the Lord Buddha.

***“Ariya disciples are scholarly because they have listened much. They have memorized all the Dhamma which is lovely in the beginning, in the middle and in the end in terms of alphabets and contents. They are like a border town which is equipped with all sorts of weapons to protect itself from within and without.***

---

<sup>14</sup> ***Jarāvagga Khuddaka-nikāya Gāthā-Dhammapada.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 42, p. 142

***Behold, monks, the Ariya disciples, who are equipped with the weapon of much listening, can abstain from unwholesomeness, causes wholesomeness to grow, abstain from unwholesome deeds, perform only wholesome deeds for their own purity.”<sup>15</sup>***

#### 5.4.4 Caga

The word “**Caga**” means to share, to give, to donate, to give up insincerity, to give up defilements.<sup>16</sup>

“Caga” and “Dana” have similar meaning. Dana usually means alms-giving whereas Caga means alms-giving as well as the giving up of emotions which arise from defilements, namely, greed, anger, ignorance.

Caga means giving up or giving away in at least three different ways.

1. **Giving Away Material Wealth:** It involves the giving of alms as a way to earn merit and make provisions for future existences. People who are wealthy tend to guard their wealth jealously. As a result, they tend to be miserly. To decrease miserliness, it is important that they give alms. And once they have given alms, they must not regret it later on.

Miserliness belongs to the greed family. It is a crude form of defilements. The ability to lessen greed allows the more refined forms of defilements to be more easily reduced. The Lord Buddha teaches us to give alms regularly so that

---

<sup>15</sup> **Nagara Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Sattakanipāta.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 37, no. 64, p. 226

<sup>16</sup> The Buddhist Studies Dictionary, the eighth printing, (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Printing Press, 2538 B.E.), page 42

when we recall our generous acts, our mind can be more easily brought to a standstill.<sup>17</sup>

***“Behold, Mahanama, whenever an Ariya disciple recalls his acts of charity, his mind will not be dominated by lust, anger, and ignorance but it will be brought to a standstill.”***

2. **Giving Up Excessive Comfort:** Excessive comfort is the cause of laziness; for example, instead of walking a short distance, one chooses to drive. Excessive comfort spoils a person in that he is addicted to ease and comfort to such an extent that he cannot be bothered to undertake self-training but will do as he pleases instead.
3. **Giving Up Emotions:** It includes giving up all the emotions arising from greed, anger, and ignorance. When one's mind is free from such negative emotions, it can be more easily coaxed to remain at the center of one's body. When one's mind is dominated by Nivara-5 (or the Five Hindrances), it becomes gloomy. It wavers and scatters. The removal of Nivara-5 allows one's mind to come to a standstill. In the Tevijja Sutta,<sup>18</sup> the Lord Buddha said,

***“Once the Buddhist monk can see with his supernormal insight that he has abandoned Nivara-5, gladness will come to him. What comes next is joy. When joy fills the mind, the body becomes calm. A calm body gives rise to happiness. Happiness causes the mind to be steadfast.”***

Therefore, we should constantly train our mind to give up all emotions, both pleasurable and unpleasurable in order to

<sup>17</sup> ***Mahānām Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Chakkanipāṭa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 281, p. 531

<sup>18</sup> ***Tevijja Sutta Dīgha-nikāya. Sīlakhandaḥavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 12, no. 383, p. 272

maintain its normalcy. On this subject, this is what Phramonkolthepmuni has to say,<sup>19</sup>

“Dana in the ultimate sense requires one to remove any pleasure derived from physical form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and a mind-object. One must bear in mind that such pleasure belongs to the laity and not to a Buddhist monk. Free the mind from emotions and keep it quiet and still. One gives up emotions for the sake of wholesomeness. It is the ultimate form of Dana; and it can lead one to Nibbana.”

#### 5.4.5 Panna (*Wisdom*)

The word “**Panna**” means having breadth and depth of knowledge. It comes from learning and thinking. It means having the intelligence to know the cause and effect of things. It means having a clear understanding. It means knowing what is good, what is evil, what is not harmful, what is harmful, what is useful, what is not useful, etc. It means having the knowledge to administer, organize, and manage things. It means having profound knowledge about all things (Sankhara<sup>20</sup>) both with and without life.

There are three levels of Panna.

1. **Cintamayapanna:** It is the Panna or wisdom which results from analytical reflection.
2. **Sutamayapanna:** It is the Panna or wisdom which results from study.
3. **Bhavanamayapanna:** It is the Panna or wisdom which results from meditation practice.

<sup>19</sup> The Dhamma Lectures of Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro), “Bhattanumodanagatha”, May 9, 2497 B.E., page 358

<sup>20</sup> There are two types of Sankhara: Those without life are called Anupadinakasankhara and include car, mountain, house, etc.; those with life are called Upadinanakasankhara and include human beings and animals. Both types of Sankhara are compounded things.

The type of Panna that the Lord Buddha wishes the Buddhist monk to attain is that derived from meditation practice called Adhipanna. The Lord Buddha said,

“What is Adhipanna? Adhipanna is the Panna that enables the Buddhist monk to extinguish all defilements and penetrate the Four Noble Truths.<sup>21</sup>

Adhipanna is the wisdom that is gained by penetrating the Four Noble Truths.<sup>22</sup> It is the wisdom of an Ariya personage because he has penetrated Dukkha (suffering), Samudaya (the cause of suffering), Nirodha (the cessation of suffering), and Magga (the path leading to the cessation of suffering).

Such a personage sees the Three Characteristics<sup>23</sup> in that everything comes into being, exists for a time, and eventually comes to an end. Our body, our home, our car, our earth, etc., are governed by these three characteristics. Knowing the fact that our body does not belong to us, is not our true self, and will one day die means that we have knowledge about the round of rebirth and we have knowledge about our body.

#### 5.4.6 Patibhanna (*Sagacity*)

The word “Patibhanna” means a ready wit and the ability to solve the problem at hand quickly.<sup>24</sup>

Patibhanna is the ability to offer a retort, the ability to solve the problem at hand quickly. Patibhanna is a sublime virtue.

<sup>21</sup> *Khuddaka-nikāya. Mahāniddes.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 66, no. 708, p. 289

<sup>22</sup> The Four Noble Truths include Dukkha, Samudaya, Nirodha, and Magga.

<sup>23</sup> The Three Characteristics include impermanence, the inability to remain the same, and the absence of true selfhood.

<sup>24</sup> The Buddhist Studies Dictionary, the eighth printing, (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Printing Press, 2538 B.E.), page 145

Whoever possesses it in a vast amount will be sharp, clever, quick-witted and able to solve urgent problems quickly.

To possess Patibhana, one had to have accumulated a large amount of merit in the area of wisdom in one's previous lives. In Buddhism, a person blessed with Patibhan is called "**Patisambhida**", and it comprises four different categories altogether.

1. **Atthapatisambhida:** It is sagacity in the area of Attha or meaning.
2. **Dhammapatisambhida:** It is sagacity in the area of Dhamma.
3. **Niruttipatisambhida:** It is sagacity in the area of Nirutti or language.
4. **Patibhanapatisambhida:** It is sagacity in the area of Patibhana or a quick wit.

In these different areas of sagacity, Patibhanapatisambhida is the best because to possess Patibhanapatisambhida one has to first be sagacious in the area of meaning, Dhamma, and language. Otherwise, one will not be able to offer a retort or solve the problem at hand quickly.

There are four different types of retort as follows.

1. An incorrect and slow retort
2. An incorrect but quick retort
3. A correct but slow retort
4. A correct and quick retort

Only the person possessing the greatest amount of Patibhana can offer a correct and quick retort. He is an expert in engaging his wisdom. If wisdom or Panna can be compared to utensils, then sagacity or Patibhana can be compared to the cleverness in organizing the utensils such that each utensil can be readily picked up and used to perform a particular task.

## 5.5 The Importance of the Six Criteria

The Six Criteria are important for the following reasons.

1. They are useful in evaluating one's virtues whatever the area of training may be. For example, different Buddhist monks may be employing different meditation techniques in their meditation practice; and yet, these six criteria can be used to evaluate the result of their meditation practice.
2. They are useful in evaluating all Buddhist monks from an ordinary monk to an Ariya monk.
3. The ultimate virtue taught by the Lord Buddha is the extinguishment of defilements and the attainment of Arahatsip. Therefore, these six criteria must work together in such a way as to enable the Buddhist monk to attain Arahatsip.

The Six Criteria can not only be employed to evaluate the Buddhist monk's virtues, but they can also work together to improve his virtues.

1. **"Saddha" (Faith):** A person listens to the Lord Buddha's Teachings and comes to believe that he is here on earth to accumulate merit and his ultimate goal is to attain Nibbana. He also believes that to attain his ultimate goal, he must undertake self-training to such an extent that his body, speech, and mind can be free from defilements. Here, it is his belief or faith that motivates him to perform good deeds according to the Lord Buddha's Teachings.
2. **"Sila" (Morality):** The starting point of wholesomeness according to the Lord Buddha's Teachings is the restraint of one's body, speech, and mind such that one does not commit unwholesome deeds. The tool used in this process is Precepts observation. One endeavors to observe the Five or higher Precepts immaculately.
3. **"Suta" (Learning by Listening):** Once one begins to observe the Precepts, one is able to realize the happiness gained from such an endeavor. Therefore, one is inspired



to improve his Precepts observation. For example, after having regularly observed the Five Precepts, one may now wish to observe the Eight Precepts. To do so requires that one learns more about the Lord Buddha's Teachings on the subject by listening to or reading the Dhamma (Suta).

4. **"Caga"** (*Charity*): Having undertaken self-training until one's body, speech, and mind have attained a certain level of purity, one realizes how Sila is the tool to help train one's mind from becoming too attached to all things material. In preventing unwholesome deeds from being committed by one's speech and body, one's mind becomes increasingly centered as it gives up the different emotions. This act is called Caga.
5. **"Panna"** (*Wisdom*): Once different emotions have been released from the mind, it comes to a standstill at the center of one's body. The quiet and still mind brings about the ability to penetrate the reality of all things. It is the supernormal insight gained from having attained the different stages of Ariyahood.
6. **"Patibhan"** (*Sagacity*): The regular and frequent use of Panna (or wisdom) gives rise to Patibhan (or sagacity).

## 5.6 Applying the Six Criteria

The six criteria of Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhan (sagacity) can be used to evaluate one's virtues in the following ways.

### 5.6.1 Evaluating One's Saddha (*Faith*)

#### For the Buddhist Monk:

Saddha means having confidence in the Self-Enlightenment of the Lord Buddha. Tathagatabodhisaddha means being confident that the Lord Buddha's Teachings are all good, therefore, must be practiced by every Buddhist monk. To evaluate one's level of confidence in the Lord Buddha's

Teachings, one has only to consider how dedicated one is in practicing the Lord Buddha's Teachings.

At the level of putting one's life on the line, it means that one endeavors to practice the Dhamma regardless of difficulties or obstacles as one works persistently toward the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

The Buddhist monk must frequently consider the level of one's Saddha by considering how much or how little self-training one is undertaking each day. He must consider if he is making any progress in living the holy life. He must also be aware of any practices that may still be lacking.

The best way for the Buddhist monk to evaluate his Saddha is by considering if he has endeavored to scrub clean his body, speech, and mind according to the Lord Buddha's Teachings and by putting his life on the line.

### **For the Householder:**

The householder can evaluate his Saddha by considering how well he is practicing alms-giving, observing the Precepts, and practicing meditation. For example, in the area of alms-giving, he may consider:

1. Whether he is giving alms every day.
2. Whether he is practicing alms-giving in such a way as to earn the maximum merit.
  - 2.1 Is he keeping his mind bright and clear before, during, and after the alms-giving?
  - 2.2 Are his alms of good quality and neatly prepared?
  - 2.3 Are his alms, his intention, and the recipient of his alms pure?
  - 2.4 Does he give alms respectfully and with his own hands?

In the areas of Precepts observation and meditation practice, he should consider if he is putting his life on the line in his pursuit of Perfections the way our Bodhisatta had done all throughout his countless existences.

### **5.6.2 Evaluating One's Sila (*Morality*)**

#### **For the Buddhist Monk:**

The Buddhist monk can evaluate his Sila by considering the brightness and clarity of his mind when he recalls his observation of the Fundamental Precepts. He should be filled with joy and cheer and experience peace of body and mind as he senses his own purity.

1. Each day, the Buddhist monk should review how strictly he is adhering to the Fundamental Precepts. He should consider how much or how little he is motivated to abstain from the things forbidden by the Lord Buddha.
2. He should review regularly how well he is carrying out his monastic duties which include chanting, practicing meditation, studying the Dhamma, etc.
3. In reviewing his Sila in terms of meditation practice, it means "attaining the Sila Sphere within him". This level of Sila is called "Adhisila" according to Phramonkolthepmuni's Dhamma lecture.

***"Sila appears as a clear sphere in the middle of the Dhamma Sphere. It is the Dhamma Sphere that gives rise to the human body. The Dhamma Sphere is clear and pure and has the size of of a chicken egg-yolk. The Sila Sphere dwells inside the Dhamma Sphere. The Sila Sphere is clear and pure and has the size of the moon or the sun."***

***An accomplished meditator can “see” the Sila Sphere with his mind at the center of his body. This Sila Sphere is called “Adhisila”.***

4. How has he tried to improve upon what he knows to be lacking still?

#### **For the Householder:**

The householder can review his Sila by evaluating the brightness and clarity of his mind. He should review how immaculately he is observing the Five Precepts or the Eight Precepts. Ultimately, he will be able to review his Sila through the attainment of his Sila Sphere.

### **5.6.3 Evaluating One's Suta (*Learning by Listening*)**

#### **For the Buddhist Monk:**

“**Suta**” or learning by listening can be evaluated in the following ways.

1. One evaluates one's Suta by evaluating one's level of eagerness in listening to or reading the Dhamma. One can consider whether or not one is bored with learning, whether or not one is absent-minded or nodding off during a Dhamma lecture.
2. One evaluates one's Suta by considering whether or not one has gained any new knowledge or idea from listening to or reading the Dhamma. Has one's knowledge of the Dhamma become more profound in any way? Does one know what it is that one is studying? What is the objective of the particular teaching? How can one put it into practice? Etc.
3. One evaluates one's Suta by considering if one has discovered an area where one still needs to improve upon.

**For the Householder:**

There are three ways that the householder can evaluate his “Suta”.

1. One evaluates one’s Suta by considering the level of one’s eagerness in attending the temple and listening to Dhamma lectures and in finding more Dhamma materials to read.
2. One evaluates one’s Suta by considering how much or how little one has applied the Dhamma that one has learnt in one’s daily life.
3. One evaluates one’s Suta by considering how one has endeavored to undertake self-training according to what one has learnt.

**5.6.4 Evaluating One’s “Caga” (*Charity*)**

For both the Buddhist monk and the householder, the same criteria can be used to evaluate one’s Caga.

1. One evaluates one’s Caga by considering how much or how little one enjoys giving and sharing what one has with others, by evaluating the level of one’s miserliness and possessiveness, and whether or not one wishes to take back what one has given away, etc.
2. One evaluates one’s Caga by considering how willingly one forgoes comfort and convenience in order to perform wholesome deeds or one is still attached to comfort and convenience to the point of being lazy.
3. One evaluates one’s Caga by considering how willingly and how quickly one gives up pleasure and displeasure.

4. One evaluates one's Caga by considering how successfully one can abandon Nivara-5 (the Five Obstacles) during meditation practice such that one can attain the "Pathamamagga Sphere"<sup>25</sup>.

### 5.6.5 Evaluating One's "Panna" (*Wisdom*)

It is the evaluation of how well one has penetrated the fact that everything and every living being fall under the Three Characteristics, namely, impermanence, the inability to remain the same, and the absence of true selfhood. The evaluation of one's Panna can be carried out at two different levels as follows.

1. Secular Wisdom: It is the wisdom gained from studying or the use of one's brain. Secular wisdom includes Cintamayapanna and Sutamayapanna and can be evaluated as follows.
  - 1.1 It is the wisdom shown by one's ability to work because work requires intelligence and responsibility.
  - 1.2 It is the wisdom shown by one's understanding of one's body and health. It shows in the way one takes care of one's body so that it will be healthy and can be readily used to accumulate merit and pursue Perfections. It shows in not overworking the body.
2. Dhamma Wisdom: It is the wisdom gained from meditation practice. It is evaluated by the attainment of the Inner Bodies which dwell at the center of one's body, and the penetration of the defilements that dwell inside the mind. Dhamma wisdom is the supernormal insight that reveals to the practitioner the reality of all compounded

---

<sup>25</sup> Phrabhavanaviriyakhun (Padet Dattajeevo), "True Monks" (Bangkok: The Dhammakaya Foundation), page 197

things. On this subject, this is what the Most Venerable Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro) has to say.

***“An accomplished meditator can see the different Inner Bodies that dwell inside the Human body. He can see that the Celestial Body dwells inside the Human Body. The Form Brahma Being’s Body dwells inside the Celestial Body. The Non-Form Brahma Being’s Body dwells inside the Form Brahma Being’s Body. The Dhammakaya dwells inside the Non-Form Brahma Being’s Body.***

***When a person dies, the Human Body and the Celestial Body become separated from each other the way tamarind is separated from its shell.***

***The Lord Buddha extinguishes defilements in steps by first extinguishing the defilements inside the Human body, then on to those inside the Celestial Body, the Form Brahma Being’s Body and the Non-Form Brahma Being’s Body respectively.***

***Defilements inside the Human Body include Abhijja (covetousness), Byapada (ill-will) and Micchaditthi (Wrong View).***

***Defilements inside the Celestial Body include Lobha (greed), Dosa (anger), and Moha (ignorance).***

***Defilements inside the Form Brahma Being’s Body include Raga (lust), Dosa (anger), and Moha (ignorance).***

***Defilements inside the Non-Form Brahma Being’s Body include Kamaraganusaya (refined greed), Patighanusaya (refined anger), and Avijjanusaya (refined ignorance).”***

Therefore, the attainment of the Inner Bodies which dwell inside the Human Body is an indication of one’s Panna or the level of supernormal insight that can penetrate

the defilements inside each Inner Body. Defilements in the Inner Bodies differ in their levels of coarseness. The defilements in the Human Body are coarser than those in the Celestial Body. The defilements in the Celestial Body are coarser than those in the Form Brahma Being's Body. And the defilements in the Form Brahma Being's Body are coarser than those in the Non-Form Brahma Being's Body.

### **5.6.6 Evaluating One's "Patibhan" (Sagacity)**

The evaluation of one's Patibhan is carried out by considering the level of one's ready wit. Both the Buddhist monk and the householder can evaluate their "Patibhan" as follows.

One's Patibhan can be evaluated by one's ability to solve problems at work. The reason is that at work one must encounter different problems. A person possessing Patibhan does not run away from problems but stands to face every problem by employing his sagacity. Moreover, his solutions never involve the committing of unwholesome deeds.

## **5.7 Comparative Evaluation**

The Buddhist monk who knows how to evaluate the level of his virtues is heedful and is not lulled by whatever level of virtues he has already cultivated. On the contrary, such a Buddhist monk will continue to undertake self-training earnestly so that he can accomplish the goal of monkhood as quickly as possible.

The Buddhist monk may wish to compare his own cultivation of virtues to someone who possesses a higher level of virtues so that he knows what to aim for. For example, one can compare the level of one's virtues to those of an Arahāt so that one can feel inspired to be like him. Examples of personages to whom one can compare one's level of virtues include:



1. The Lord Buddha
2. The Arahats whose life histories are recorded in the Tipitaka.
3. The Dhamma teachers who possess supernormal insight and supernormal powers.
4. The Preceptor who practices righteousness according to the Dhamma-Vinaya.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

It can be concluded that the Buddhist monk can become Attannu only when

1. He understands the value of self-evaluation and the importance of the six criteria, namely, Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhan (sagacity).
2. He knows how to employ the six criteria to evaluate the level of his virtues at any given point in time.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook before proceeding to the next chapter.

# Chapter 6

---

## The Fourth Step: Mattannu

## **Chapter 6**

### **The Fourth Step: Mattannu**

#### **Contents**

---

- 6.1 The Meaning of Mattannu**
- 6.2 The Four Requisites**
- 6.3 The Four Requisites as Allowed by the Lord Buddha**
  - 6.3.1 The Four Requisites and Their Uses
  - 6.3.2 The Amounts and Types of the Four Requisites
- 6.4 The Four Requisites and Habits**
- 6.5 Attitudes toward the Four Requisites**
- 6.6 The Four Requisites and Self-Training**
- 6.7 The Four Requisites' Cycle**
- 6.8 Receiving the Four Requisites**
  - 6.8.1 The Importance of Receiving the Four Requisites
  - 6.8.2 Knowing When to Receive the Four Requisites
  - 6.8.3 How to Receive the Four Requisites
  - 6.8.4 Learning to Receive the Four Requisites
- 6.9 Exercising Moderation**
- 6.10 Conclusion**
- 6.11 Mattannu and the Ganakamoggallana Sutta**
- 6.12 The Householder and the Four Requisites**
  - 6.12.1 Attitudes toward the Four Requisites
  - 6.12.2 The Four Requisites and the Householder's Lifestyle

## Concepts

---

1. The four requisites are the basic necessities of life and they have a direct impact on the Buddhist monk's self-training.
2. Exercising moderation in receiving the four requisites plays an important role in the Buddhist monk's self-training because the four requisites are the most practical tools that he can use to make progress in his self-training.
3. Management of the four requisites is just as important in the householder's life. It allows the householder to know how to live within his means. It also enables him to more easily accumulate merit and pursue Perfections.

