



Open Up To Read About Happiness

Mangala sutta family edition

The Writers and Thinkers for World Peace, The Foundation of Education Development for Ethics

Open Up To Read About Happiness



May I wish

.....

a live-long happiness

from



Preface

“Happiness” is the most preferable word to describe what all people are searching for, no matter who they are: children or adults, men or women, the young or the old, even the poor or the rich. However, how many of them know how to build up real happiness for their lives? Anyway, we are the ones who are ignorant of such knowledge.

The happiness we have in our lives is just a temporary kind. That is, even though we've got one thing, we still are greedy to get more and more without stopping.

Fortunately, one day I had a significant chance to have read an important script of the **38 Paths Of The Blessings Of Life**, written for teaching purposes over twenty years ago, which belonged to the Most Venerable Dhattajeevo Bhikkhu, all of which made me know the paths to happiness.

While I was reading every page of the script, it built up the feeling of openness to elucidate happiness within me.

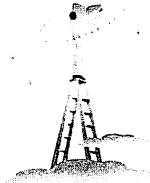
In my feelings, every word in the script (record) represented the most immeasurable virtue. After having read it, I thought about how I could help others to have a chance to read it and to be inspired to study more deeply and further investigate it for their own benefit. I then asked the Most Venerable Dhattajeevo Bhikkhu for permission to make a copy

of the more important and inspirational sections of the text for printing.

We tried to make the text shorter, easier to understand, and easier to remember so as not to spend too much time on reading. However, for further information, a cassette tape of “**The Blessings Of Life**” by Luangphaw Dhattajeevo is suggested as a supplement and available now.

Last but not least, we hope that the book titled “Open Up To Read About Happiness” or “Blessings of Life”, a pocket book for the family, will be one of the books that will radiate happiness to all readers and will encourage them to perform better deeds. This is the pathway to Happiness for all, in all walks of life.

Best wishes,
The Thinkers and The Writers for World Peace Club



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Author's Preface

Building up happiness for our lives is similar to going up stairs step by step.

Originally, we were born into the world with nothing, without even a piece of cloth. Whatever we have today, came afterwards such as money, cars, housing, spouse, family and children.

Finally we have to die and leave everything behind, without any

perception of everything that follows afterwards. All of