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to learn about the importance of the four requisites to the Buddhist monk's lifestyle.
2. To enable the student to learn about the Buddhist monk's correct uses of the four requisites.
3. To enable the student to learn how important it is for the Buddhist monk to know how to correctly receive the four requisites.
4. To enable the student to apply what he has learnt to his own self-training.
5. To enable the student to learn how to apply the process of Mattannu to his management of the four requisites.

## Chapter 6

### The Fourth Step: Mattannu

The student has now learnt that the Buddhist monk's self-training process begins with learning the Lord Buddha's Teachings (Dhammannu), learning to correctly interpret them and apply them to his cultivation of virtues (Atthannu), and learning to evaluate the level of his virtue so that he can continue to make progress in his self-training (Attannu).

The fourth step after Dhammannu, Atthannu, and Attannu is Mattannu.

***“To become Mattannu, the Buddhist monk must exercise moderation in receiving robes, food, shelter, and medicine.***

***If the Buddhist monk does not know how to exercise moderation in receiving robes, food, shelter, and medicine, he cannot be said to be Mattannu.***

***But it is because the Buddhist monk knows how to exercise moderation in receiving robes, food, shelter, and medicine that he is said to be Mattannu.***

***He is said to be Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, and Mattannu for this reason.”<sup>1</sup>***

---

<sup>1</sup> ***Dhammaññū Sutta Aṅguttaranikāya Saṭṭakanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 37, no. 65, p. 236

## 6.1 The Meaning of Mattannu

The word “**Mattannu**” means exercising moderation. The Commentary adds that it means knowing what the right amount is, knowing what is just right, and knowing what amount is adequate.<sup>2</sup>

“**Robes**” here mean the cloths used by the Buddhist monk for different purposes. He may wear them as in the case of the Triple Robe Set. He may wear a robe for bathing. Or he may fold it so he can sit on it. Etc. For the laity, robes here mean clothes.

**Food** for the Buddhist monk means the food received as alms from the laity.

**Shelter** for the Buddhist monk means the place to sleep and the place to sit. It includes the Buddhist monk’s cell, the monastery, desks, chairs, etc.

**Medicine** for the Buddhist monk means things that are necessary in caring for the patients. They include medicine and all the tools and equipment needed for patient care.

Therefore, **Mattannu means exercising moderation in receiving the four requisites and everything related to them.**

In learning to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites, the Buddhist monk must know the following.

1. The importance of the four requisites in the self-training process.
2. The importance of receiving the four requisites as well as how to receive them.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Mahāassapura Sutta. Aṭṭhakathā-Majjhimanikāya. Mūlapaṇṇāsa.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 19, p. 224

## **The Importance of the Four Requisites in the Self-Training Process**

### **6.2 The Four Requisites**

From the Lord Buddha's Saying at the beginning of this chapter, it is clear how important the four requisites are and for at least two reasons.

1. The four requisites are the basic necessities that allow the human life to be sustained. We need clothes to keep our body warm. Food is necessary for our survival. Shelter protects us from the elements. And medicine helps us to recover from illnesses. Without the four necessities, life cannot be sustained.
2. The four requisites allow life to go on normally and smoothly. We need clothes for work. We need nutritious food to keep our body healthy. We need shelter to keep us and our possessions safe. We need medicine when we are ill.

The four requisites are important for both the Buddhist monk and the householder. But for the Buddhist monk, the four requisites assume a much more important role because their consumption is governed by the Dhamma-Vinaya (the monastic code of discipline). The life of a Buddhist monk is about working toward the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. It is a life of renunciation. Therefore, he is not allowed to buy whatever he pleases, wears whatever he pleases or eats whenever he pleases, etc. For the Buddhist monk, the four requisites mean the absolute necessities and it is imperative that he manages them properly. Poor management of the four requisites will have a negative effect on the life of the Buddhist monk.

### 6.3 The Four Requisites as Allowed by the Lord Buddha

#### 6.3.1 The Four Requisites and Their Uses

Most people in the world do not pay enough attention to the four requisites. Some people have too much while others have too little. The fact that most people have no idea what the four requisites are about causes them to accumulate more things than they need. Some people have too many clothes. Some people buy too much food and much of it goes to waste.

The Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk to be mindful when consuming the four requisites so that he can derive the most use from them. This Teaching is found in the conversation between the Lord Buddha and Venerable Cunda Thera as follows.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Robes (Clothing)**

***Behold, Cunda, I permit all of you to wear your robes in order to keep away the cold and the heat, biting insects, the wind, the sun, reptiles, and to provide adequate coverage for your body.***

#### **Food**

***I permit all of you to eat in order to sustain your body and assuage hunger so that you can use your body to live the holy life.***

<sup>3</sup> ***Pasadika Sutta. Dīgha-nikāya Pāṭikavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 15, no. 133, p. 275



**Shelter**

***I permit all of you shelter in order to protect you from the cold, the heat, biting insects, the wind, the sun, reptiles, and the elements and to give you solitude.***

**Medicine**

***I permit all of you to take medicine in order to remove the aches and pains caused by illnesses.***

The purposes of consuming the four requisites can be summarized as follows.

**Robes or Clothing:**

1. To protect one from the cold and the heat.
2. To protect one from biting insects and other animals.
3. To provide adequate coverage for one's body.

**Food:**

1. To sustain the body.
2. To enable the body to perform different tasks.
3. To assuage hunger.
4. To enable chastity practice by eating just enough and never too much.
5. To keep the body in good functioning order.

**Shelter:**

1. To protect one from the cold and the heat.
2. To protect one from biting insects and other animals.
3. To protect one from inclement weather.
4. To allow one the solitude needed for meditation practice.

**Medicine:** To relieve one from the physical discomfort caused by illnesses.

**6.3.2 The Amounts and Types of the Four Requisites**

The Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monks the importance of the amounts and types of requisites. If one knows how to correctly consume the four requisites, one will not be given to excessiveness. If one knows that clothing is needed only to protect one from the elements, insects and other animals, and to provide adequate coverage for one's body, then one has no need for clothes of different styles and colors. If one knows that food is needed only to sustain the body and keep it functioning properly, then an excessive amount of food is not needed. If one knows that shelter is needed only to protect one from the elements, insects and other animals, then a very large house is not necessary. If one knows that medicine is needed only to cure one's illness, then one has no need for all the food supplements and health-promoting products.

The key to the consumption of the four requisites is moderation. The Lord Buddha has given the Buddhist monk detailed information on the subject as follows.



## Clothing

On one occasion, the Lord Buddha noticed that His disciples were having too many robes. He wondered how many robes it would take for one to be comfortable, so He wore just one robe and went to sit outside at night during the cold season. Although there were dewdrops, He did not feel cold initially with just one robe.

After the first watch (after 22:00 hours), He began to feel cold so He put on another robe.

After the second watch (after 02:00 hours), He began to feel cold so He put on the third robe.

After the third watch (after 06:00 hours), He began to feel cold so He put on the fourth robe.

Having carried out the experiment, the Lord Buddha said to His disciples:

***“Behold, monks, the Buddhist monk who minds the cold can live comfortably with just three robes. Therefore, I permit the Buddhist monk to own three robes.***

***Behold, monks, I permit you to have three robes, namely, two outer robes (Sanghati), one upper robe (Uttarasanga), and one inner garment (Antaravasaka).”<sup>4</sup>***

Although three robes are enough to keep the Buddhist monk comfortable, the Lord Buddha does allow him to own more robes as he deems necessary.

---

<sup>4</sup> ***Cīvarakhandhaka Vinayapiṭaka Mahāvagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 7, no. 150, p. 278

## Food

Venerable Sariputra Thera, the Lord Buddha's Chief Disciple on the right who was foremost in the area of wisdom had the following to say on the subject of food.<sup>5</sup>

***“When eating fresh or dry food, the Buddhist monk should not become too attached to its taste. He should fill his stomach sparingly. He should exercise moderation and maintain mindfulness when he eats. When he feels that he will feel full in the next four or five bites, he should stop eating and take a drink of water instead. This is the practice of the Buddhist monk who wishes to feel comfortable.”***

This manner of eating allows one to feel comfortable, the state conducive to meditation practice.

## Shelter

The Lord Buddha has given a guideline on the size of the Buddhist monk's shelter as follows.<sup>6</sup>

***“The Buddhist monk who wishes to build a personal dwelling can build a cell that is three meters in length and 1.75 meters in width.”***

The cell of this size, 1.75 x 3.0 meters, is sufficient for the use and comfort of the Buddhist monk.

## Medicine

The Lord Buddha has given the Buddhist monk the following guideline on the use of medicine.

<sup>5</sup> **Sariṭputta- theragāthā. Khuddaka-nikāya. Theragāthā.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 53, no. 396, p. 229

<sup>6</sup> **Vinayapiṭaka Mahavibhaṅg.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 3, no. 500, p. 364

***“Behold, monks, I have considered that the following five items can be used as medicine: clarified butter, cheese, oil, honey, and cane juice. These medicinal foods are beneficial to the body; therefore, I permit their consumption by the Buddhist monk when it is offered.”<sup>7</sup>***

***Behold, monks, I permit the receiving of these five offerings and their consumption at the time that they are offered.”<sup>16</sup>***

These five items are considered to be medicinal foods and not the kind of food received during the Buddhist monk's alms-round. The Lord Buddha did not specify the amount, since it varies with the severity of the illness.

#### **6.4 The Four Requisites and Habits**

Our Lord Buddha has given the Buddhist monk detailed information about the four requisites in terms of types, amounts, and purposes as appeared in the disciplinary rules. The four requisites allow the Buddhist monk to sustain his life and perform different monastic activities well enough so that he can work toward the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

These disciplinary rules enable the Buddhist monk to form good habits through the consumption of the four requisites.

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online, habit is defined as a usual way of behaving: something that a person does often in a regular and repeated way. Habit has a direct effect on one's thought, speech, and action. Therefore, good habits allow one to think good thoughts, say good words, and

<sup>7</sup> Later, the Lord Buddha allowed these five items to be consumed whenever needed.

<sup>8</sup> ***Vinayapīṭaka Mahāvagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 7, no. 25, p. 59

take good actions. On the contrary, bad habits cause one to think bad thoughts, say bad words, and take bad actions.

The Buddhist monk has no other possessions except for the four requisites. In terms of clothing, he has the three robes. In terms of food, he has what is offered him during his alms-round. In terms of shelter, he has just enough space to live comfortably. In terms of medicine, he uses it only when he is ill. Since the four requisites are what the Buddhist monk consumes daily, they play a crucial role in terms of his habits. In other words, habits, whether they are good or bad, are formed in the process of consuming the four requisites.

In having just three robes, it behooves the Buddhist monk to care for them and keep them clean so that they can last a long time. In consuming the robes correctly, the Buddhist monk learns to cultivate thriftiness. He also learns to cultivate awareness as he takes care of them, keeps them clean, and wears them properly. In the process, he learns to pay attention to details in everything that he does. In terms of going on an alms-round, the Buddhist monk learns not to be too fussy about what he eats. Etc. The cultivation of these good habits enables the Buddhist monk to cultivate higher virtues. On the contrary, if the Buddhist monk does not consume the four requisites correctly, he runs the risk of becoming careless and reckless.

The four requisites are like a double edged sword in that they can be both beneficial and harmful depending on how one consumes them.

***“Behold, monks, craving for the Buddhist monk arises from the three robes, food, shelter, and medicine. If the Buddhist monk is not careful, these four requisites can be the cause of his craving.”<sup>9</sup>***

---

<sup>9</sup> ***Taṇhā Sutta. Khuddaka-nikāya. Itivuttaka.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 45, no. 285, p. 666

Craving for the four requisites can turn into bad habits which result in bad thoughts, bad speech, and bad actions. With the arising of craving, one's virtues deteriorate.

According to the Dhamma-Vinaya, every new Buddhist monk must be under the supervision of his Preceptor for at least five years so that he can receive Dhamma instructions and cultivate good habits by learning to correctly manage and consume the four requisites.

The good habits derived from managing and consuming the four requisites enable the Buddhist monk to think, say, and do good things. The more good habits are formed, the better he will be able to cultivate higher virtues.

## **6.5 Attitudes toward the Four Requisites**

In Buddhism, the four requisites are important in at least three ways.

1. The four requisites are life's basic needs. They sustain life and allow the Buddhist monk to perform his monastic duties. Even so, the Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk how to correctly consume them.
2. The Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk to consume only what he needs. It is an excellent way to conserve natural resources. The Buddhist monk needs only the three robes in terms of clothing. The food he consumes is received during his daily alms-round, and he eats only two meals a day. He lives simply inside his cell. He does not require a large dwelling with all kinds of furniture in it.
3. The four requisites play a crucial role in cultivating good habits because they are consumed daily by the Buddhist monk. Good habits, in turn, enable him to cultivate higher virtues.

## 6.6 The Four Requisites and Self-Training

Not only can the four requisites give rise to good habits, they can also serve as instruments of self-training according to the Dhamma-Vinaya.

Self-training is the practice of the Lord Buddha's Teachings for the purpose of scrubbing clean one's body, speech, and mind such that all defilements can be extinguished. As stated above, the four requisites are like a double-edged sword. If one does not exercise care, they can cause defilements to wreak havoc in the Buddhist monk's life in the form of craving. On the contrary, if one does exercise care in consuming the four requisites, they can be the very weapons deployed to remove craving and extinguish defilements.

***“Behold, monks, what defilements can be extinguished as a result of exercising care in consuming the four requisites?”***

***Behold, monks, a Buddhist monk is careful and knows to use the robes to protect his body from the cold, the heat, biting insects and reptiles, the wind, the sun and to provide adequate coverage for his body.***

***He eats his food not for fun, for drunkenness or beauty enhancement, but he eats so that he can comfortably sustain his body. He eats in order to assuage hunger and aid his chastity practice.***

***He understands that his shelter is there to protect him from the cold, the heat, biting insects and reptiles, the wind, the sun, inclement weather, and to be for him a place of solitude necessary for meditation practice.***

***He takes medicinal items in order to relieve the pain and suffering of an illness and to aid his recovery.***



***Behold, monks, the defilements and anxieties that plague a Buddhist monk who does not exercise care in his consumption of the four requisites cannot plague a Buddhist monk who exercises care in his consumption of the four requisites.***

***Behold, monks, the said defilements can be extinguished by the care exercised in the consumption of the four requisites.***<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, the correct consumption of the four requisites can be used as a tool for self-training for the purpose of extinguishing defilements. The Buddhist monk must know the correct purposes of the four requisites. He must know to consume them in a conscientious manner. The correct consumption of the four requisites provides at least two benefits.

1. The Buddhist monk will not have to spend too much time managing his four requisites; therefore, he will have more time for meditation practice.
2. He will not become too concerned with the four requisites or things outside of himself; therefore, it will be easier for him to keep his mind at the center of his body.

When the Buddhist monk is not too concerned with the amount and the quality of the four requisites in his life, he will not be given to pleasure or displeasure in having or not having these things. His mind will be free from concerns and worries. He will have more time for meditation practice and it will be easier for him to keep his mind quiet and still at the center of his body. On this subject, this is what Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro) has to say,

***“Release the six emotions that arise from the physical form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and a***

---

<sup>10</sup> ***Sabbasavaṣaṇvara Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Mūlapaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 17, no. 14, p. 143

***mind object. The mind is then quiet, still, and free from these emotions. It is in such a way that the mind can achieve concentration.”***

The correct consumption of the four requisites can be used as a tool for self-training. It enables one to exercise care and restraint such that there is a decrease in defilements and an increase in purity and virtue.

It is recommended that the Buddhist monk considers the four requisites at three different times: before, during, and after their consumption as shown in the Dhamma lecture given by Phramonkolthepmuni (Sodh Candasaro) as follows.

***“When the Buddhist monk touches the robe offered to him, he realizes that it is just an object and it is completely separated from his self. It is clean and lovely. After it comes into contact with his body, it becomes soiled. When wearing the robe, the Buddhist monk must know that he is wearing the robe in order to protect his body from the cold, the heat, biting insects and reptiles, and to prevent the arising of sense-desire. After wearing the robe, he must also consider the reason for putting it on. He must repeatedly consider the purposes of the four requisites in his life.”***

Of the four requisites, it turns out that food is the most difficult requisite to manage. Clothing and shelter do not require much maintenance and they do last a while. Medicine is needed only occasionally. But when it comes to food, it behooves the Buddhist monk to exercise moderation each time he eats. The effect of the food eaten is quite direct and immediate. Too little food makes one feel hungry again too soon. Too much food makes one feel uncomfortable. Eating food that is of poor quality or too spicy can make one ill. Illnesses get in the way of meditation practice. If the Buddhist monk can learn to manage what he eats, the management of other requisites will be made easier.

## 6.7 The Four Requisites' Cycle

There are five steps to the four requisites' cycle as follows.

1. The search for the four requisites
2. Receiving the four requisites
3. Consuming the four requisites
4. Taking care of the four requisites
5. The donation and removal of the four requisites

**1. The Search for the Four Requisites:** The Lord Buddha permits the Buddhist monk to earn his livelihood by going on an alms-round. He is not allowed to purchase the four requisites for himself. Therefore, the requisites he needs must come from the laity. The Buddhist monk is not allowed to obtain what he needs by wrong livelihood such as the use of deception, making an investment, currying favor with a layperson, practicing black magic, etc.

**2. Receiving the Four Requisites:** This is the most important step according to the Lord Buddha's Saying.

***"The Buddhist monk is considered to be Mattannu when he knows to exercise moderation in receiving clothing, food, shelter, and medicine..."***

Details of this subject will be presented in 6.8

**3. Consuming the Four Requisites:** After having received the four requisites, it remains for the Buddhist monk to consume them correctly and according to their purposes. The correct consumption of the four requisites enables the Buddhist monk to develop good habits that facilitate progress in his self-training.

- 4. Taking Care of the Four Requisites:** It means making the most and best use out of the four requisites so that they can last a long time. It means taking good care of them and repairing what needs to be repaired. For example, when washing the robe, care is needed not to rub it too hard or stretch it. It should not be hung out to dry under the hot sun or its color will fade quickly. When it is dry, it should be neatly folded and stored in a dry place. Etc.

All requisites need to be well taken care of. The Buddhist monk who takes good care of his requisites is an inspiration to the laity because he is making the most and best use of all the things offered to him by the laity. On the contrary, a Buddhist monk who is careless with his requisites can hardly be an inspiration to the laity. His behavior will have a negative impact on Buddhism in the long run, since the Buddhist monks need the laity to provide the four requisites for them. Without the laity, the Buddhist monks cannot survive. The Lord Buddha teaches us to take care of our possessions as follows.<sup>11</sup>

***“Behold, monks, a wealthy family cannot last for the following four reasons.***

- 1. It does not look for what was lost.***
- 2. It does not repair what needs to be repaired.***
- 3. It does not exercise moderation in its consumption.***
- 4. It appoints an unethical woman or man to be the head of the household.”***

---

<sup>11</sup> ***Kul Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Catukakanipāṭa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 35, no. 258, p. 623

## **5. *The Donation and Removal of the Four Requisites***

- 1) Donation: After the Buddhist monk receives the four requisites from the laity, he may choose to share what he has with his fellow monks. He may choose to offer things of a finer quality to his Preceptor or his Dhamma teacher.
- 2) Removal: Once the four requisites arrive at the end of their lifetimes, they need to be disposed of. For example, an old robe may be cut into smaller pieces and used as a cleaning cloth. Leftover food that has spoiled must be disposed of properly.

### **The Importance of How to Receive the Four Requisites**

## **6.8 Receiving the Four Requisites**

### **6.8.1 The Importance of Receiving the Four Requisites**

The four requisites are the four basic needs required by every human being. They play a more important role in the life of the Buddhist monk because he must consume only what is necessary and according to the Dhamma-Vinaya as decreed by the Lord Buddha. These disciplinary rules enable the Buddhist monk to cultivate increasingly higher virtues. Consumption of the four requisites can be used as a tool to develop good habits for the purpose of defilements extinguishment.

The most important step in the consumption of the four requisites is in receiving them. The Lord Buddha says that to be *Mattannu*, the Buddhist monk must know to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites.

Receiving the four requisites is like the doorway or the entrance through which the four requisites can play an important role in the life of the Buddhist monk.

### **6.8.2 Knowing When to Receive the Four Requisites**

The Buddhist monk, who knows to exercise moderation when it comes to receiving the four requisites, must have a good understanding of the four requisites' cycle. He knows the beginning and the end of the four requisites in that he knows what he is lacking, how to go about obtaining the four requisites correctly and according to the Dhamma-Vinaya, how much of the four requisites to receive, how to consume them properly, how to make them last, and how to donate or remove them when they arrive at the end of their lifetimes. Only with such understanding can the Buddhist monk gain the most use out of the four requisites.

There are four cases involved in receiving the four requisites.

1. The case of "not receiving" is allowed when the Buddhist monk has no need for more requisites. However, if the Buddhist monk chooses not to receive what he needs, it can make his life very difficult. Not accepting additional robes when living in a cold climate area, not accepting food when hungry, not accepting shelter when it is raining, or not accepting medicine when one is ill, such refusal of the four requisites can only harm the Buddhist monk.
2. The case of "receiving less than what is necessary" can make life difficult for the Buddhist monk. Receiving too little food makes the Buddhist monk weak and anxious when gnawed by hunger.
3. The case of "receiving too much of what is necessary" becomes a burden for the Buddhist monk. He may have to spend too much time caring for what he has. He may become possessive. Etc.

4. The case of “receiving just enough of what is necessary” enables the Buddhist monk to derive all of the benefits from the four requisites.

How the Buddhist monk receives the four requisites is a direct reflection of his self-training and virtue.

### 6.8.3 How to Receive the Four Requisites

The Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk to be content with whatever requisites he has. This is reflected in His praise of Venerable Mahakassapa Thera as follows.

***“Behold, monks, Kassapa is content with whatever robes he has and he exemplifies contentment. He does not waste too much time searching for his robes. He is not displeased by not receiving any robe. He is not pleased by receiving a robe. He is not attached to them but uses them accordingly.***

***Behold, monks, Kassapa is content with whatever food, shelter, and medicine he has...”<sup>12</sup>***

There are three types of contentment.<sup>13</sup>

1. Yathasantosa: It means being content with consuming whatever four requisites one has received through one's own effort.
2. Yathabalasantosa: It means being content with what one needs for one's body, good health, and what one can consume. One willingly gives away anything one has in excess of.

---

<sup>12</sup> ***Santaṭṭhi Sutta. Samyuttanikāya. Nidānavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 35, no. 258, p. 623

<sup>13</sup> Phrabhavanaviriyakhun (Padet Dattajeevo), “True Monks”, (Bangkok: The Dhammakaya Foundation, 2540 B.E.), page 176

3. Yathasarupapasantosa: It means being content with what is befitting one's status and rank. Should one receive something of an exceptional quality, one willingly offers it to a more senior monk.

#### 6.8.4 Learning to Receive the Four Requisites

Before receiving the four requisites, there are things the Buddhist monk should first consider.

1. Is one receiving the four requisites out of "need", "want" or "greed"?
  - 1.1 In the "need" category, it means that without the four requisites one's life and one's monastic duties will be jeopardized.
  - 1.2 In the "want" category, it means that without the additional four requisites, one will not experience hardship but with them one's life will be made easier.
  - 1.3 In the "greed" category, it means that one wants additional requisites in spite of the fact that one does not lack anything.

The Buddhist monk needs to find out for himself if he is receiving the four requisites out of need or want. However, if it is out of greed, he must not receive them at all.

2. He should consider the three components, namely
  - (1) The requisite being offered
  - (2) The intention of the donor
  - (3) The Buddhist monk's need.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> **Roth Sutta. Samyuttanikāya. Sahāyatanavagga.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 28, p. 398



- 2.1 If the donor is well-off but wishes to donate a little, the Buddhist monk is to accept what is offered.
- 2.2 If the donor is poor but wishes to donate much, the Buddhist monk is to accept a little of what is donated.
- 2.3 If the donor is well-off and wishes to donate much, the Buddhist monk is to accept only what is necessary.

Knowing how to accept the four requisites will inspire a deeper faith in the laity and it will enable the Buddhist monk to scrub clean his body, speech and mind.

## 6.9 Exercising Moderation

Two case studies about exercising moderation in receiving the four requisites are presented as follows.

1. King Udena's story
2. The story of the female Buddhist monk, Thulalananda

### 1. King Udena's Story<sup>15</sup>

On one occasion, while King Udena and his wife were enjoying themselves in the royal park, his wife learnt that Venerable Ananda Thera was in the vicinity. She asked her husband for permission to visit the venerable monk. During the visit, Venerable Ananda Thera gave her a Dhamma lecture. She felt moved to make an offering of 500 pieces of cloth to Venerable Ananda Thera. King Udena thought it not proper for Venerable Ananda Thera to accept so many pieces of cloth for himself and felt that he had to go and talk to Venerable Ananda Thera about it.

<sup>15</sup> *Vinayapīṭaka Cullavagga*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 9, p. 522

*King Udena:* Venerable Sir, did my wife come to pay you a visit?

*Venerable Ananda:* She did, great king.

*King Udena:* Did she offer you anything, Venerable Sir?

*Venerable Ananda:* Yes, she offered me 500 pieces of cloth.

*The King:* What are you planning to do with so many pieces of cloth, Venerable Sir?

*The Venerable:* I am planning to give them to the monks whose robes are now worn out.

*The King:* What are you planning to do with the worn out robes?

*The Venerable:* They will be used to line the ceiling of the monastery.

*The King:* What are you planning to do with the old ceiling cloths?

*The Venerable:* They will be used to cover seat cushions.

*The King:* What are you planning to do with the old cushion covers?

*The Venerable:* They will be used to cover the floor.

*The King:* What are you planning to do with the old floor covers?

*The Venerable:* They will be used as foot towels.

*The King:* What are you planning to do with the old foot towels?

*The Venerable:* They will be used as dust cloths.

*The King:* What are you planning to do with the old dust cloths?

*The Venerable:* They will be mixed with mud and used to cover the walls.

Venerable Ananda Thera's answers so inspired King Udena that he ended up making an offering of 500 additional pieces of cloth to Venerable Ananda. Therefore, in just one day, Venerable Ananda Thera had been given 1,000 pieces of cloth.

This is a great example of how to receive the four requisites. It has little to do with accepting the least amount of what is offered but it has everything to do with how to make the best use of what is being offered. Venerable Ananda Thera's manner of receiving the cloths is beneficial in the following ways.

1. Venerable Ananda had the opportunity to earn merit from offering the cloths to his fellow monks.
2. His fellow monks could replace their worn-out robes with new ones.
3. King Udena and his wife had the opportunity to earn a tremendous amount of merit.
4. Buddhism flourishes as a result of the deep faith inspired by the conduct of such a true monk as Venerable Ananda Thera.

## 2. The Story of the Female Monk, Thulalananda<sup>16</sup>

On one occasion, a lay devotee promised to offer whatever amount of garlic the female monks (Bhikkunis) had need of and had instructed his watchman to offer the female monks who came to ask for garlic a few bunches each.

At the time, the city of Savatthi was organizing a festival and all of this devotee's garlic had been sold out. When the female monks came to ask for garlic from him, he sent them to get it at his garlic farm.

On that occasion, the female monk, Thulalananda, took the liberty of taking a large amount of garlic with her. Her immoderation caused the watchman to find fault with all the female monks who came for garlic at the farm.

This example shows that when a Buddhist monk fails to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites, he runs the risk of being criticized for his action and causing the laity's faith to erode.

Therefore, it is important that the Buddhist monk exercises moderation in accepting the four requisites because what he does has an impact on his person, the monastic community as a whole, the laity, and Buddhism.

### 6.10 Conclusion

To become Mattannu, the Buddhist monk must know to exercise moderation in accepting the four requisites in that...

1. He must have the ability to manage the four requisites which shows in the way he correctly accepts them.
2. He must have the ability to deploy the four requisites as tools for self-training so that he can cultivate higher virtues.

<sup>16</sup> *Vinayapiṭaka Bhikkhunīvibhaṅg*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 5, p. 176

Once the Buddhist monk has cultivated these abilities, he is said to be Dhammannu (knowledgeable in the Dhamma), Atthannu (knowing how to correctly interpret the Dhamma and putting it into practice), Attannu (knowing how to evaluate his virtue), and Mattannu (exercising moderation in receiving the four requisites).

### **6.11 Mattannu and the Ganakamoggallana Sutta**

The process required in learning to become Mattannu enables the Buddhist monk to meet with success in the steps prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta. For example, Patimokkhasanvara (the first step) can be achieved when the Buddhist monk has learnt to consume the four requisites properly and according to what is allowed by the Lord Buddha. He does not transgress the Fundamental Precepts that have to do with the consumption of the four requisites.

The care exercised in the consumption of the four requisites is the source of good habits which enable the Buddhist monk to think, say, and do things in a mindful manner. Cultivation of mindfulness facilitates other steps of self-training as prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta especially the second and fifth steps.

### **6.12 The Householder and the Four Requisites**

The Lord Buddha's teaching on the subject of "Mattannu" can be modified and applied by the householder in the following ways.

#### **6.12.1 Attitudes toward the Four Requisites**

The householder can cultivate the correct attitudes toward the four requisites as follows.

1. The attitude that the four requisites are life's basic needs; therefore, the householder learns to understand the purposes of the four requisites.
2. The attitude that natural resources must be conserved; therefore, the householder learns to consume the four requisites in moderation and in such a way as to help conserve precious natural resources.
3. The attitude that the four requisites are tools that enable one to form habits; therefore, he is mindful of how he consumes the four requisites and how he is forming good or bad habits as a result of consuming them.

### **6.12.2 The Four Requisites and the Householder's Lifestyle**

The correct attitudes about the four requisites have the following effect on the householder's lifestyle.

1. Clothing: The householder takes good care of his clothing and keeps it clean and neat. He is properly dressed. He chooses the kinds of clothing that are easy to care for, durable, not gaudy, not too expensive, and proper for different occasions. He takes care not to buy too many clothes.
2. Food: The householder makes sure that he eats clean and nutritious food. He does not overeat. Just four to five bites before feeling full, he stops eating and takes a drink of water instead. He does not buy more food than what he needs so he will not have to throw anything away. He keeps his mealtime regular.
3. Shelter: The householder chooses to live in a suitable place, for example, near a temple and a grocery store, surrounded by good and moral people, etc. His home should not be so large that it is difficult to keep clean and maintain.

4. Medicine: The householder knows to take care of his health by exercising regularly, having an annual medical checkup, etc.

The teaching about Mattannu can help the householder to cultivate different virtues and form good habits. These endeavors facilitate his merit accumulation through alms-giving, Precepts observation, and meditation practice. He is not likely to become too concerned with external things and is more likely to adopt a simple lifestyle. This way it will be easier for him to share what he has with others. The care he takes in managing and consuming the four requisites help him to be mindful; therefore, making it easier for him to keep the Precepts and practice meditation. He will be able to cultivate higher and higher virtues as a result.

## ASSIGNMENTS

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook before proceeding to the next chapter.

# Chapter 7

---

## The Fifth Step: Kalannu



## **Chapter 7**

### **The Fifth Step: Kalannu**

#### **Contents**

---

- 7.1 To Be Kalannu**
- 7.2 The Meaning of Kalannu**
- 7.3 Time and Life**
  - 7.3.1 The Truth about Time
  - 7.3.2 Heedfulness
- 7.4 The Buddhist Attitudes toward Life and Time**
  - 7.4.1 Life Is Short
  - 7.4.2 The Uncertainty of Life
  - 7.4.3 The Best Use of Time
- 7.5 The Four Activities and the Buddhist Monk's Self-Training**
  - 7.5.1 The Importance of the Four Activities
  - 7.5.2 The Relationship between the Four Activities and the Path and Fruit of Nibbana
- 7.6 Time Management**
  - 7.6.1 How to Manage Time
  - 7.6.2 How to Perform the Four Activities
  - 7.6.3 Failure in Time Management
- 7.7 Self-Training from the Dhammannu Step to the Kalannu Step**
- 7.8 Conclusion**
- 7.9 Kalannu and the Householder**

## Concepts

---

1. Time is precious. Once it passes by, it can never return. The passing of time also takes with it the opportunities to perform wholesome deeds. Therefore, for the Buddhist monk who is working toward the Path and Fruit of Nibbana, time is a precious commodity. He must learn to manage his time as effectively as possible so that each passing day brings him closer and closer to the attainment of the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.
2. Effective time management means spending time to perform the most important activities first. According to the Lord Buddha, these include learning, asking questions, practicing meditation, and seeking a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest. These activities especially meditation practice enable the Buddhist monk to extinguish defilements. Therefore, however busy the Buddhist monk may be in his daily life, he must make time to perform these four important activities.

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to understand the importance of time management and how the ability to manage time has a direct effect on the Buddhist monk's self-training and success.
2. To enable the student to understand how the four important activities enable the Buddhist monk to penetrate the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.
3. To enable the student to understand that effective time management means making the time to perform the four important activities.
4. To enable the student to modify what he has learnt accordingly and apply it to his own life as a householder and in such a way as to maximally benefit his life on earth, his merit accumulation, and his pursuit of Perfections.

## Chapter 7

### The Fifth Step: Kalannu

#### 7.1 To Be Kalannu

Once the Buddhist monk has learnt to be Dhammannu (learning the Lord Buddha's Teachings), Atthannu (learning to correctly interpret the Lord Buddha's Teachings and applying them in his cultivating of virtue), Attannu, ((learning to evaluate the level of his virtue so that he can continue to make progress in his self-training) Mattannu (learning to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites and everything related to them), the next step for him to learn is how to be Kalannu.

The fifth step of the Buddhist monk's self-training has to do with time management. On learning to be Kalannu, this is what the Lord Buddha has to say.

***“To become Kalannu, a Buddhist monk must know when to study, when to ask questions, when to practice meditation, and when to seek a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest. If a Buddhist monk does not know when to study, when to ask questions, when to practice meditation, and when to seek a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest, he cannot be said to be Kalannu. But it is because a Buddhist monk knows when to study, when to ask questions, when to practice meditation, and when to seek a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest that he is said to be Kalannu.”***

## 7.2 The Meaning of Kalannu

The word “**Kala**” has different meanings. It means time, an age, a period, once, temporary. It can also mean a destroyer; that is, causing death or an agent of death.

The word “**Kalannu**” means a person who knows the right time to perform the four activities, namely, studying, asking questions, practicing meditation, and seeking a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest.

## 7.3 Time and Life

The fact that the Lord Buddha puts time management in the fifth step of self-training shows that time management is more difficult than the first four steps. Moreover, time management plays a crucially important role when one is working toward the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

### 7.3.1 The Truth about Time

Most people appear to pay little attention to time and how it has an impact on their lives. Some people just let time pass idly by.

As a human being, we spend time going to school, taking care of our body, talking, sleeping, working, enjoying ourselves, etc. If we are here on earth to accumulate merit, pursue Perfections, and work toward the Path and Fruit of Nibbana, then very few of us indeed are doing what we are supposed to be doing here.

Time impacts our lives in at least five ways.

- 1) **Time Marches On:** Once it passes by, no one can bring it back.
- 2) **Time Takes away Our Youthfulness and Our Health:** As time goes by, we become older. The aging process

occurs gradually and continuously. It is a process called “Santati” in Buddhism. When we lose a hair, the body replaces it. Once a cell dies, the body replaces it. It is a continuous process of life and renewal that slows down as we age. The aging process can be witnessed by the fact that everyone grows from an infant to a toddler, a toddler to a child, a child to a teenager, a teenager to a young adult, a young adult to an older adult, and an older adult to an elderly adult. At the same time that we are aging, our physical strength and our health also deteriorate.

- 3) **Time Brings on Old Age:** Our body becomes old and decrepit with time. And yet, very few elderly people have any idea why we are here on earth.
- 4) **Time Takes away Opportunities to Perform Wholesome Deeds:** The best time to accumulate merit and pursue Perfections is when we are still young and healthy. But most people on earth spend their youth and adulthood busily doing anything but accumulating merit and pursuing Perfections. Some people even have the notion that they should wait until they are old before they should think about attending the temple, accumulating merit, and pursuing Perfections.
- 5) **Time Brings on Death:** Time may impact different people differently but to everyone it brings on death. Death is a certainty and every life is marching toward it.

Once death comes, all is over. One cannot go back and relive one’s life over again not even to correct one’s mistakes. In the *Devaduta Sutta*<sup>1</sup>, the Lord Buddha says that a heedless person who committed unwholesome deeds when he was living on earth will be asked by Phya Yama (this is the title of celestial beings dwelling in the first celestial realm of

---

<sup>1</sup> *Devadūta Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Uparipannāsa.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 23, p. 189

Catumaharajika, whose duty is to judge former human beings) if he had ever seen the five Devadutas (celestial messengers), namely, an infant, an old person, a sick person, a prisoner, and a dead person. He would answer in the affirmative. Phya Yama would then say to him, you were intelligent enough and as an adult, had it never occurred to you that birth, aging, sickness and death are part of life, and that evil deeds would incur terrible retribution? Had it never occurred to you to perform wholesome deeds with your body, speech, and mind? When he answers that it had not because he was heedless, then Phya Yama would say to him,

***“Behold, man, you did not perform any wholesome deeds with your body, speech, and mind because you were heedless. Therefore, your heedlessness will be punished by the officers of the Hell Realm. Your deeds of demerit had not been done to you by your mother, your father, your siblings, your friends, your relatives, the monks and ascetics or celestial beings. You had committed these deeds of demerit yourself; therefore, you will reap the retribution for your deeds of demerit.”***

Time is precious and it behooves all of us to spend it as wisely as possible while we still have it.

### **7.3.2 Heedfulness**

For those who understand that time brings on death, they will endeavor to perform as many wholesome deeds as possible while they can so that they can attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. This is the case for the Buddhist monk. He left the secular life to enter the monkhood so that he can practice renunciation. He is heedful when it comes to performing wholesome deeds. In the Ratthapala Sutta, King Korabaya, the ruler of the kingdom of Kuru, asks Venerable Ratthapala the reasons for his entering the monkhood as a young adult.

“Some people on earth enter the monkhood because...

1. They are old and can no longer earn a living.
2. They are sickly and will have a difficult time earning a living.
3. They run out of money.
4. They no longer have anyone that they can depend on.”<sup>2</sup>

Since Venerable Ratthapala is not afflicted by the woes stated above, why then should he decide to enter the monkhood?

Venerable Ratthapala tells the king that his decision to enter the monkhood came from the fact that he heard these words from the Lord Buddha.

1. The world brings on old age in that everyone is aging and will become old one day and his health will be gone. No one can stop the aging process.
2. No one can resist the world in that when one is sick, no one else can assuage one's pain. One must bear the suffering by oneself.
3. The world belongs to no one in that once one dies, one must leave everything behind be it one's material wealth or whatever else that makes one happy.
4. The world is always lacking in that one falls prey to craving. One is always in want of something. One is never satisfied. One is forever the slave of defilements and craving.

The four truths stated above caused Venerable Ratthapala to enter the monkhood. He understood life to be plagued with pain and suffering. He understood that time brought on old age. He understood that the human body was worthless unless it was used to perform wholesome deeds.

---

<sup>2</sup> ***Ratthapala Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Majjhimanipphāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 21, no. 440, p. 35

In talking about death, some people may feel that Buddhism has a pessimistic view on life. In fact, Buddhism deals with the reality of life, and a wise person will use the truth to motivate him to hasten his merit accumulation. To contemplate death, which is a certainty, is not to make us fear death as much as to warn us that our time on earth is limited. In the *Catutathapatipada Sutta*<sup>3</sup>, the Lord Buddha says to the effect that...

The Buddhist monk must contemplate death.<sup>4</sup> He should be reminded of death all day and all night long. Wherever he may be, he should realize that death can come to him any time. He may be bitten by a poisonous snake. He may be bitten by a scorpion. He may be bitten by a centipede. He may suffer a fatal fall. He may suffer from fatal indigestion. He may be attacked by someone. Or he may be killed by a non-human. He should also consider if he were to die now, was there any unwholesomeness that needed to be abandoned? If so, he must hasten to do it the way one hastens to extinguish the fire on one's clothes or headdress.

When people are still young and healthy, they pay very little attention to the subject of their own death. It is only when they are lying on their deathbed that they are beginning to look for something that they can take refuge in. It is a good exercise of heedfulness if one can pose the question, 'what one would like to do the most should today be one's last day on earth'. Of course, the answer will differ with different people. It all depends on each person's understanding of the truth about the reality of life and the world. An example of heedfulness is shown in the conversation between the Lord Buddha and

---

<sup>3</sup> ***Catutathapaṭipadā Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Atthakanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 37, no. 171, p. 641

<sup>4</sup> The contemplation of death is one of the meditation techniques called "Anusati".



King Pasendikosala as shown in the Pabbatopama Sutta<sup>5</sup> as follows.

“What if your civil servants came to you from all four cardinal points and told you that a mountain reaching up to the clouds is now rolling in to crush all living beings to death. If there is something you wish to do, this is the time to do it. Now, if you were to face such an impending disaster, what would you do?”

King Pasendikosala said, “I would practice meditation and perform deeds of merit, Most Exalted One.”

The Lord Buddha said, “Behold, great king, I wish to remind you that old age and death are always with you. What should you be doing then when that is the case?”

King Pasendikosala said, “Most Exalted One, since old age and death are with me, what else can I do but practice meditation and perform deeds of merit regularly.”

Therefore, for those who know about the human life objective whether they are Buddhist monks or householders, they should hasten to accumulate as much merit as possible while they still can.

## 7.4 The Buddhist Attitudes toward Life and Time

They are as follows.

### 7.4.1 Life Is Short

Whatever the human lifespan may be, it is still short. In the Arakanusāsani Sutta<sup>6</sup>, the Lord Buddha says that even

<sup>5</sup> **Pabbatopama Sutta. Samyuttanikāya. Sagāthavagga.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 24, no. 411, p. 522

<sup>6</sup> **Arakānusāsani Sutta Aṅguttaranikāya Saṭṭakanipāta.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 37, no. 71, p. 273

during the period when the human lifespan was about 60,000 years, a religious leader by the name of “Araka” had the following to teach his disciples.

1. Life is like a dewdrop at the end of a glass blade. It disappears quickly once the sun comes up.
2. Life is like the foam formed on the water surface during the rain, it bursts quickly.
3. Life is like the writing on the water surface, it disappears quickly.
4. Life is like the river that flows down the mountain, it flows constantly.
5. Life is like spit which is easily disposed of.
6. Life is like a piece of meat in a hot iron pan, it does not last long.
7. Life is like a cow that is being taken to the slaughterhouse, it is walking to its death.

Even during the time that the human lifespan was as long as 60,000 years, a wise person could still see that life was short. But with the human lifespan of less than one hundred years, strangely enough, people appear to feel that they would live for a long time. After telling the Buddhist monks about the religious leader, “Araka”, the Lord Buddha said,

***“Behold, monks, these days the human lifespan is very short. And it is plagued by tremendous suffering and frustration. Therefore, a wise person should perform deeds of merit and practice renunciation because death comes together with life.***

***Behold, monks, today, people live to be 100 years old. Some live longer, others shorter.”***

### 7.4.2 The Uncertainty of Life

Since life is short and we have no idea how long we will live, it means that nothing is certain in life. Some people die young. Some people have a long lifespan. Comments about the uncertainty of life appear in the Commentary's Samidadhi Sutta<sup>7</sup> as follows.

1. We cannot tell for certain at what age death will come to us.
2. We cannot tell for certain what illness we will die from.
3. We cannot tell for certain at what time of day death will come to us.
4. We cannot tell for certain in what place death will come to us.
5. We cannot tell for certain where our rebirth will take place.

### 7.4.3 The Best Use of Time

It is because we cannot tell when death will come to us that the Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk to make the best use of his time in the Bhaddekaratta Sutta<sup>8</sup> as follows.

***“A person should not pine for the past or hope for the future. Whatever is gone is gone. Whatever has not arrived has not arrived. A person should concentrate on the present.***

***A person ought to practice meditation regularly. Today is the day to practice meditation earnestly. Who knows if death will come in the morrow, for no one can negotiate with Death when it calls upon one. A person ought to diligently practice meditation during the day and during the night, for***

<sup>7</sup> **Samiddhi Sutta. Samyuttanikāya. Sagāthavagga.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 24, p. 109

<sup>8</sup> **Baddakaratta Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Uparipannāsa.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 23, no. 526, p. 210

***such a person can be said to be making the best use of his time.”***

Life is short and we have no idea when death will come to us. Therefore, the Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk not to be reckless in regards to time. He should hasten to practice meditation in order to attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. What is important is not so much about how long we will live but rather how effectively we spend each day. It is because we must learn to spend the limited time we have in life performing wholesome deeds and doing what is best for us that the Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk to learn to be “Kalannu”.

## **7.5 The Four Activities and the Buddhist Monk’s Self-Training**

After the Buddhist monk has learnt to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites, the next thing he must do is to learn time management. It goes without saying that if the Buddhist monk has not learnt to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites, he will not be able to make the best use of his time.

### **7.5.1 The Importance of the Four Activities**

In learning to be Kalannu, it is important that the Buddhist monk knows the right time to perform the four important activities of studying, asking questions, practicing diligence, and seeking a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest.

- 1) Studying:** It means studying the Lord Buddha’s Teachings especially in regards to the Dhamma-Vinaya (the monastic code of discipline). It is the duty of a Buddhist monk to study what the Lord Buddha teaches so that he can have an in-depth knowledge of the

framework within which to live his life. Spending the time to study the Lord Buddha's Teachings increases the Buddhist monk's knowledge of the Dhamma. In other words, he is increasing his "Dhammannu".

**2) Asking Questions:** It means asking whatever questions he may have about the Dhamma. The questions need to be addressed to his Dhamma teacher(s).

- He may have a question about a certain Dhamma topic.
- He may want to make sure that his understanding of a certain Dhamma topic is correct.
- He may already have a good understanding of a certain Dhamma topic but wishes his Dhamma teacher to elaborate on it.
- He may want to ascertain that his understanding of the Dhamma topic is correct.

The Buddhist monk asks questions about the Dhamma in order to prevent misinterpretation and ensure that his practice of the Dhamma proceeds accordingly. There are two components to this activity.

1). "The Questioners": There are two categories as follows.

The first category includes newly ordained monks or older monks who just started to study the Dhamma and put it into practice for the purpose of self-training. These older monks may have been a long time in the monkhood but have just begun to undertake self-training according to the steps prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta. In other words, they have just started to earnestly practice Sila (morality), Samadhi (concentration), and Panna (wisdom).

The second category includes the monks who have been on the path for a time but they still have questions

especially about meditation practice. They still need Dhamma teachers to help them make progress in the area of meditation practice.

2). **“The Answerers”**: They include Dhamma teachers who are well-versed in the Lord Buddha’s Teachings and know how to put them into practice. Dhamma teachers must have a good and long history in the area of self-training to be able to give clear and helpful advice to the questioners. Dhamma teachers play an important role in the life of the Buddhist monk who is working toward the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. In the Senasana Sutta, the Lord Buddha says that a well-trained monk can attain Nibbana soon enough if...

1. He has a suitable shelter. It means that his shelter is not too far from a community. It is quiet and conducive to meditation practice.
2. He does not have any difficulty obtaining the four requisites.
3. He lives near scholarly monks who are experts in the scriptures, the Dhamma and the Vinaya.
4. They can give him advice on and answers to different topics.
5. They can explain each Dhamma topic to him in such a way as to dispel all questions about that Dhamma topic.

The questioning and answering process aims to help the Buddhist monk to become increasingly Atthannu.

**3) Practicing Diligence:** It means that the Buddhist monk diligently works on his self-training especially in the area of meditation practice. Meditation practice is the crux of

self-training for the purpose of attaining emancipation from defilements.

The Buddhist monk's lifestyle enables him to undertake self-training in earnest.

1. He can undertake self-training through his daily activities which include going on an alms-round, chanting and studying the Dhamma-Vinaya.
2. He can undertake self-training through his assigned duties inside the temple which may include maintenance work, construction work, etc.
3. He can undertake self-training through everything that has to do with the four requisites.

The Buddhist monk's self-training helps him to pay attention to details, develop the manners befitting a true monk, become an inspiration to the laity, develop mindfulness and develop non-attachment to the things outside of himself. In the end, his self-training causes his mind to return to the center of his body. Practicing diligence here has to do with purifying one's mind through meditation practice.

Practicing diligence has to do with using meditation practice to scrub clean one's body, speech and mind based on one's understanding of "Atthannu".

#### **4) The Search for Solitude:** It means...

1. Searching for a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest by undertaking Dhutanga, etc.
2. Quitting all defilements such as lust, anger, ignorance, etc., according to the saying of the Lord Buddha as follows,

***“The Buddhist monk must search for solitude in order to extinguish all defilements.”<sup>9</sup>***

The search for solitude has two objectives as follows.

1. It is to search for a quiet place in order to practice meditation in earnest (self-training in the area of Atthannu).
2. It is to search for a quiet place in order to review one's progress in the area of virtue (self-training in the area of Attannu).

The difference between “diligence” and “the search for solitude” is that diligence means meditation practice as part of the Buddhist monk's daily activities whereas the search for solitude means practicing meditation in earnest in order to enable the mind to come to a standstill more quickly and more easily.

In conclusion, the Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk to give priority to the four activities if he wishes to make progress in the cultivation of higher virtues. It means that he should endeavor to spend his day performing these four important activities to the best of his ability before performing other activities.

### **7.5.2 The Relationship between the Four Activities and the Path and Fruit of Nibbana**

Learning and asking questions are considered to be “Pariyatti” or the study of the Scriptures whereas diligence practice and the search for solitude are considered to be “Patipatti” or the practice of the Dhamma. When the Buddhist monk works earnestly on Pariyatti and Patipatti, the end result will be

---

<sup>9</sup> ***Purabhedasuttaniddes Khuddaka-nikāya Mahāniddes.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 66, no. 396, p. 20



“Pativedha” or the supernormal insight that leads one to attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.

The self-training process from Dhammannu to Kalannu can be arranged into steps as follows.

1. Studying all of the Lord Buddha's Teachings in order to really know what the Lord Buddha teaches (**Dhammannu**).
2. Learning to correctly interpret the Lord Buddha's Teachings and putting what one has learnt into practice (**Atthannu**).
3. Learning to evaluate one's virtue so that one can continue to make improvement (**Attannu**).
4. Since the Buddhist monk's lifestyle differs drastically from that of the householder, the best tools he has at his disposal for his self-training are his daily activities and everything having to do with the four requisites (**Mattannu**).
5. For the self-training to bear fruits, it is necessary that the process takes place daily and regularly. It requires the Buddhist monk to allocate time for the four important activities and their constant improvement. This requires diligence, consistence, and patience (**Kalannu**).

In order to make progress in the area of virtue, the Buddhist monk must undertake self-training through...

- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) His daily activities | (2) His assigned duties |
| (3) His four requisites  | (4) His time management |

Kalannu enables the Buddhist monk to work diligently on his self-training such that he refuses to waste time on things that are not important.

These techniques enable the Buddhist monk to undertake the self-training steps as prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta, namely...

- (1) Exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha
- (2) Restraining one's sense-faculties
- (3) Exercising moderation in terms of food consumption
- (4) Practicing wakefulness
- (5) Cultivating mindfulness and self-possession
- (6) Having a penchant for solitude.

## 7.6 Time Management

### 7.6.1 How to Manage Time

- 1) **Having the Right Attitude about Time:** The view that one must hasten to perform wholesome deeds because life is short and is filled with uncertainty is the correct view to have for the Buddhist monk. It motivates him to manage his time properly so that he can achieve the goal of monkhood by continuing to undertake self-training for the purpose of attaining the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.
- 2) **Knowing How to Prioritize:** The Buddhist monk must give priority to the four important activities, namely, studying, asking questions, diligence practice and the search for solitude.
- 3) **Doing the Most Important Work First:** The Buddhist monk is to follow the advice given by Venerable Harita Thera.

***“Whoever procrastinates will experience problems later on and miss the chance for happiness. Talk only about the work that should be done and should not talk about the work that should not be done. Wise men can tell the difference between a doer and a talker. Nibbana as taught by the Lord Buddha is filled with bliss, devoid of the grief and***

***filth of defilements. The nature of Nibbana is perfect bliss.***<sup>10</sup>

### 7.6.2 How to Perform the Four Activities

1) **Studying:** Although one can study the Dhamma by reading the Scriptures or researching the Tipitaka, one can never dispense with Dhamma lectures from a Dhamma teacher. The guidelines for the most effective learning are presented as follows.

1.1) The first set of guidelines were given by the Lord Buddha to Venerable Punniya on how to become truly learnt in the Dhamma.<sup>11</sup>

1. The Buddhist monk must be a believer.
2. He must approach a Dhamma teacher.
3. He must go and sit near the teacher.
4. He must ask pertinent questions.
5. He must pay attention to the answers.
6. He must memorize what he has learnt.
7. He must contemplate what he has learnt.
8. He must put what he has learnt into practice in order to truly understand the Lord Buddha's Teachings.

1.2) The second set of guidelines were given by Venerable Ananda Thera who was foremost in the area of scholarliness.

---

<sup>10</sup> ***Hārit-theragāthā. Khuddaka-nikāya. Theragāthā.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 51, no. 321, p. 319

<sup>11</sup> ***Punṇiya Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Atthakanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 37, no. 188, p. 671

***“The Buddhist monk must be clever in terms of the contents, the Dhamma, the alphabets, and the language from beginning to end. In these ways will the Buddhist monk be a quick learner of the Dhamma and be able to retain what he has learnt.”<sup>12</sup>***

Both sets of guidelines require that...

- (1) The Buddhist monk listen attentively to each Dhamma lecture and interpret the teaching correctly before putting it into practice;
- (2) The Buddhist monk be blessed with a good and able Dhamma teacher who can not only elaborate on the Dhamma and make it easier for him to understand but also be a good role model for him.

**2) Asking Questions:** It is the way to help the Buddhist monk gain a deeper understanding of the Dhamma because any questions he may have about the Dhamma have been answered. The question the Buddhist monk may have can be asked in the following ways.

1. Beginning the question with “what” in order to get the explanation he needs.
2. Beginning the question with “why” in order to understand the cause and effect involved as well as how to correctly interpret the Dhamma.
3. Beginning the question with “how” in order to understand how best to put the Dhamma into practice.

---

<sup>12</sup> ***Nisanti Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, p. 361

Being clever about the kind of question to ask allows the Buddhist monk to gain a deeper understanding of the Dhamma such that he can pass it on to others. Venerable Ananda exemplifies the Buddhist monk who is clever with his questions. He was permitted by the Lord Buddha to ask whatever questions he had whenever he had them. As a result, he possessed profound knowledge of the Lord Buddha's Teachings and had made a great contribution to Buddhism. Moreover, he was recognized by the Lord Buddha for being foremost in the area of scholarliness. Asking questions plays an important role in the Buddhist monk's cultivation of higher virtues.

**3) Diligence Practice:** It means being diligent when it comes to meditation practice. To practice diligence means that...

- 3.1) The Buddhist monk is not given to laziness.
- 3.2) The Buddhist monk has a penchant for diligence in that he is not easily deterred by hard work, exhaustion, hunger, thirst, or sickness. He knows to practice diligence whatever the circumstances may be.
- 3.3) The Buddhist monk must be in a suitable environment. At least, he should not be in situations where he cannot easily practice diligence as stated by the Lord Buddha.<sup>13</sup> These include:
  1. Being old and decrepit.
  2. Being sickly.
  3. Not receiving enough food as a result of an economic downturn.

---

<sup>13</sup> **Samaya Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 54, p. 129

4. Being in a place where people lack harmony and conflicts abound.
  5. Being in a place where the Buddhist monks are divided causing the laity to lose faith in them.
- 3.4) The Buddhist monk can be said to be practicing diligence only when...<sup>14</sup>
1. He believes in the Lord Buddha's Self-Enlightenment.
  2. He is healthy and his digestive system is functioning properly.
  3. He is not boastful or pretentious. He shows himself for what he is.
  4. He works diligently and earnestly to abandon all unwholesomeness.
  5. He has the supernormal insight of an Ariya personage who sees the arising and cessation of suffering such that all defilements can be extinguished.
- 3.5) The Buddhist monk puts his life on the line when practicing diligence as shown in the Ghata Sutta<sup>15</sup> as follows.

***Venerable Mahamoggallana Thera: Most Exalted One, how does a person practice diligence?***

***The Lord Buddha: Moggallana, the Buddhist monk practices diligence by vowing that whatever a man can do in order to achieve something, he will endeavor to do it even if his***

<sup>14</sup> ***Bodhirajkumāra Sutta Majjhimanikāya Majjhimaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 21, no. 518, p. 130

<sup>15</sup> ***Ghaṭa Sutta. Samyuttanikāya Nidānavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 26, no. 692, p. 758

***body and flesh should dry up leaving only skin, tendons, and bones. For as long as he cannot achieve his goal, he will not stop. This is how the Buddhist monk practices diligence, Moggallana.***

- 4) **Searching for a Place of Solitude:** The Buddhist monk from time to time finds a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest. Among other things, the place needs to be quiet and conducive to keeping his body and mind calm.

### 7.6.3 Failure in Time Management

There are several reasons why a Buddhist monk cannot make the time to perform the four important activities. These include...

- 1) **Having Too Many Requisites:** If a Buddhist monk does not exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites, it can backfire. Excess requisites can become a burden because the Buddhist monk has to spend time taking care of them. If he is not careful, he will be encouraging his own craving to grow.
- 2) **Staying Too Long in One Place:** This scenario causes the Buddhist monk to accumulate things, have too many acquaintances, and form attachment to the place. In the Abhinivasa Sutta<sup>16</sup>, the Lord Buddha says,

***“Behold, monks, there are five problems associated with the Buddhist monk who has the same dwelling for a long time.***

---

<sup>16</sup> ***Abhinivāsa Sutta. Āṅguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 223, p. 475

1. *He tends to accumulate things.*
  2. *He tends to accumulate too many medicinal items.*
  3. *He tends to have too many extra activities and will not make time to perform the necessary activities.*
  4. *He has too many acquaintances both Buddhist monks and householders.*
  5. *When it comes time for him to leave the dwelling for a while, he becomes anxious.”*
- 3) **Forming the Six Bad Habits that Lead to the Loss of Wholesomeness:** In the Samaka Sutta,<sup>17</sup> the Lord Buddha teaches these six bad habits as follows.
1. *Being fond of extracurricular activities.*
  2. *Being talkative.*
  3. *Being mindless.*
  4. *Being fond of company.*
  5. *Being stubborn.*
  6. *Keeping bad company.*

*Any group of people in the past...in the future...in the present that is distant from wholesomeness, those people become distant from wholesomeness because of these bad habits.*

These six bad habits prevent a Buddhist monk from doing what he should be doing because he spends too much time doing what he should not be doing. Whatever virtue he had cultivated becomes lost to him.

<sup>17</sup> *Sāmaka Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Chakkanipāṭa.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 292, p. 579



### 7.7 Self-Training from the Dhammannu Step to the Kalannu Step

Once the Buddhist monk has undertaken self-training until he becomes Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, Mattannu, and Kalannu, it means that he can now serve as his own virtuous friend. He has studied the Lord Buddha's Teachings (Dhammannu). He has learnt to correctly interpret them and practice them accordingly (Atthannu). He has learnt to evaluate the level of his virtue (Attannu). He has learnt to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites (Mattannu). And he has learnt to manage his time properly such that he has more time to study the Scriptures and practice meditation (Kalannu). He is making progress in cultivating higher virtues. The purity of his body, speech, and mind is increasing; and he is embarking upon the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. It is for these reasons that the Buddhist monk can now serve as his own virtuous friend.

### 7.8 Conclusion

To become Kalannu, the Buddhist monk must...

1. Know the value of time and know how best to manage his time.
2. Know how to prioritize his activities such that he first spend his time performing the four important activities, namely, studying, asking questions, practicing diligence, and searching for a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest.

***Only when the Buddhist monk has succeeded in these ways that the Lord Buddha considers him to be Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, Mattannu, and Kalannu.***

## **7.9 Kalannu and the Householder**

The householder can also learn to be Kalannu in the same way as the Buddhist monk by beginning to understand the value of time and spending time in ways that best benefit him.

With the correct understanding about time, he can begin to learn time management by dividing his activities into four categories as follows.

1. Activities which are important and urgent.
2. Activities which are important but not urgent such as planning, policy-making that has an impact on the department or organization in the long run, etc.
3. Activities which are not important but urgent such as answering the telephone, answering the doorbell etc.
4. Activities which are neither important nor urgent such as going to parties, going out carousing, etc.

Most people in the world assume the second set of activities to have first priority. The reason is that if they are not tended to right away, they may not have a short-term impact but they will certainly have a long-term impact. For example, if planning and policy-making are delayed, it can have a huge impact on work and the organization in future. The first set of activities may be important and urgent but they have a short-term impact and they rarely occur.

In learning to become Kalannu, the householder can practice the teaching easily by making time for two activities as follows.

1. Studying and asking questions about the Scriptures.
2. Practicing meditation daily and taking some time out to practice meditation in earnest.

It is best that the householder learns time management through alms-giving, Precepts observation, and meditation practice.

- Study in-depth on the subjects of alms-giving, Precepts observation, and meditation practice.
- Keep practicing what he has learnt over and over again.

If the householder can follow these guidelines, he will be able to live his life in such a way as to come closer and closer to realizing his life objective.

## ASSIGNMENTS

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook before proceeding to the next chapter.

# Chapter 8

---

## The Sixth Step: Parisannu

## **Chapter 8**

### **The Sixth Step: Parisannu**

#### **Contents**

---

- 8.1 To Be Parisannu**
- 8.2 The Meaning of Parisannu**
- 8.3 Why Is It Important To Be Parisannu?**
- 8.4 The Four Groups of People**
  - 8.4.1 Who Are The Four Groups of People?
  - 8.4.2 The Importance of the Four Groups of People
- 8.5 The Traditions and Customs of the Four Groups of People**
- 8.6 Social Etiquette**
- 8.7 Conclusion**
- 8.8 Parisannu and the Householder**

## Concepts

---

1. Now that the Buddhist monk has undertaken self-training until he can be considered to be Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, Mattannu, and Kalannu and can now serve as his own virtuous friend. The next step in his self-training is how to become a virtuous friend to other people as prescribed in the step called Parisannu. In being a virtuous friend, it means that the Buddhist monk must be able to help others attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana or at the very least lead them to the right path. Learning to be Parisannu means learning to help spread Buddhism to every corner of the world. It means that the Buddhist monk must study the conduct, temperament, traditions and customs of the people that he wishes to help so that he will know how to conduct himself properly for the purpose of spreading the Lord Buddha's Teachings in an effective manner. During the Lord Buddha's time, the Lord Buddha divided people into four groups, namely, the royalties, the Brahmins, the millionaires, and the ascetics because these people played an important role in the propagation of Buddhism.
2. For the householder who has learnt to be Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, Mattannu, and Kalannu, he can also learn how to be Parisannu by putting the relevant principles into practice. In this way, he will be able to act as a virtuous friend to other people, thereby, doing what he can to help spread Buddhism.

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to learn about the importance of being Parisannu and the duty of a virtuous friend.
2. To enable the student to learn about the importance of the four groups of people, namely, the monarchs (royalties), the Brahmins, the millionaires and the ascetics and the role they played in spreading Buddhism.
3. To enable the student to realize how important it is to understand the particular customs and traditions of each of the four groups of people.
4. To enable the student to learn how to approach these four groups of people for the purposes of acting as a virtuous friend and passing on the Lord Buddha's Teachings to them.

## Chapter 8

### The Sixth Step: Parisannu

#### 8.1 To Become Parisannu

So far the Buddhist monk has studied the Lord Buddha's Teachings to such an extent that he can correctly interpret them and put them into practice. Next, he has learnt how to evaluate the level of his virtue, exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites, and manage his time so that he can make time to perform the four important activities daily. In other words, he has learnt to be Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, Mattannu, and Kalannu such that he can now serve as his own virtuous friend.

These first five steps as prescribed in the Dhammannu Sutta are sufficient for the self-training process as prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta. These include

step 1: Exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha

step 2: Restraining the sense-faculties

step 3: Exercising moderation in terms of food consumption

step 4: Practicing wakefulness

step 5: Cultivating mindfulness and self-possession

step 6: Having a penchant for solitude.

Once the Buddhist monk has undertaken self-training to the point where he can serve as his own virtuous friend, the Lord Buddha teaches him to act as a virtuous friend to humanity.



On learning to be Parisannu, the Lord Buddha says,

***“To become Parisannu, the Buddhist monk must know that this group of people consists of monarchs, this group of people consists of Brahmins, this group of people consists of millionaires, and this group of people consists of ascetics. He must know how to approach each group of people and how to conduct himself properly in their midst. If the Buddhist monk does not know how to approach each of these groups of people and how to conduct himself properly in their midst, he cannot be said to be Parisannu. Only when the Buddhist monk knows how to approach each of these groups of people and how to conduct himself properly in their midst can he be said to be Parisannu. He can then be said to be Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, Mattannu, Kalannu, and Parisannu.”***

## **8.2 The Meaning of Parisannu**

The word **“Parisannu”** means one who knows the social etiquette of a particular society such that his verbal and physical conduct suits the members of that society.<sup>1</sup>

In Buddhism, it means knowing how to approach and socialize with the four groups of people, namely, the monarchs, the Brahmins, the millionaires, and the ascetics.

In other words, he knows the conduct, the temperament, the customs and traditions of each of these groups of people.

---

<sup>1</sup> Magadha-Thai Dictionary, Major P. Longsomboon, Wat Paknam Dhamma School, (Bangkok: Artorn Printing 2540 B.E.), et al.

### 8.3 Why Is It Important To Be Parisannu?

When a Buddhist monk knows how to approach and socialize with members of these four groups by bearing in mind each respective group's conduct, temperament, customs and traditions, he is more likely to earn their acceptance and respect. This allows him to act as a virtuous friend and pass on the Lord Buddha's Teachings to them.

On the contrary, if a Buddhist monk is well-versed in the Dhamma and has the ability to teach and pass on the Dhamma but lacking in social etiquette in that he does not know how to conduct himself properly, he may not be able to earn the trust and respect of the people.

### 8.4 The Four Groups of People

#### 8.4.1 Who Are the Four Groups of People?

During the Lord Buddha's time, the four groups of people include:

1. Monarchs: These are the rulers of different kingdoms.
2. Brahmins: These are the people who are very wealthy and have many followers.
3. Millionaires: These are wealthy merchants or wealthy individuals.
4. Ascetics: These include cult leaders and their disciples. They may or may not have Right View and include fire-worshipping ascetics, wandering religious mendicants, naked ascetics, etc.

In today's world, these four groups of people include:

1. **Monarchs:** These are the high-ranking government officials. They can be further split into two groups:
  - a) members of the senate, house representatives, politicians, Prime Minister, Ministers, etc.,
  - b) permanent

government officials, namely, permanent secretaries, directors-general, provincial governors, policemen, soldiers, etc.

2. **Brahmins:** These include well-educated people such as academics, teachers, etc. Mass media are also included in this group.
3. **Millionaires:** These include wealthy businessmen, wealthy merchants, well-to-do farmers, etc.
4. **Ascetics:** These include religious personnel of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hindu, etc.

#### 8.4.2 The Importance of the Four Groups of People

The reason the Lord Buddha deems these four groups of people to be important is that they play a key role in the propagation of Buddhism. All throughout the history of Buddhism, members of these four groups have always played an important role in the promotion and support of Buddhism. At other times, they have been instrumental in crushing Buddhism. Therefore, it behooves the Buddhist monk to pay special attention to these four groups of people.

They act like a double-edged sword. If they agree with and approve of Buddhism, Buddhism can flourish. But if they disagree with and disapprove of Buddhism, Buddhism can decline. The power base of these four groups of people differs as follows.

The power base of monarchs or government administrators is the authority to rule and administer.

The power base of Brahmins or academics is knowledge.

The power base of millionaires is money.

The power base of religious personnel is spiritual beliefs.

Because these different groups of people have their own ways of doing things, their own ways of behaving, their own customs and traditions, it is necessary that a Buddhist monk knows how to approach them in order to act as a virtuous friend to them.

### **The Monarchs:**

This group of people has a tremendous influence over the general public especially during the Lord Buddha's time. If the monarch of a kingdom agreed with and approved of Buddhism, the work of propagating Buddhism was facilitated. This scenario is exemplified by King Bimbisara.<sup>2</sup>

On one occasion, the Lord Buddha and 1,000 Buddhist monks were sitting under the Banyan tree in the palm grove, a place called Supradisatha Cetiya in the city of Rajagaha of the kingdom of Magadha, King Bimbisara along with 120,000 wealthy Brahmins and millionaires decided to pay Him a visit.

On that occasion, the Lord Buddha gave them a Dhamma lecture, at the end of which King Bimbisara and 110,000 wealthy Brahmins and millionaires attained the Fruit of Sotapanna whereas 10,000 wealthy Brahmins and millionaires attained the Triple Gem and took the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha as their refuge for the rest of their lives. King Bimbisara was filled with such joy that he requested the Lord Buddha and His disciples to have their meals at the palace the next morning. He also offered the bamboo grove called Veluvanna to Buddhism. It became the first Buddhist temple of this Buddha Eon.

It was because the Lord Buddha had given a Dhamma lecture to King Bimbisara and the 120,000 influential people that allowed the Lord Buddha's Teachings to spread quickly and

---

<sup>2</sup> *Vinayapiṭaka Mahāvagga*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 6, no. 56, p. 110

widely. During the Lord Buddha's time, Magadha was one of the most powerful kingdoms politically, religiously, economically and militarily.

Starting from the morning after the Lord Buddha's first Dhamma lecture in Rajagarh, a large number of people came to accumulate merit and listen to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lectures at the Veluvanna Temple. As a result, Buddhism was well established in the Kingdom of Magadha.

### **The Brahmins:**

The Brahmins during the Lord Buddha's time were well-educated individuals with tremendous influence and a large number of followers. If they agreed with and approved of the Lord Buddha's Teachings, they could be instrumental in the spreading of Buddhism. This was exemplified by the Brahmin, Bavari.<sup>3</sup>

The Brahmin, Bavari, possessed three of the thirty-two physical features of the Perfect Man. He was learnt in the Vedas. He had sixteen senior disciples, each of whom was the head of 1,000 disciples. Hence, Bavari had altogether 16,000 disciples. One day, Bavari had some questions and one particular celestial being advised him to address the questions to the Lord Buddha. Bavari decided to send all of his disciples to visit the Lord Buddha.

Each of the sixteen senior disciples took turn to ask the Lord Buddha his question. By the time the Lord Buddha answered all of their questions, fifteen senior disciples along with all of their disciples attained Arahatsip. Only one senior disciple attained the Fruit of Anagami and the reason was that he wanted Bavari to have the opportunity to listen to the Lord

---

<sup>3</sup> *Aṭṭhakathā. Khuddaka-nikāya. Suttanipāta.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 47, p. 882

Buddha's Dhamma lectures. Eventually, all of them including Bavari entered the monkhood.

This example shows very clearly how this group of people plays an important role in the propagation of Buddhism. When the people heard that the Brahmin, Bavari, and all of his disciples had converted to Buddhism, they too wanted to attend the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lectures. Bavari and his disciples were instrumental in the propagation of Buddhism.

### **The Millionaires:**

The millionaires, who believe in the Lord Buddha's Teachings, play an important role in supporting Buddhism. During the Lord Buddha's time, many Upasakas (male lay devotees) and Upasikas (female lay devotees) were recognized as being foremost in the area of alms-giving. Here, only one example will be given. It is the story of the great Upasika, Visakha.<sup>4</sup>

The great Upasika, Visakha, was the daughter of the millionaire "Dhananjaya" and his wife, Sumanadevi. They lived in the city of Bhaddiya. When Visakha was seven years old, the Lord Buddha saw with His supernormal insight that she would be able to attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. Therefore, He along with a large group of His disciples went to visit the city of Bhaddiya.

The millionaire, Mendaka, who was Visakha's grandfather, heard of the Lord Buddha's visit. Therefore, he sent Visakha along with 500 girls who were her attendants to go and welcome the Lord Buddha. Having paid homage to the Lord Buddha, she stood to one side. The Lord Buddha gave her and her 500 attendants a Dhamma lecture, at the end of which all of them attained the Fruit of Sopanna.

---

<sup>4</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Gāthā-Dhammapada.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 41, p. 73

When Visakha was sixteen years old, she married Punnavadhanakumara and went to live in her husband's family home in the city of Savatthi. She had served as a virtuous friend to every member of her husband's family and all of them converted to Buddhism. Ever since then, in the morning, Visakha's house would be full of Buddhist monks and merit-makers. She prepared alms for the Buddhist monks every morning. Having offered alms to the Buddhist monks in the morning, she would later go with her attendants to listen to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lecture at the temple. All of them carried medicinal items and beverages for the Buddhist monks. She would return home after having heard the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lecture. This was her daily routine.

Sometime later, Visakha built the Pubbaram Temple for the Lord Buddha and the Buddhist monks. The temple was a mansion consisting of two stories and 1,000 rooms. There were 500 rooms on the first floor and 500 rooms on the second floor. She had spent a total amount of 270 million for the construction of the temple.

Visakha was also foremost in the area of offering the four requisites to the Buddhist monks.

The great Upasika Visakha's story shows that when millionaires can be converted to Buddhism, they have the means to support Buddhism. In the case of Visakha, besides being a millionaire who had a large number of attendants, she was also well-respected by the people of the city of Savatthi. Therefore, she had played an important role in supporting and propagating Buddhism.

### **The Ascetics:**

The ascetics play an important role in spreading the Lord Buddha's Teachings because they are spiritual leaders. They are highly regarded by the monarchs, the Brahmins, the

millionaires, and the general public. The important role played by the ascetics is exemplified by the three Jatila brothers.<sup>5</sup>

Before the Lord Buddha taught the Dhamma in the kingdom of Magadha, He thought of the three Jatila brothers. They were fire-worshipping ascetics with many disciples. And they were highly regarded by the monarchs, the Brahmins, the millionaires, and the general public of Magadha. If these fire-worshipping ascetics could be converted to Buddhism, it would make easier the work of propagating Buddhism in Magadha.

The Lord Buddha went first to teach the eldest brother, Uruvelakassapa, who had 500 disciples. After the conversion of Uruvelakassapa and his disciples, the Lord Buddha went next to teach the second brother, Nadikassapa, and his 300 disciples. After their conversion, the Lord Buddha went last to teach the youngest brother, Gayakassapa, and his 200 disciples. It so happened that all 1,003 ascetics were able to attain Arahathship. After entering the monkhood, all of them followed the Lord Buddha into the city of Rajagarh. The people of Rajagarh began to attend the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lectures as a result.

## 8.5 The Traditions and Customs of the Four Groups of People

### Customs, Traditions, and Arrogance

In the Khattiyadhipapaya Sutta,<sup>6</sup> the Lord Buddha teaches the differences among these four groups of people in terms of desire, taste, confidence, and want as follows.

<sup>5</sup> ***Mahakhandhaka Vinayapiṭaka Mahāvagga***. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 6, no. 37, p. 87

<sup>6</sup> ***Khattiyadhipapaya Sutta. Āṅguttaranikāya Chakkanipāta***. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 323, p. 687



***“Monarchs desire material wealth, favor wisdom, have confidence in military might, want land, and wish for supremacy.***

***Brahmins desire material wealth, favor wisdom, have confidence in incantations, want to worship fire, and wish for the Brahma Realm.***

***Millionaires desire material wealth, favor wisdom, have confidence in the arts, want work, and wish for success.***

***Ascetics desire patience and meekness, favor wisdom, have confidence in morality, want to be free from the concerns of life, and wish for Nibbana.”***

During the Lord Buddha’s time, these four groups of people had their own ways of doing things but they did have one thing in common and that was arrogance.

### **1) The Monarchs’ Arrogance**

Monarchs desire material wealth, favor wisdom, have confidence in military might, want land, and wish for supremacy.

In regards to monarchs, this is what the Lord Buddha has to say in the Dahara Sutta.<sup>7</sup>

***“Do not underestimate that the monarch is still young, for even a very young absolute monarch has the power to order the execution of one who berates him.”***

With absolute power, a very young monarch is all powerful. He can command his soldiers to go to war, if he chooses. He can command the execution of a particular individual.

---

<sup>7</sup> ***Dahara Sutta. Samyuttanikāya Sagāthavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 24, no. 322, p. 406

The arrogance common to monarchs is demonstrated in the story of King Vidudabha as follows.<sup>8</sup>

During the Lord Buddha's time, King Pasendi, who was the ruler of the kingdom of Kosala, wished to become a relative of the Lord Buddha by marriage. Therefore, he sent a message to ask for a daughter of the Sakya House. Meanwhile, members of the Sakya House did not regard King Pasendi as being equal to them. However, they feared that if they did not send him a female member of the Sakya House, they would risk the wrath of the king. Therefore, they decided to send Vasabhakhattiya, the daughter of King Mahanama and his female slave.

King Pasendi was enamored with the girl and appointed her his chief queen. Sometime later, she gave birth to a son with a golden complexion and he was called "Vidudabha".

When Vidudabha was sixteen years old, he asked his parents for permission to visit his Sakya relatives in the city of Kapilavastu. The Sakya royalties put on a show in welcoming the prince although they felt contempt for his lowly birth. Having stayed a few days, the prince returned to the kingdom of Kosala.

As soon as the prince left, the female slaves had to wash the board on which the prince had sat with milk and cursed him for being a lowly person. Unfortunately, one of Prince Vidubabha's pages forgot his weapon and returned to fetch it. He heard the curses and wanted to know what the matter was. Having found out the truth, this page told everyone he knew about it. The rumor spread so quickly that it soon reached the ears of Prince Vidubabha. The prince set his heart on avenging himself and vowed that when he ascended the throne, he would kill the Sakya royalties and use the blood of their throats to clean the same board that he had sat on.

---

<sup>8</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Gāthā-Dhammapada.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 41, p. 21-42

Upon ascending the throne, King Vidubabha mobilized his troops against the city of Kapilavastu and succeeded in killing all of the Sakya royalties.

This story shows clearly the arrogance of monarchs and how their arrogance could lead to their own demise.

## 2) The Brahmins' Arrogance

Brahmins desire material wealth, favor wisdom, have confidence in incantations, want to worship fire, and wish for the Brahma Realm.

During the Lord Buddha's time, the Brahmins were highly educated and they were the intellectual leaders of society. They exerted a great deal of influence on the masses. Sometimes, they also assumed the role of a ruler and as such they played an important role in the spreading of Buddhism. The arrogance common to Brahmins is demonstrated in the story of the Brahmin, Sonadanda, as follows.<sup>9</sup>

On one occasion, the Lord Buddha and a group of 500 Buddhist monks went to the city of Campa. They went to stay at a place near the lotus pond inside the city. In this city, the Brahmin, Sonadanda, was the teacher of royalties and Brahmins. He had been given the authority to rule over some of the villages and towns. He went to see the Lord Buddha while the Lord Buddha was being visited by the Brahmins and millionaires of the city.

He was concerned that were he to ask a question that ought not to be asked or were the Lord Buddha to ask him a question that he could not answer, he would lose face and be seen as a stupid person. Being thus regarded would cause him to lose position and material wealth.

---

<sup>9</sup> ***Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta. Dīgha-nikāya. Sīlakhandhavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 12, p. 17

The Lord Buddha knew his thought; therefore, He chose to ask only the questions that He knew the Brahmin could answer. Having eased the Brahmin's mind, the Lord Buddha gave him a Dhamma lecture. Afterward, the Brahmin proclaimed himself a lay devotee who took the Triple Gem as his refuge. He requested the Lord Buddha and the Buddhist monks to come for a meal at his house the next morning. When the meal was over, the Brahmin approached the Lord Buddha and sat on a cushion placed lower than where the Lord Buddha was sitting. He said to the Lord Buddha,

"If I am in the midst of the people and get up to bow low at your feet, I am afraid that the people would look down on me. This will cause me to lose position and material wealth. Therefore, I ask for your permission that in such a circumstance I will merely put my hands up in a Namaskar instead of getting up to pay you a deep obeisance. If I remove my headdress, it will be like bowing to you. If I pass by in a vehicle, I will raise my goad and lower my umbrella to show that I am bowing to you."

Although the Brahmin believed in the Lord Buddha, he still had an image to uphold. He had the deepest respect for the Lord Buddha, and yet he had to do what was right for him and the people that he led.

### 3) The Millionaire's Arrogance

Millionaires desire material wealth, favor wisdom, have confidence in the arts, want work, and wish for success. The millionaire's power base is material wealth. If they spend it by supporting Buddhism and on charity, it will be of great use to him and everyone. But if they hoard it, it will not be of any use to anyone as in the story of the millionaire, Kosiya.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> *Atthakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Gāthā-Dhammapada.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 41, p. 49

During the Lord Buddha's time, there was a miserly millionaire called Kosiya. His personal wealth was worth 800 million. He lived in the village of Sakkara not too far from the city of Rajagarh. One day, the millionaire saw someone in the countryside eating a crispy pancake and began to crave it. He wanted to have some but he did not want to have to share it with anyone. His abstinence caused him to become thin and sallow. After his wife learnt that he had been craving crispy pancakes, she volunteered to make them for him. He asked his wife to prepare the snack for his own consumption only. He told his wife to bring whatever she needed to prepare the snack to the seventh floor of their castle.

The Lord Buddha knew what was going on with the millionaire. Therefore, early that morning, he sent His Chief Disciple, Venerable Mahamoggallana Thera, to torture and subdue the millionaire. The great venerable flew to sit in mid-air outside the window of the millionaire's castle. This greatly annoyed the millionaire. Seeing the great Venerable Mahamoggallana Thera standing, sitting, doing walking meditation in the air did not cause the millionaire to give up his snack. The great venerable then threatened the millionaire with plumes of fire. The millionaire feared that his castle would be burnt to ashes so he asked his wife to make a small crispy pancake for the great venerable. But when his wife tried to pour just a small amount of the pancake mixture into the pan, it kept getting bigger and bigger. The millionaire tried to pour just a small amount of pancake mixture into the pan, the same thing happened. He tried a few times with the same result. Finally, the millionaire told his wife to offer one pancake to the great venerable. But however hard they tried to pry the pancake from the stack, it would not separate. The stack of pancakes became one piece. The millionaire finally became exhausted from the effort exerted in separating the pancakes; he no longer had any desire to eat any so he told his wife to offer the entire stack to the great venerable.

Venerable Mahamoggallana Thera then gave the millionaire and his wife a Dhamma lecture and they became believers. He employed his supernatural powers to bring the couple to the temple so that they could offer the pancakes to the Lord Buddha and 500 Buddhist monks. Having eaten the pancakes, the Lord Buddha gave the couple a Dhamma lecture, after which the couple attained the Fruit of Sotapanna. They spent the rest of their lives accumulating merit, hence, making the best use of their material wealth.

Material wealth is a source of power. This particular millionaire was extremely fortunate to have been saved by the Lord Buddha. As a result, he was able to accumulate merit and support Buddhism with his material wealth. His practice of alms-giving played a part in helping the Buddhist monks to spread the Lord Buddha's Teachings.

#### 4) The Ascetics' Arrogance

Ascetics desire patience and meekness, favor wisdom, have confidence in morality, want to be free from the concerns of life, and wish for Nibbana. Different groups of ascetics have different beliefs and tend to adhere strictly to their own beliefs. Some groups of ascetics believe in self-mortification and practice it in earnest. Some groups of ascetics believe in fire-worshipping and practice it in earnest. All in all, they are confident that their beliefs and practices will lead them to Nibbana. Ascetics are spiritual leaders and as a group they play an important role in the spreading of Buddhism as shown in the story of the three Jatila brothers.<sup>11</sup>

Not long after the Lord Buddha's Self-Enlightenment, He trekked to the village of Uruvela where the three fire-worshipping brothers were living. The eldest brother's name was Uruvelakassapa. He had altogether 500 disciples.

---

<sup>11</sup> *Vinayapiṭaka Mahāvagga*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 6, p. 87

The younger brother's name was Nadikassapa, and he had 300 disciples. And the youngest brother's name was Gayakassapa, and he had 200 disciples. They lived in three separate ashrams along the bank of the Gaya River.

The Lord Buddha knew that these three brothers would be able to attain Arahatsip, so He went first to teach the eldest brother, Uruvelakassapa. His arrogance prevented him from acknowledging the Lord Buddha for what He was. The fire-worshipping ascetic was under the conviction that he was an Arahata while the Lord Buddha was not. The Lord Buddha had to display His supernormal powers in so many ways before Uruvelakassapa could admit that He had great supernormal powers but he still held on to the conviction that he was an Arahata while the Lord Buddha was not. Finally, there was a huge rainfall and the entire area was submerged. The Lord Buddha caused the water to form a wall all around the area where He was staying. The fire-worshipping ascetic grew concerned for the Lord Buddha's safety and went by boat to where the Lord Buddha was staying. He saw how the Lord Buddha was doing walking meditation on dry ground in an area surrounded by a wall of water. And yet, his old conviction was still intact.

The Lord Buddha knew it was time to remind the ascetic of his wrong belief, so He said, "Behold, Kassapa, you are not an Arahata. You have not yet found the path which leads to Arahatsip. Your conviction and conduct cannot possibly lead you to attain Arahatsip."

Uruvelakassapa suddenly felt humbled by the Lord Buddha's remark and went to rest his forehead on the Lord Buddha's feet. He then asked the Lord Buddha to ordain him.

After Uruvelakassapa and his 500 disciples entered the monkhood, they dumped their cut hair, headdress, requisites, and fire-worshipping implements into the river. These items floated past the ashrams of his younger brothers. Out of the fear for their eldest brother's safety, they came to

his ashram. Having learnt of what became of him, the younger brothers and their disciples also entered the monkhood. The Lord Buddha gave all of them relevant Dhamma lectures with the result that everyone attained Arahatsip.

Uruvelakassapa's arrogance prevented him from releasing his wrong belief, and it had taken quite a while for the Lord Buddha to convert him. But once converted, these former fire-worshipping ascetics had played an important role in spreading the Lord Buddha's Teachings.

## 8.6 Social Etiquette

### 8.6.1 Proper Conduct

The Lord Buddha teaches the five ways of conducting oneself properly. They include how to approach, how to act, how to stand, how to sit, and how to keep quiet. Details of these five ways differ with differing groups of people depending on each group's views, customs, traditions, conduct, and temperament. Even the people belonging to the same group may have different views about things. But overall the Buddhist monk's conduct must be in accordance with the Dhamma-Vinaya in order to inspire belief and respect in the people. He should be composed, dignified, and at ease wherever he may be for the fact that he has cultivated morality, concentration, and wisdom. The Lord Buddha wishes every Buddhist monk to fit in wherever he is as expressed in the Parisa Sutta.<sup>12</sup>

The five ways of conducting oneself properly can be elaborated as follows.

1. **"How to Approach"**: The Buddhist monk practices how to approach the different groups of people during his

---

<sup>12</sup> *Parisa Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Atthkanipāta*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 37, no. 166, p. 611



alms-round. According to the Vinaya, the Buddhist monk is advised to do as follows.

“Behold, monks, you are to dress properly and clean your alms-bowl before going on your alms-round.

While you are walking among the houses, you are to practice self-restraint. You are to keep your eyes low. You are to keep your body properly covered at all times. You are not to laugh. You are to remain silent. You are not to walk with a swagger. You are not to swing your arms, move your head from side to side, walk on your toes, cover your head or lean against anything.

Once you enter a house, know that this is the entrance and this is the exit. You do not rush your entrance or your exit. You do not stand too far away or too near. You are not to leave suddenly. When the lay person is making a food-offering, you are to part your outer robe and reveal the alms-bowl with your left hand, extend it with your right hand, and use both hands to support the alms-bowl. You are not to look at the alms-giver. After the food-offering is over, you are to conceal your alms-bowl inside your outer robe and depart in a dignified manner. Etc.

Behold, monks, such is the manner in which a Buddhist monk goes on his alms-round.”

It should be evident that the Lord Buddha has given the Buddhist monk detailed instructions on how to go on an alms-round. This is to ensure that the Buddhist monk conducts himself properly so that he can be the source of inspiration to the people.

The Lord Buddha also cites nine circumstances where the Buddhist monk should not approach a house.

1. When the householder is reluctant to welcome the Buddhist monk.
2. When the householder is reluctant to pay him respect.

3. When the householder is reluctant to offer him a seat.
4. When the householder hides his things.
5. When the householder gives little even though he can afford to give much.
6. When the householder deliberately offers him things of poor quality even though better quality things are available.
7. When the householder makes an offering in a disrespectful manner.
8. When the householder does not sit close enough to listen to the Dhamma.
9. When the householder feels no joy in hearing the Dhamma.

But if these scenarios are absent, the Buddhist monk is advised to enter the house. Once he has entered a house, he is to conduct himself as follows.<sup>13</sup>

1. He does not take things for granted with a householder that he is not familiar with.
2. He does not demand that the householder does this or that.
3. He does not keep the company of those who harbor ill-will against him.
4. He does not talk to anyone in a whisper.
5. He does not ask for too much.

2. **“How to Stand”**: In order to stand properly, the Buddhist monk must abstain from the following.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> *Kulupaka Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 111, p. 250

1. He does not stand too far; otherwise, he would have to shout when he wishes to say something.
2. He does not stand too near; otherwise, the other person will feel uncomfortable.
3. He does not stand upwind; otherwise, he may give off body odor.
4. He does not stand in place higher than anyone else because it is a show of disrespect.
5. He does not stand face to face with someone; otherwise, he will have to stare into another person's eyes.
6. He does not stand too far behind a person; otherwise, he will have to crane his neck to look at him.

In fact, to stand properly means to stand to the left or to the right of a person and at a proper distance.

3. **“How to Act”**: This is best exemplified by the story of the novice monk, Nigrodha,<sup>15</sup> who alone inspired Asoka the Great to convert to Buddhism and help Buddhism to flourish during his reign.

One day while Asoka the Great was looking out of his window, he saw a novice monk who was walking in such a composed and dignified manner that he sent his page to invite the novice monk to the palace.

When the novice monk was at Asoka the Great's presence, Asoka invited the novice monk to have a seat.

---

<sup>14</sup> *Aṭṭhakathā Oghatarāṇa Sutta. Samyuttanikāya. Sagāthavagga.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 24, p. 32

<sup>15</sup> *Paṭhamasamantapasadika Aṭṭhakathā-vinayapiṭaka.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 1, p. 84

The novice monk looked around to make sure that there were no Buddhist monks in the room before he approached the throne and gave Asoka the Great to understand that he should take the alms-bowl.

Asoka the Great watched the novice monk as he approached the throne and thought to himself that today this novice monk would be the owner of this palace.

The novice monk put his alms-bowl in Asoka's hands and went to sit on the throne. Asoka humbly offered different kinds of delicious food to the novice monk.

Before the novice monk took a seat on the throne, he had to first make sure that there was not a Buddhist monk there to whom he should first pay respect and defer. The novice monk's action pleased Asoka the Great very much. Every situation is different and every Buddhist monk must exercise care in conducting himself properly and in such a way as to best benefit Buddhism.

4. **“Sitting”**: The Lord Buddha says that to sit properly, the Buddhist monk must abstain from doing the following.<sup>16</sup>

1. Sitting too far from someone
2. Sitting too near someone
3. Sitting upwind of someone
4. Sitting in a place higher than others
5. Sitting face to face with someone
6. Sitting too far behind someone

---

<sup>16</sup> *Mahānidāna Sutta Aṭṭhakathā-dīgha-nikāya Mahāvagga*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 13, p. 189

It can be seen that standing and sitting are governed by the same principles and for the same reasons. The best place to sit or stand is at a proper distance a little to the left or to the right of a person.

**5. “How to Remain Silent”:** The Lord Buddha says that one should remain silent when one knows or does not know something. At times, the best thing to do is to keep quiet especially when saying something does not do any good. The Buddhist monk who knows how to remain silent is graceful and dignified. It is a different kind of silence shown by someone who cannot answer a question.

In the company of other Buddhist monks, there are only two things the Buddhist monk should do.<sup>17</sup>

1. Converse about the Dhamma
2. Remain silent after the manner of an Ariya personage.

These five ways of conducting oneself properly must be learnt and practiced by every Buddhist monk because they are crucial to the propagation of Buddhism.

## 8.7 Conclusion

It can be concluded that for the Buddhist monk to become Parisannu...

1. He must know and understand the practices of the four groups of people, namely, the monarchs (government administrators), the Brahmins (academics), the millionaires (businessmen and business owners), and the ascetics.

---

<sup>17</sup> *Rāja Sutta. Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya Udāna.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 44, p. 173

2. He must be able to conduct himself properly in their midst. He must know how to approach them, how to stand, how to act, how to sit, and how to remain silent in their midst.

***Only after the Buddhist monk knows how to do these things that he can be considered to be Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, Mattannu, Kalannu, and Parisannu.***

### **8.8 Parisannu and the Householder**

The principles prescribed for the Buddhist monk on the subject of Parisannu can be modified and applied to the householder so that he can learn to conduct himself properly in any social situation. One added aspect is in the area of clothing. Since the householder has many articles of clothing, it behooves him to dress properly and according to the social circumstance.

The householder should exercise good manners in line with the rules of social etiquette. "Attributes of a Person with Class", the book written by Jaoprayaprasadetsurentrabodi (M.R.V Pia Malakul) makes for a good reference on this subject. An excerpt of the book is as follows.

"A person with class is neat in body, speech, and mind. He dresses cleanly and neatly. He is not loud. He does not interrupt when someone is talking. He does not sneeze loudly without covering his mouth and nose...

A person with class has good manners. He sits properly in the presence of older people. He pays respect to an older person. He pays his respect when saying farewell. He defers to a lady. He does not vilify another person's loved ones in front of the person. He knows to apologize when he has done something wrong. He is respectful to his elders. He is kind and gentle to those younger than him, etc."

If the householder wishes to visit a person's house in the capacity of a virtuous friend, he should first make an appointment with the person. He should dress properly and make sure that he has all the necessary information. He should arrive at the person's house about five minutes early but not earlier than that. Most importantly, he should never be late. He should sit where he is invited to sit. He should not stay too long. He should not enter the person's house before being invited inside. He should not ask too many personal questions out of his own curiosity, etc.

Good manners should be employed in the presence of the four groups of people. When in the company of foreigners, one should also learn to conduct oneself properly by learning more about the particular people and their culture.

## ASSIGNMENTS

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook before proceeding to the next chapter.

# Chapter 9

---

## The Seventh Step: Puggalaparoparannu



## **Chapter 9**

### **The Seventh Step: Puggalaparoparannu**

#### **Contents**

---

- 9.1 Knowing the Audience**
- 9.2 To Be Puggalaparoparannu**
- 9.3 The Choice of Dhamma Topic**
  - 9.3.1 Choosing the Dhamma Topic to Suit the Audience's Intrinsic Nature
  - 9.3.2 Choosing the Dhamma Topic to Suit the Audience's Background
  - 9.3.3 Choosing the Dhamma Topic to Suit the Audience's Level of Intelligence
- 9.4 How to Give a Dhamma Lecture**
  - 9.4.1 It Is not Easy to Give a Dhamma Lecture
  - 9.4.2 Never Underestimating the Importance of Giving a Dhamma Lecture
- 9.5 Useful Tips for Giving a Dhamma Lecture**
  - 9.5.1 The Use of a Case Study
  - 9.5.2 The Use of an Analogy
  - 9.5.3 The Use of a Teaching Aid
- 9.6 Evaluation**
  - 9.6.1 Evaluating One's Dhamma Lecture
  - 9.6.2 Evaluating the Audience
- 9.7 Conclusion**
- 9.8 Puggalaparoparannu and the Householder**
- 9.9 The Dhammannu Sutta and Self-Training**

## Concepts

---

1. The Buddhist monk who has learnt to be Puggalaparoparannu knows how to read people. Therefore, he knows which Dhamma lecture to give to his audience. Puggalaparoparannu plays an important role when acting as a virtuous friend. Puggalaparoparannu allows people to understand what is being taught to the point that they want to practice it. Puggalaparoparannu is helpful to the propagation of Buddhism. And it is useful in creating a better society and a better environment.
2. The Buddhist monk employs his knowledge of Puggalaparoparannu to distinguish his audiences so that he can help them to gain knowledge and cultivate higher virtues. These audiences can, in turn, introduce the Dhamma to the people they know, thereby, creating a better environment for everyone.
3. The Householder can also apply the principles of Puggalaparoparannu in performing the duty of a virtuous friend and in passing on the Dhamma knowledge to each other more effectively.

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to learn about the importance and the meaning of Puggalaparoparannu.
2. To enable the student to know how the Buddhist monk learns to become Puggalaparoparannu.
3. To enable the student to learn how the householder can apply the principles of Puggalaparoparannu in his daily life.

## Chapter 9

### The Seventh Step: Puggalaparoparannu

To become Parisannu means to know the different groups of people, their conduct, their temperament, their customs and traditions and how to conduct oneself properly in their midst. Parisannu is the first step toward performing the duty of a virtuous friend. When the Buddhist monk knows to conduct himself properly in the way he approaches the people, in the way he stands, acts, sits, and in the way he remains silence, he naturally earns the respect and goodwill of these people. They will be more willing to listen to his Dhamma lectures and advice so that they can learn to live their lives correctly and achieve their life objective.

Having the opportunity to converse with each other about the Lord Buddha's Teachings allows people to come to an understanding about the reality of life and the world. They learn how important it is to cultivate Right View, to perform only wholesome deeds, accumulate merit, and abandon all unwholesomeness. In acting as a virtuous friend to the people, the Buddhist monk is giving them the eternal truth.

***“Behold, monks, I have not seen anything that can cause wholesomeness which has not yet occurred to occur or unwholesomeness which has occurred to erode like having a virtuous friend. Behold, monks, when a person has a virtuous friend, wholesomeness which has not yet occurred will occur and unwholesomeness which has occurred will erode.”<sup>1</sup>***

---

<sup>1</sup> *Kalyāṇamittadivagga* *Āṅguttaranikāya Ekanipāta*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 32, no. 72, p. 142

## 9.1 Knowing the Audience

In performing the work of a virtuous friend, it is necessary that one understands the type, intrinsic nature, and characteristics of his audience. Only when the Buddhist monk knows his audience that he can select the relevant Dhamma topic for his conversation.

Knowing his audience allows the Buddhist monk to open for them the gateway to the Celestial Realm and even Nibbana.

***“Behold, monks, I could see that there were living beings who possessed traces of defilements, those who possessed a high level of defilements, those who possessed a vast amount of merit, those who possessed a small amount of merit, those who were wholesome, those who were unwholesome, those who could be taught easily, those who could be taught with difficulty, and those who understood the danger of the hereafter.”<sup>2</sup>***

From the Lord Buddha’s Saying above, living beings can be divided into four categories depending on how readily they can attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana.<sup>3</sup>

1. **“Ugaghatitannu”**: These are the persons who can attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana as soon as a Dhamma topic is mentioned. This category of living beings can be compared to a lotus that is ready to bloom today.
2. **“Vipacitannu”**: These are the persons who can attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana as soon as a Dhamma topic is explained in brief. This category of living beings can be compared to a lotus that will bloom tomorrow.

<sup>2</sup> ***Pasarasi Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Mūlapaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 18, no. 323, p. 421

<sup>3</sup> ***Āyacana Sutta. Samyuttanikāya. Mūlapaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 25, p. 124

3. **“Neyya”**: These are the persons who can attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana after frequent teaching and coaching. This category of living beings can be compared to a lotus that will bloom sometime in the future.
4. **“Padaparama”**: These are the persons who cannot attain the Path and Fruit of Nibbana in this lifetime in spite of much listening, much memorizing and much learning. This category of living beings can be compared to a lotus that is submerged and will become food for the fish and the turtles.

The Lord Buddha's Teachings can definitely benefit the first three categories of living beings in the current lifetime. As for the fourth category, the Lord Buddha's Teachings will follow them to benefit them in future lifetimes.

Therefore, the Buddhist monk should be able to tell if his audience is ready or not to listen to the Dhamma and practice it. It does not mean that he can tell which category of living beings his audience belongs to, however. It does mean that he knows a person for his temperament, conduct, personal preference, etc.

## 9.2 To Be Puggalaparoparannu

On the subject of learning to be Puggalaparoparannu, this is what the Lord Buddha has to say.

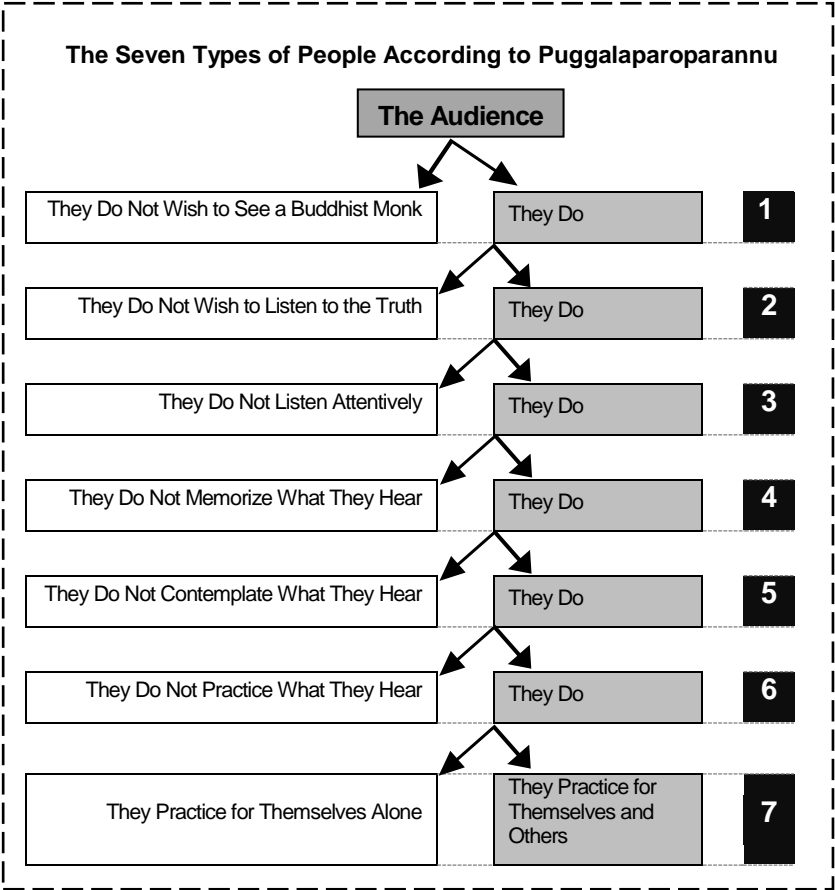
“The Buddhist monk learns to be Puggalaparoparannu by learning to know the two categories of people in the following scenarios.

- 1) **One Category Wishes to See an Ariya Personage but the Other Category Does Not**: The people who do not wish to see an Ariya personage deserve blame while the people who wish to see an Ariya personage deserve praise. There are two categories of the people who wish to see an Ariya personage as follows.

- 2) **One Category Wishes to Listen to the Dhamma but the Other Category Does Not:** The people who do not wish to listen to the Dhamma deserve blame while the people who wish to listen to the Dhamma deserve praise. There are two categories of the people who wish to listen to the Dhamma as follows.
- 3) **One Category Listens to the Dhamma Attentively but the Other Category Does Not:** People who do not listen to the Dhamma attentively deserve blame while the people who listen to the Dhamma attentively deserve praise. There are two categories of the people who listen to the Dhamma attentively as follows.
- 4) **One Category Memorizes the Dhamma It Has Heard but the Other Category does not:** People who memorize the Dhamma they have heard deserve blame while those who memorize the Dhamma they have heard deserve praise. There are two categories of the people who memorize the Dhamma they have heard as follows.
- 5) **One Category Contemplates the Dhamma It has Memorized but the Other Does Not:** People who do not contemplate the Dhamma they have memorized deserve blame while those who contemplate the Dhamma they have memorized deserve praise. There are two categories of the people who contemplate the Dhamma they have memorized as follows.
- 6) **One Category Practices the Dhamma It Has Contemplated but the Other Category Does not:** People who do not practice the Dhamma they have contemplated deserve blame while those who practice the Dhamma they have contemplated deserve praise. There are two categories of the people who practice the Dhamma they have contemplated as follows.

**7) One Category Practices What They Have Heard to Benefit Themselves and Others but the Other Practices What They Have Heard to Benefit Themselves Alone:** People who practice what they have heard to benefit themselves alone should be chastised while the people who practice what they have heard to benefit themselves and others should be praised.

Behold, monks, the Buddhist monk who knows a person in these ways is considered to be Puggalapaparannu.



The Lord Buddha divides people into seven types where each type is divided into two categories as follows.

1. The people who want to or do not want to see a Buddhist monk.
2. The people who want to or do not want to listen to a Dhamma lecture.
3. The people who listen to a Dhamma lecture attentively or inattentively.
4. The people who memorize or do not memorize a Dhamma lecture.
5. The people who contemplate or do not contemplate what they have memorized.
6. The people who practice or do not practice what they have contemplated.
7. The people who practice the Dhamma to benefit themselves alone or to benefit themselves as well as others.

When the Buddhist monk can apply this principle to distinguish the different types and categories of people, he will be better able to teach them.

- (1) If a person wants to see a Buddhist monk, it means that he has some basic knowledge about Buddhism. He knows that the life of a Buddhist monk is vastly different from that of a householder. He has enough belief in Buddhism to want to see a Buddhist monk.
- (2) If a person wants to listen to a Dhamma lecture, it means that he has more knowledge about Buddhism than the person in the first category. Therefore, he wishes to learn more about what the Lord Buddha teaches. If a person wants to see a Buddhist monk but does not want



to listen to a Dhamma lecture, it is very likely that he sees the Buddhist monk as some sort of a good-luck charm or he wants the Buddhist monk to bless him and give him special amulets, magic incantations, etc. His belief in the Lord Buddha's Teachings is lacking; therefore, he is not ready to listen to a Dhamma lecture.

- (3) If a person listens to the Dhamma lecture attentively, it means that he appreciates the value of the Lord Buddha's Teachings. If while listening to the Dhamma lecture, the person allows his mind to wander off or is busily chatting, he cannot gain anything from the Dhamma lecture.
- (4) If a person listens to the Dhamma lecture attentively and commits it to memory, he stands to gain more Dhamma knowledge with time than someone who listens attentively but does not commit it to memory.
- (5) If a person memorizes the Dhamma lecture and takes the time to contemplate it, he stands to gain more wisdom than someone who memorizes it but does not contemplate it.
- (6) If a person practices what he has learnt in his daily life, he will truly understand the value of the Dhamma. A person who does not practice what he has learnt may even employ his knowledge to commit unwholesomeness by finding faults with others or using what he knows to take advantage of others.
- (7) If a person practices the Dhamma to benefit himself alone, he cannot be a virtuous friend to other people. And he is not helping other people to benefit from the Lord Buddha's Teachings.

Examples of those who practice the Dhamma to benefit themselves and others include the Lord Buddha and the Arahats. They are pure in body, speech, and mind. The people who practice the Dhamma to benefit themselves

and others tend to be more loving and kind than those who practice the Dhamma to benefit themselves alone.

When the Buddhist monk can read a person according to the principles prescribed in the Puggalaparoparannu, he is in the best position to act as a virtuous friend to the person because he knows exactly what and how he should teach the person.

Puggalaparoparannu is exemplified in the following story.

### **The Story of the Five Male Lay Devotees<sup>4</sup>**

During the Lord Buddha's time, there were five male lay devotees who wanted to listen to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lecture. Therefore, they went to see the Lord Buddha. Having paid homage to the Lord Buddha, they sat themselves down to one side. During the Dhamma lecture, one person fell asleep. One person was writing on the ground with his finger. One person was shaking a tree. One person was looking up at the sky. There was only one lay devotee who was paying close attention to the Lord Buddha's words.

Venerable Ananda was fanning the Lord Buddha at the time. After the Dhamma lecture, he asked the Lord Buddha, "Most Exalted One, your voice is like thunder, and yet it is curious that these lay devotees acted as they did."

"Ananda, don't you know these lay devotees?"

"No, Most Exalted One. I do not know them."

"The one who fell asleep had been reborn a snake for 500 consecutive existences. And now he cannot seem to get enough sleep; therefore, my voice could not reach him.

---

<sup>4</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Gāthā-Dhammapada.*** Bangkok : Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 43, p. 42

The one who wrote on the ground had been reborn a worm for 500 consecutive existences. Therefore, he was too busily writing on the ground to hear my voice.

The one who shook the tree had been reborn a monkey for 500 consecutive existences. Therefore, he was too busily shaking the tree to hear my voice.

The one who was looking up at the sky had been reborn an astrologer for 500 consecutive existences. Therefore, he was too busily looking up at the sky to hear my voice.

The one who paid close attention to my lecture had been reborn a Brahmin who was fond of chanting for 500 consecutive existences. Therefore, he listened to my lecture as if he was listening to an incantation.

At the end of the lecture, this last lay devotee was able to attain the Fruit of Sotapanna.

Although all five lay devotees wanted to listen to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lecture, the manner in which they listened to the Dhamma lecture differed causing four of them to not receive any benefit. This story serves as a reminder to the Buddhist monk that he needs to observe the manner in which the different members of his audience are listening to his Dhamma lecture.

In learning to become Puggalaparoparannu, the Buddhist monk is learning to be as best a virtuous friend as possible. It allows him to give first priority to those who are ready to be taught so that they can benefit the most from his teaching. In the *Desana Sutta*,<sup>5</sup> the Lord Buddha makes the following comment to the householder, Gamani.

---

<sup>5</sup> ***Samyuttanikāya Sahāyatanavagga***. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 29, no. 603, p. 193

***“Behold, Gamani, rice paddy fields have three different qualities: good, fair, and poor. Which kind of rice paddy field will the rice farmer cultivate first?***

***The rice farmer will naturally choose to cultivate the good rice paddy field first and then the fair one. He may or may not cultivate the poor quality rice paddy field because whatever grows there will become fodder for the cattle.***

***Likewise, I give my Dhamma lectures which are lovely in the beginning, in the middle, in the end, complete with alphabets and contents first to my male and female monks because they take me as their refuge.***

***Likewise, I give my Dhamma lectures which are lovely in the beginning, in the middle, in the end, complete with alphabets and contents last to heretical teachers and non-believers.”***

The seven principles given in the teaching on Puggalaparoparannu allow the Buddhist monk to give a Dhamma lecture that suits each type of audience. He will not give a profound Dhamma lecture to someone who wants to see him but does not want to listen to a Dhamma lecture. In that case, it is better for him to greet the person and say a little something that may arouse his curiosity. If the Buddhist monk makes the mistake of giving a long and profound Dhamma lecture to such a person, it may turn the person off altogether such that he may never want to see any Buddhist monk again.

### **9.3 The Choice of Dhamma Topic**

The Buddhist monk needs to know that the ultimate aim of giving a Dhamma lecture is to lead the listener to embark upon the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. Therefore, in giving a Dhamma lecture, the Buddhist monk hopes that the listener will receive all three levels of benefit as follows.

At the highest level, the Buddhist monk hopes that the listener will be emancipated from all defilements.

At the intermediate level, the Buddhist monk hopes that the listener will receive happiness here on earth and in the hereafter.

At the low level, the Buddhist monk hopes that the listener will be able to benefit from the Dhamma lecture in his future existences.

The Lord Buddha chose to give only a Dhamma lecture that could benefit His listener. He told His disciples that His knowledge about reality could be compared to all the leaves in the forest, but what He taught to the people could be compared to the leaves held inside a fist.

When choosing a Dhamma topic, the Buddhist monk can choose it according to 1) the listener's intrinsic nature; 2) the listener's background; and 3) the listener's level of intelligence.

#### **9.3.1 Choosing the Dhamma Topic to Suit the Audience's Intrinsic Nature (Carita)**

Intrinsic nature or Carita can be divided into six categories as follows.

1. Ragacarita: Being fond of beauty
2. Dosacarita: Being quick to anger
3. Mohacarita: Being stupid and ignorant

4. Saddhacarita: Being easily misled
5. Buddhacarita: Being thoughtful and introspective
6. Vitakacarita: Being anxious and worried

The following is how the Lord Buddha chooses a Dhamma topic to suit His listener's intrinsic nature.

***“The Lord Buddha teaches the ugliness of the body to those who possess Ragacarita. He teaches loving-kindness to those who possess Dosacarita.***

***He teaches those who possess Mohacarita to study and ask questions, to listen to Dhamma lectures, converse about the Dhamma, and stay close to their teacher.***

***He teaches mindfulness on breathing (Anapanasati) to those who possess Vitakacarita.***

***He teaches those who possess Saddhacarita the truth about the Lord Buddha's Self-Enlightenment, the value of the Dhamma, and the Buddhist monks' practice of righteousness and their Fundamental Precepts.***

***He teaches supernormal insight (Vipassana) and the Three Characteristics (impermanence, the inability to remain the same, and the absence of true selfhood) to those who possess Buddhacarita.”<sup>6</sup>***

The following story has to do with Queen Khemadevi, the chief wife of King Bimbisara.

---

<sup>6</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Mahāniddes.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 66, p. 304

### **The Story of Queen Khema<sup>7</sup>**

---

Queen Khema was a lady of exquisite beauty. She knew that the Lord Buddha taught about the harm of physical form; therefore, she had no wish to see the Lord Buddha. King Bimbisara had to try and devise a plan to encourage her to see the Lord Buddha. He commanded a songwriter to write about the exquisite beauty of the Veluvanna Temple especially for his queen. Having heard the song, the queen had a sudden urge to see the temple.

The Lord Buddha knew about the queen's visit to the temple, so He created a woman of exceptional beauty who attended to Him by fanning Him. Having seen the beautiful woman, the queen thought that it had been said that the Lord Buddha spoke about the harm of the physical form; the rumor had to have been wrong. My beauty is but a fraction of this beautiful lady, and I have never seen such beauty before in my life. The queen did not pay attention to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma lecture, for she was busily staring at the beautiful lady.

Knowing the queen's intrinsic nature and her pride in her own beauty, the Lord Buddha caused the beautiful lady to go from childhood to adulthood and all the way to mere skeleton. Upon seeing the transformation of the beautiful lady, it suddenly occurred to her that the body had to come to pass; that it deteriorated quickly; and there was no real substance to the physical form.

Knowing the queen's state of mind, the Lord Buddha said, "Khema, look at the sad and unclean body. It rots and it has things flow out of it from above and below. This is what a fool desires." At the end of the sentence, Queen Khema attained the Fruit of Sotapanna. The Lord Buddha said further, "Anyone who craves beauty becomes a victim of

---

<sup>7</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Gāthā-Dhammapada.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 43, p. 298

craving like a spider falling into its own web. A wise person who can stop the current of craving becomes carefree and emancipated from all suffering.” At the end of the sentence, Queen Khema attained Arahatsip.

### 9.3.2 Choosing the Dhamma Topic to Suit the Audience’s Background

The Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk to give a Dhamma lecture based on what the audience is familiar with as exemplified by the Dhamma lecture given by Him to the fire-worshipping brothers in the sub-district of Gaya by the bank of the Gaya River. This Dhamma lecture is called the Adittapariyaya Sutta.<sup>8</sup>

***“Behold, monks, all things are hot. What are these things? These are the eyes, the physical form, the eye-consciousness, and the sight. Whatever happiness or unhappiness derived from sight is hot.***

***Why is it hot? It is hot because of fire, namely, lust (Raga), anger (Dosa), and ignorance (Moha). It is hot because of birth, aging, death, grief, lamentation, suffering, sadness, and despair.”***

A person’s background may include his livelihood, his birthplace, his level of education, his age, etc. The Buddhist monk’s knowledge of his audience’s background allows him to teach the Dhamma to them in an effective manner.

<sup>8</sup> ***Āditta-pariyāya Sutta. Samyuttanikāya Salāyatanavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 28, no. 31, p. 33



### 9.3.3 Choosing the Dhamma Topic to Suit the Audience's Level of Intelligence

A person's level of intelligence increases with age even though his intrinsic nature and background have not changed. Therefore, he will require a different Dhamma topic. This is exemplified by the advice given to Venerable Rahula by the Lord Buddha.

When Venerable Rahula became a novice monk at the age of seven, he still behaved like a child. At the time, the advice given to him by the Lord Buddha is shown in the Cularahulovada Sutta<sup>9</sup> as follows.

***“Behold, Rahula, a person that intentionally lies is also capable of other misdeeds. Therefore, Rahula, you must never lie, not even in jest.”***

When Rahula the novice became a teenager, what he needed to guard himself against was lust. While following the Lord Buddha on His alms-round in the morning, the Lord Buddha gave him an advice as shown in the Maharahulovada Sutta<sup>10</sup> as follows.

***“Behold, Rahula, a physical form whether it is in the past, in the future or in the present; whether it is inside or outside; whether it is coarse or refined, whether it is homely or exquisite; whether it is far or near, know with your insight that the physical form does not belong to us; we are not the physical form; and the physical form is not us.”***

<sup>9</sup> ***Cūlarāhulovadha. Majjhimanikāya Majjhimpaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 20, no. 125, p. 265

<sup>10</sup> ***Mahārāhulovadha Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Majjhimpaṇṇāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 20, no. 133, p. 278

As Venerable Rahula grew in wisdom, the Lord Buddha gave him a more profound advice as appeared in the Cūlarāhulovada Sutta<sup>11</sup> and is shown here in part as follows.

***“Rahula, are the eyes permanent or impermanent?”***

***“They are impermanent, Most Exalted One.”***

***“Are impermanent things the source of unhappiness or happiness?”***

***“Unhappiness, Most Exalted One.”***

***“When a thing is impermanent, the source of unhappiness, and changeable, should it be considered as belonging to us, being us, and our true selfhood?”***

***“Not at all, Most Exalted One.”***

***“Rahula, is the physical form permanent or impermanent.....”***

As a result of the Lord Buddha’s supernormal insight and incomparable teaching method, at the end of the Dhamma lecture, Venerable Rahula was able to attain Arahātship. Venerable Rahula was also recognized by the Lord Buddha as being foremost in the area of love for learning.

#### **9.4 How to Give a Dhamma Lecture**

The Lord Buddha is our best role model on how to be a virtuous friend. His Dhamma lectures are lovely in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end. Nonetheless, it is important that the Buddhist monk understands the two fundamental aspects about giving a Dhamma lecture.

<sup>11</sup> ***Cūlarāhulovada Sutta. Majjhimanikāya. Uparipannāsa.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 23, no. 795, p. 477

#### 9.4.1 It Is not Easy to Give a Dhamma Lecture.

This is because one must be ready in terms of one's mind, one's knowledge of the Dhamma topic, and one's ability to pass on one's knowledge in a chronological order. The Lord Buddha said to Venerable Ananda,<sup>12</sup>

"Behold, Ananda, it is not easy to give someone a Dhamma lecture. To give a Dhamma lecture, the Buddhist monk must bear in mind that...

1. He will present his Dhamma lecture in a chronological order.
2. He will present the relevant cause and effect.
3. He will present the Dhamma lecture in the spirit of loving-kindness.
4. He will present the Dhamma lecture without expecting anything in return.
5. He will not employ the Dhamma lecture as the means to satirize himself or anyone else.

#### 9.4.2 Never Underestimating the Importance of Giving a Dhamma Lecture

Regardless of who one's audience may be: One must always be well-prepared for one's Dhamma lecture. Members of his audience may be well-educated. They may possess a high level of intelligence. They may be children. Whoever the audience may be, the Buddhist monk must present the Dhamma lecture in a respectful manner. He does this by making sure that the contents are correct and that he is well-prepared for the task.

---

<sup>12</sup> *Udāyi Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 159, p. 334

In the Siha Sutta<sup>13</sup>, the Lord Buddha says,

***“Behold, monks, when I give a Dhamma lecture to the Buddhist monks, I do so respectfully.***

***When I give a Dhamma lecture to the female Buddhist monks, I do so respectfully.***

***When I give a Dhamma lecture to the male and female lay devotees, the general public, even beggars and bird catchers, I do so respectfully.***

***I do this because I am steeped in the Dhamma and I respect the Dhamma.”***

The special ability to teach living beings for the purpose of leading them out of the round of rebirth is unique to the Lord Buddha. This amazing quality is a result of the Perfections which had been pursued to the fullest extent for the specific purpose of becoming self-enlightened as the Lord Buddha. “Anuttaro Purisadammasarathi” is one of the Buddha-Virtues. It means the incomparable ability to teach and train living beings. The process by which the Lord Buddha gives a Dhamma lecture consists of seven steps as follows.

1. His Dhamma lecture goes from what is easy to understand to what is increasingly more difficult to understand.
2. His Dhamma lecture proceeds in a chronological manner.
3. His Dhamma lecture contains real-life examples.
4. His Dhamma lecture is precise and concise.
5. His Dhamma lecture consists of relevant cause and effect.
6. His Dhamma lecture has just the right length.
7. His Dhamma lecture is given at just the right time and to the right person.

<sup>13</sup> ***Sīha Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Pañcakanipāta.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 36, no. 99, p. 226

In addition, the Lord Buddha's words have the following four characteristics.

1. **Sandassana:** His words are clear, thereby, all doubts can be dispelled.
2. **Samadapana:** His words are inspiring in that whoever listens to them is inspired to put them into practice.
3. **Samutatejana:** His words are empowering in that whoever listens to them has the willpower to overcome obstacles and practice the Dhamma for his own happiness, success, and prosperity.
4. **Sampahansana:** His words fill the listeners with joy and cheer.

It is important that the Dhamma topic and its contents suit the audience; and the Dhamma lecture is given at the right time and to the right person. It is also important that the lecturer's words can inspire and motivate the audience to practice the Dhamma in spite of obstacles.

## **9.5 Useful Tips for Giving a Dhamma Lecture**

### **9.5.1 The Use of a Case Study**

Citing an example in the form of a true story helps the audience to remember and understand the Dhamma lecture while they have fun listening to it. The Lord Buddha often cites a true story when giving a Dhamma lecture. These stories have to do with either His own or His disciples' previous lives.

### 9.5.2 The Use of an Analogy

When the Dhamma concept is difficult to understand, the use of an analogy can help it to become easier to understand.

At one point, Venerable Malunkayaputra wanted to know if the world is permanent or impermanent; if it is finite or infinite, etc. Such questions have nothing at all to do with being emancipated from defilements. Therefore, the Lord Buddha decided to teach this disciple by using an analogy as shown in the Culamalunkayaovada Sutta<sup>14</sup> as follows.

***“Behold, Malunkayaputra, suppose a man had been shot by a poisonous arrow and needed his relatives to fetch a surgeon so that the arrow could be removed.***

***Suppose the man said that he did not yet know the identity of the person who shot him; therefore, he would not yet allow the poisonous arrow to be removed.***

***Suppose the man said that he did not know anything about the arrow and how it was made; therefore, he would not yet allow the poisonous arrow to be removed.***

***Behold, Malunkayaputra, before the man could find out all these things that he wished to know, he would have already been dead.***

***Behold, Malunkayaputra, if anyone does not wish to live the holy life just because I will not tell him my view on these ten things.<sup>15</sup> He will die without ever hearing them.”***

<sup>14</sup> *Cūlamālunkaya Sutta. Majjhimanikāya Majjhimaṇṇāsa.* Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 20, no. 150, p. 301

<sup>15</sup> These include 1) the world is permanent; 2) the world is impermanent; 3) the world is finite; 4) the world is infinite; 5) life and the body are one and the same; 6) life and the body are not one and the same; 7) dead

### 9.5.3 The Use of a Teaching Aid

The Lord Buddha uses whatever He can find around Him as a teaching aid. For example, on one occasion, He saw a large fire and used it as a teaching aid.

“Behold, monks, can all of you see that large fire over there? Now, between embracing a large fire and embracing a young woman with soft hands and feet, which do you think is better?”<sup>16</sup>

When the Buddhist monks answered that it is better to embrace a young woman, the Lord Buddha said that it is better to embrace a fire because at most they will die but they will not be reborn in the Hell Realm. The Buddhist monk who transgresses the Precepts by embracing a woman will be reborn in the Hell Realm and will experience untold pain and suffering.

Today, advanced technologies allow the use of multimedia as a teaching aid when giving a Dhamma lecture. This is a good thing because it helps the Buddhist monk to give a more effective Dhamma lecture.

Examples of teaching aids include slide projector, overhead projector, different computer programs, CDs, radio, television, etc. These are all good teaching aids that can help in the teaching and spreading of the Lord Buddha’s Teachings.

---

beings exist; 8) dead beings do not exist; 9) some dead beings exist and some do not; 10) dead beings do or do not exist. Any view on these phenomena has nothing to do with being emancipated from defilements.

<sup>16</sup> **Aggikhandhūpama Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Sattakanipāta.** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 37, no. 69, p. 260

## **9.6 Evaluation**

It is important that after each Dhamma lecture the Buddhist monk evaluates his Dhamma lecture in terms of its good points and bad points so that he can make whatever improvement necessary and continue to improve the quality of his Dhamma lectures. Evaluation may be carried out by evaluating one's Dhamma lecture and evaluating the audience.

### **9.6.1 Evaluating One's Dhamma Lecture**

However eloquent and effective the Buddhist monk may be in giving a Dhamma lecture, he still needs to continue making improvement by evaluating his Dhamma lecture in three ways. These include 1) the contents of the Dhamma lecture; 2) whether the Dhamma lecture is delivered with a pure intention or not; and 3) the audience's opinions.

**1) The Contents of the Dhamma Lecture:** It is important that the Buddhist monk makes sure that the contents of his Dhamma lecture are correct by following these five guidelines.

1. The Dhamma lecture must proceed in a chronological manner.
2. It must contain relevant cause and effect.
3. It must be delivered in the spirit of loving-kindness.
4. It must be given without expecting anything in return.
5. It must not be used to satirize himself or anyone else.



- 2) To Evaluate Whether the Dhamma Lecture Is Delivered with a Pure Intention or Not:** This can be evaluated based on the following teaching of the Lord Buddha.

***“Behold, monks, if a Buddhist monk gives a Dhamma lecture to the people with the intention that his Dhamma lecture will cause his audience to believe in him, then the Dhamma lecture of this Buddhist monk is impure.***

***If a Buddhist monk gives a Dhamma lecture because he believes that the Lord Buddha’s Teachings are timeless, can be personally experienced, and should be learnt, and he gives the Dhamma lecture in the spirit of loving-kindness, then the Dhamma lecture of this Buddhist monk is pure.”<sup>17</sup>***

The intention is impure if the Buddhist monk gives a Dhamma lecture in order to make people believe in him and think that what he is teaching comes from his own insight.

The intention is pure if the Buddhist monk gives the Dhamma lecture in order to pass on the Lord Buddha’s Teachings so that they can benefit the audience.

- 3) The Audience’s Opinions:** This can be carried out in two ways as follows.

1. In Writing as in filling an evaluation form: The form can contain such questions as the manner in which the Dhamma lecture is delivered, the contents of the lecture, the clarity of the lecture, the length of the lecture, etc. The information gained must be useful to the Buddhist monk so that he can make adjustment and further improve on the quality of his Dhamma lectures.

---

<sup>17</sup> ***Candhūpama Sutta. Samyuttanikāya Nidānavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 26, no. 472, p. 550

2. In Hearing from the audience or by word of mouth:  
This method is not as useful if all the pro and con comments are not written down. Often times, the comments made may not cover all the aspects of the Dhamma lecture.

### **9.6.2 Evaluating the Audience**

The audience can be evaluated in two ways as follows.

#### **1) To Evaluate the Audience's Comprehension:**

It is important that the Buddhist monk knows how well his audience has comprehended the contents of his Dhamma lecture. He can evaluate them by...

1. Asking them questions and listening to their answers.
2. Observing their attitude, the level of their interest, etc.
3. Using an evaluation form.

#### **2) To Improve the Audience:**

This is carried out according to the principles of Puggalaparoparannu. The aim is to continue improving the audience's Dhamma knowledge and virtue. For example, how to motivate those who do not wish to see a Buddhist monk (1) to want to see a Buddhist monk (2); how to motivate those who do not wish to listen to a Dhamma lecture to want to listen to a Dhamma lecture (3), all the way to how to motivate the people to practice the Dhamma for their own as well as other people's benefits (7).

## 9.7 Conclusion

In order to become Puggalaparoparannu, the Buddhist monk must...

1. Be able to read people.
2. Be able to teach the Dhamma to suit his different audiences.

***Having thus trained himself, the Buddhist monk can then be considered to be Dhammannu, Atthannu, Attannu, Mattannu, Kalannu, Parisannu, and Puggalaparoparannu.***

## 9.8 Puggalaparoparannu and the Householder

The householder can also benefit from the principles prescribed in the Puggalaparoparannu by modifying them and practicing them accordingly. He can begin by following the guidelines below.

1. When conversing about the Dhamma, he can choose some basic Dhamma topics that involve everyday life as follows.
  - 1.1 Alms-giving, Precepts observation, and meditation practice.
  - 1.2 The Law of Kamma: Good deeds bear good fruits. Evil deeds bear evil fruits. Etc.
2. Giving Dhamma Advice
  - 2.1 By exchanging information, experience, know-how to those at a similar or higher level.
  - 2.2 By teaching and telling those at a lower level to do what is needed to be done and giving them the reason(s) for it.

- 2.3 By giving a Dhamma lecture to the people at different levels.

### 9.9 The Dhammannu Sutta and Self-Training

In practicing the principles given in the Dhammannu Sutta, the Buddhist monk has undertaken self-training and gone from being his own virtuous friend to being a virtuous friend to other people.

#### Dhammannu

In this step, the Buddhist monk begins by studying all of the Lord Buddha's Teachings until he becomes well-versed in them. He has gained, for example, an overview of how the Lord Buddha in the capacity of a Bodhisatta had persistently and consistently pursued Perfections to the fullest extent. He has confidence in the Lord Buddha's Self-Enlightenment and His enlightened knowledge about reality. He is inspired to follow in the Lord Buddha's footsteps.

For the householder, given his familial obligations and time limitation, he can start by attending the temple and listening to a Dhamma lecture regularly. He can then memorize what he has heard and contemplate it until he can fully appreciate the benefits gained from practicing what he has contemplated. He is inspired to follow the Buddhist monk's example and wishes to learn more about the Lord Buddha's Teachings by undertaking ordination for a time especially during the Rains-Retreat. The female householder can attend the temple and become a volunteer.

#### Atthannu

Once the Buddhist monk has become well-versed in the Lord Buddha's Teachings, he can now put them into practice in his daily life. It means that he must know how to correctly

interpret the Lord Buddha's Teachings and he needs a good teacher or a virtuous friend who is more experienced than him to give him constant guidance. It can be his Preceptor, a Dhamma teacher, etc. This is how the Buddhist monk becomes Attannu.

For the householder, besides regularly and earnestly giving alms, observing the Precepts and practicing meditation, he must also have a good teacher. It is important that he attends the temple regularly because monastic personnel are there to pass on the Dhamma knowledge to him. They are his virtuous friends.



### **Attannu**

In this step, the Buddhist monk learns to evaluate his virtue by applying the six criteria of Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhan (sagacity). It is important that the Buddhist monk knows how to correctly apply these criteria to evaluate the level of his virtue; otherwise, he will not be able to make correction or improvement in a timely manner.

For the householder, he can also modify and apply the six criteria in evaluating the level of his virtue based on his observation of the Five Precepts or Eight Precepts, earning right livelihood, etc.



### **Mattannu**

In this step, the Buddhist monk learns to cultivate good habits through the consumption of the four requisites. This ability enables him to live a happy life as a Buddhist monk.

For the householder, the emphasis is on moderation and not on extravagance when it comes to purchasing what he needs and wants in life. What he consumes must not stand in the way of cultivating higher virtues. For example, he chooses not

to consume wine because the consumption of wine transgresses the Precepts besides not being good for his body.

### **Kalannu**

In this step, the Buddhist monk learns how precious time is. Therefore, he must know how to manage his time so that he can perform the four most important activities, namely, studying, asking questions, practicing diligence, and seeking a place of solitude in order to practice meditation in earnest.

For the householder, most of his time is spent earning a living and fulfilling familial obligations. Still, he needs to learn to manage his time so that he can practice meditation regularly, attend the temple to learn the Dhamma and accumulate merit at least once a week. He can also spend his vacation by attending a week-long meditation retreat.

### **Parisannu**

The Buddhist monk must perform the duty of a virtuous friend to humanity. He learns to do this by learning about the important groups of people (Parisannu) and by learning how to read people (Puggalaparoparannu).

To be humanity's virtuous friend, the Buddhist monk must know about the ways of the four important groups of people, namely, government administrators, academics, business owners, wage earners, and the ascetics. These four groups of people play an important role in the propagation of Buddhism and the Buddhist monk must know to approach them and teach them by conducting himself properly.

For the householder, he must also perform the duty of a virtuous friend to those close to him socially and professionally. He must also know to conduct himself properly when he is in the midst of the four important groups of people.



## **Puggalaparoparannu**

The Buddhist monk must pass on the Lord Buddha's Teachings to the people. He must be able to do it in such a way as to inspire the people to practice what he teaches until they can reap the benefits of their practice.

For the householder, it is also important for him to perform the duty of a virtuous friend by passing on his Dhamma knowledge in the form of appropriate advice and suggestions to those around him. They can be his superiors at work, his subordinates, his students, his children, etc.

The seven steps outlined in the Dhammannu Sutta play an important role in the self-training of the Buddhist monk. In the process, he not only learns to cultivate higher virtues but also learns to be a virtuous friend to humanity.

For the householder, in modifying and applying these seven steps to his daily life, he can cultivate different virtues, accumulate merit, pursue Perfections, and have enough knowledge and know-how to act as a virtuous friend to those around him.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook before proceeding to the next chapter.

# Chapter 10

---

## The Relationship Between the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta



## **Chapter 10**

### **The Relationship Between the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta**

#### **Contents**

---

- 10.1 Becoming One's Own Virtuous Friend**
- 10.2 Cultivating Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha**
  - 10.2.1 Dhammannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha
  - 10.2.2 Atthannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha
  - 10.2.3 Attannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha
  - 10.2.4 Mattannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha
  - 10.2.5 Kalannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha
- 10.3 Getting Started**
- 10.4 Becoming a Virtuous Friend to All Humanity**
- 10.5 Dana, Sila, Bhavana, and the Dhammannu Sutta**

## Concepts

---

1. The Dhammannu Sutta provides the techniques in which each step of the Ganakamoggallana Sutta can be successfully practiced until the Buddhist monk can become his own virtuous friend and scrub his mind clean of defilements.
2. Besides becoming one's own virtuous friend, the Dhammannu Sutta also provides the techniques by which the Buddhist monk can learn to become a virtuous friend to other people.
3. The level of success in the step-wise training process as outlined in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta depends on the level of the Buddhist monk's commitment.

## Objectives

---

1. To enable the student to understand the relationship between the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta.
2. To inspire the student to perform the duty of a virtuous friend to other people in his daily life.
3. To enable the student to understand the importance of practicing the Dhamma for the purpose of forming good habits.

## Chapter 10

### **The Relationship between the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta**

In the earlier chapters, the student has learnt the details of the Dhammannu Sutta, which prescribes the training techniques for the Buddhist monk. The practice of this Sutta allows the Buddhist monk to form good habits and cultivate higher virtues such that he is getting closer to his ultimate goal which is Nibbana.

The Buddhist monk begins by studying the Lord Buddha's Teachings in breadth and depth. This step is called Dhammannu.

Next, the Buddhist monk learns to correctly interpret the Lord Buddha's Teachings so that he can practice them accordingly. This step is called Atthannu.

The Buddhist monk then learns to evaluate the level of his virtue and the progress of his endeavor. This step is called Attannu.

Next, the Buddhist monk learns to practice moderation in receiving the four requisites. This step is called Mattannu.

The Buddhist monk then learns to manage his time so that he has time to study the Dhamma and practice meditation. This step is called Kalannu.

These five steps are instrumental to the Buddhist monk's self-training process according to each of the steps prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta as follows.

### **10.1 Becoming One's Own Virtuous Friend**

The six steps prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta are as follows.

- Step 1:** Exercising Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha
- Step 2:** Restraining the Sense-Faculties
- Step 3:** Exercising Moderation in Terms of Food Consumption
- Step 4:** Practicing Wakefulness
- Step 5:** Cultivating Mindfulness and Self-Possession
- Step 6:** Having a Penchant for Solitude

The Buddhist monk, who has successfully undertaken his self-training according to these six steps, will be able to bring his mind to a standstill at the center of his body which is called the Seventh Base. The more he practices, the easier it will be for him to keep his mind still and to the point where it is devoid of the Five Hindrances (Nivara-5). He is then ready to attain the First Jhana, the Second Jhana, etc., depending on his accumulated merit and Perfections.

The Buddhist monk's self-training process is made easier by employing the techniques prescribed in the Dhammannu Sutta and the steps prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta.

### **10.2 Cultivating Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha**

In order to make it easier for the student to understand how one can apply the first five methods of the Dhammannu Sutta to each of the five steps of the Ganakamoggallana Sutta, a chart is provided by using Step 1: Exercising Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha as an example as follows.

**Learning to Exercise Self-Restraint  
According to the Patimokkha**



1. Becoming Dhammannu
2. Becoming Atthannu
3. Becoming Attannu
4. Becoming Mattannu
5. Becoming Kalannu

### **10.2.1 Dhammannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha**

In learning a subject, it is important that one garners as much information about the subject as possible. For example, a person who wishes to become a businessman must know about what to sell, how to market the product, etc. Likewise, the Buddhist monk who wishes to practice self-restraint according to the Patimokkha must learn everything he can about the subject.

He must first of all understand that the Patimokkha includes the Buddhist monk's 227 Fundamental Precepts as well as other disciplinary rules and all of their details. On this subject, this is what the Most Venerable Phramonkolthepmuni has to say.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Phramonkolthepmuni's Dhamma Lecture on "Bhattanumodanakatha", November 18, 2497 B.E.

***“The Buddhist monk’s Precepts are infinite. There are 227 Precepts in the Patimokkha. There are three million and one hundred something Precepts in the Visudhimagga. There are also other Precepts in the Vinayapitaka.***

***The number of the Buddhist monk’s Precepts is infinite but the most important ones are the 227 Precepts as prescribed in the Patimokkha.”***

The Buddhist monk can know all about the Precepts only when he has learnt to become Dhammannu. It means that he has studied in-depth the Lord Buddha’s Teachings or that he has perused the entire contents of the Tipitaka.

### **10.2.2 Atthannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha**

The next step involves putting what he has learnt into practice. This step is more difficult, since it requires that the Buddhist monk have a real understanding of what he has learnt.

Putting theoretical knowledge into practice is the process that enables the Buddhist monk to become Atthannu.

To put one’s knowledge about exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha into practice requires that three components be present.

1. The knowledge one gains about exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha through one’s reading and listening (Dhammannu).
2. Putting what one has learnt into practice.
3. Having a virtuous friend or a teacher who can give one proper guidance and instructions.

For the Buddhist monk, having a knowledgeable teacher is the most important component. This is exemplified in the following story. It is the story of Venerable Ukakanthita.<sup>2</sup>

During the Lord Buddha's time, there was a man called "Anupubba". He was the son of a millionaire living in the city of Savatthi. He loved to accumulate merit. Later, he decided to enter the monkhood, and he was called Venerable Ukakanthita. His Preceptor was an expert in the Vinaya. And his teacher was an expert in the Abhidhamma.

He was taught by his teacher about what the Buddhist monk should or should not do based on the Abhidhamma. His Preceptor taught him about what the Buddhist monk should or should not do, and what is proper or improper based on the Vinaya.

All these details made Venerable Ukakanthita feel that it was indeed extremely difficult to be a Buddhist monk and perhaps he ought to disrobe and find his way out of suffering as a householder instead.

Ever since then he thought of nothing but disrobing. He no longer studied the Patimokkha. He no longer conversed about the Dhamma. He became thin, sallow and dominated by apathy. His teacher and Preceptor decided to take him to see the Lord Buddha.

The Lord Buddha said to him, "Monk, if you can observe just one thing, then you will not have to bother with anything else at all."

Venerable Ukakanthita wanted to know what that one thing was.

*"All you have to do is to keep watch over your mind.  
Can you do it?"*

---

<sup>2</sup> ***Aṭṭhakathā-khuddaka-nikāya. Gāthā-Dhammapada.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 40, p. 407

*“I think I can, Most Exalted One.”*

*“Then, just keep watch over your mind and that will help you to be free from suffering.”*

After the Dhamma conversation, Venerable Ukakanthita was able to attain the Fruit of Sotapanna right then and there.

This story shows the true value of a virtuous friend and a righteous teacher. Although the knowledge he had gained from his teacher and Preceptor caused him to feel discouraged and weighed down for fear that he would not be able to comply with all of the disciplinary rules, the Lord Buddha's instruction allowed him to realize that all the teachings given by his teacher and Preceptor were all about keeping watch over his mind. The reason was that once one could watch over one's mind, one would be able to control one's speech and action. Having practiced meditation according to the Lord Buddha's instruction, he was able to attain the Fruit of Sotapanna.

### **10.2.3 Attannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha**

Having undertaken self-training according to the Patimokkha in terms of Attannu, the Buddhist monk can now see a real change in his mind, speech, and body. He is now calmer, more composed, more vigilant, etc. He must next learn how to evaluate his self-training in terms of progress so that he can stay the course.

The method used to evaluate progress in his self-training is called Attannu. It involves the evaluation of his virtue using the six criteria, namely, Saddha (faith), Sila (morality), Suta (learning by listening), Caga (charity), Panna (wisdom), and Patibhan (sagacity).



1. Saddha (Faith): He evaluates his Saddha by the level of his wish to keep his mind, speech, and body pure by continuing to exercise self-restraint according to the Patimokkha.
2. Sila (Morality): He evaluates his Sila by evaluating the level with which he endeavors to observe the Precepts more and more immaculately.
3. Suta (Learning by Listening): He evaluates his Suta by evaluating the level with which he endeavors to learn all there is to learn about the monk's Precepts in the Vinaya, the Suttas and other sources.
4. Caga (Charity): He evaluates his Caga by evaluating how readily he can give up the things forbidden by the Lord Buddha and everything that may obstruct his exercise of self-restraint according to the Patimokkha.
5. Panna (Wisdom): He evaluates his Panna by evaluating how well he understands the Patimokkha and how well he is observing the Fundamental Precepts.
6. Patibhan (Sagacity): He evaluates his Patibhan by evaluating how well he can apply his knowledge about exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha in his daily life.

When one is in the habit of evaluating his virtue by using these six criteria, it helps one to be heedful and it enables one to continue making progress in his self-training. According to the Lord Buddha's Saying as shown in the Thitisutta Sutta<sup>3</sup>, the process of Attannu can be compared to looking at oneself in the mirror.

***“Behold, monks, it is like a young man or a young woman who enjoys getting dressed up and looking***

---

<sup>3</sup> *Thiti Sutta. Aṅguttaranikāya Dasakanipāta*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 38, no. 53, p. 173

*at oneself in the mirror or in the clear water. When he/she sees specks of dirt on his/her face, he/she would try to remove them. But if he/she sees no specks of dirt, he/she is glad that his/her face is good and clean.*

*Behold, monks, in the same manner, when the Buddhist monk regularly checks the level of his covetousness or the level of his steadfastness, it causes his wholesomeness to grow...”*

#### **10.2.4 Mattannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha**

The process involved in Mattannu has to do with exercising moderation in receiving the four requisites. This process enables the Buddhist monk to perform well in terms of exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha in three ways as follows.

- 1) It Gives the Buddhist Monk the Ability to Forbid Himself to Transgress the Patimokkha:** The reason is that most of the disciplinary rules involve the four requisites directly or indirectly. Therefore, the Buddhist monk who knows to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites is automatically exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha.
- 2) It Enables the Buddhist Monk to Exercise Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha:** The reason is that once the Buddhist monk has made it a habit to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites, he does not have to worry about transgressing the disciplinary rules.
- 3) It Helps the Buddhist Monk to Train His Mind:** The reason is that the ability to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites allows the Buddhist monk to make good progress in all the other steps prescribed in

the Ganakamoggallana Sutta. For example, if the Buddhist monk does not exercise moderation in receiving food, his “Patimokkhasamvarasila” (discipline as prescribed by the Patimokkha) will be lacking. If he allows himself to enjoy the taste of food, his “Indriyasamvara” (discipline as regards sense-restraint) will be lacking. When he consumes too much food because he likes its taste, he will feel bloated and drowsy, and his wakefulness practice will be hampered.

On the contrary, if he exercises moderation in receiving the four requisites, his Patimokkhasamvara, Indriyasamvara and wakefulness practice will not be hampered.

### **10.2.5 Kalannu and Self-Restraint According to the Patimokkha**

Time is needed to learn and understand something and to put it into practice. Therefore, time management is an essential skill for a Buddhist monk.

A Buddhist monk must be able to manage his time so that he can spend time studying the Scriptures, asking questions that are relevant to the Scriptures and their practices, practicing diligence, and seeking a place of solitude to practice meditation in earnest.

Kalannu or time management in this step means finding the time to study everything about exercising self-restraint according to the Patimokkha and putting it into practice.

It should be obvious to the student that the self-training process as prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta requires the five techniques as prescribed in the Dhammannu Sutta. He learns to be Dhammannu by studying the Lord Buddha’s Teachings. He learns to be Atthanu by correctly interpreting the Lord Buddha’s Teachings and putting them into practice. He learns to be Attannu by knowing how to

evaluate his virtue by using the six criteria. He learns to be Mattannu by knowing how to exercise moderation in receiving the four requisites. And he learns to be Kalannu by finding the time to study the Scriptures and practice meditation.

By applying these five techniques to the six steps of self-training prescribed in the Ganakamoggallana Sutta, progress can be made readily. Meanwhile, one's body, speech, and mind are becoming cleaner and purer. One's mind, which used to dart here and there haphazardly, is becoming quieter and quieter until it comes to a standstill at the center of one's body. As one proceeds with all the six steps taught by the Lord Buddha, one will be able to gain supernormal insight which allows one's defilements to be extinguished and Nibbana to be attained.

### 10.3 Getting Started

After the Brahmin, Ganakamoggallana, heard from the Lord Buddha the steps required in the Buddhist monk's self-training, he wanted to know if every Buddhist monk would be able to attain Nibbana. The Lord Buddha's answer was no. It was like two men traveling to the city of Rajagarh. Both received directions to get there from the person who knew the way. However, one man took the wrong road but the other followed the directions correctly until he arrived at Rajagarh. The Lord Buddha said to the Brahmin,

***“Behold, Brahmin, Nibbana exists, the way to get there exists, and the guide also exists. I teach these things to my disciples. Some will get there. Others will not.***

***Behold, Brahmin, what else can I do when I am only the guide?”***

This saying of the Lord Buddha shows clearly that success in a Buddhist monk's self-training depends on the Buddhist monk alone.

#### 10.4 Becoming a Virtuous Friend to All Humanity

Once the Buddhist monk can successfully become his own virtuous friend, he needs to then perform the duty of a virtuous friend to the people. After all, his livelihood is made possible by the four requisites given him by the laity. It is with their support that he can spend the time he needs to study the Lord Buddha's Teachings. Therefore, he must pass on the Lord Buddha's Teachings to them.<sup>4</sup>

***"Behold, monks, the Brahmins and the householders have supported you and provided you with robes, food, shelter, and medicine. All of you should also support the Brahmins and the householders by giving them Dhamma lectures which are lovely in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end. You should proclaim the holy life to them.***

***Behold, monks, householders and monks depend on each other by the power of alms-giving and Dhamma-giving..."***

In the Singalaka Sutta<sup>5</sup>, the Lord Buddha teaches the Buddhist monk how to be a virtuous friend to the lay people.

***"The Buddhist monk should help the householder by:***

- 1. Forbidding him to commit misdeeds.***
- 2. Encouraging him to practice wholesomeness.***

<sup>4</sup> ***Bahukāra Sutta Khuddaka-nikāya Itivuttaka.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 45, no. 287, p. 677

<sup>5</sup> ***Singalaka Sutta. Dīgha-nikāya Pāṭikavagga.*** Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University Press, vol. 16, no. 204, p. 91

- 3. *Encouraging him to be loving and kind.***
- 4. *Teaching him what he does not know.***
- 5. *Clarifying what he has already heard.***
- 6. *Telling him how to be reborn in the Celestial Realm.***

In other words, the Buddhist monk must give Dhamma lectures. He must teach the lay people not to commit misdeeds but to practice wholesomeness, to be loving and kind, etc. To be a teacher of Dhamma means that the Buddhist monk must be a qualified Dhamma teacher.

He becomes qualified because he has undertaken self-training to a certain extent according to the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta especially in regards to Parisannu (how to read people) and Puggalapaparannu (know the audience).

A qualified Buddhist monk can also perform the duty of a virtuous friend to the lay people. He has self-knowledge and he knows how to read other people. All of us are still tainted with defilements but deep down all of us want to be good and moral. But many of us do not know how to get started. Therefore, we need the help of a qualified Buddhist monk to teach us and guide us.

### **10.5 Dana, Sila, Bhavana, and the Dhammannu Sutta**

Naturally, the householder is not expected to undertake strict self-training the way the Buddhist monk does given his life's circumstances such as the need to earn a living, familial obligations, etc. He can, however, practice the Ganakamoggallana Sutta for the purpose of purifying his body, speech, and mind. He can practice the Ganakamoggallana Sutta with the help of the Dhammannu Sutta through such daily activities

as alms-giving, Precepts observation, and meditation practice as follows.

**Alms-Giving:** It is the practice which lessens possessiveness and miserliness. It is the practice which lessens greed so that one does not become overly concerned about material things. The practice of alms-giving forms the foundation of self-training in other areas.

**Precepts Observation:** With the lessening of greed, one is not wont to harm other people as a result of covetousness. Precepts observation lessens anger and prevents one from committing misdeeds.

**Meditation Practice:** With the lessening of greed and anger, one's mind becomes calmer and is not given to darting here and there haphazardly. This makes it easier to become quiet and still. At a complete standstill, the mind becomes bright and penetrating knowledge can be gained. With the gain of penetrating knowledge about reality, ignorance disappears.

It can be seen that just by practicing alms-giving, Precepts observation, and meditation according to the Ganakamoggallana Sutta and the Dhammannu Sutta, the householder can cause his body, speech, and mind to become purer and purer.

## ASSIGNMENTS

After you have finished studying this chapter, complete the test and the exercises provided in the workbook.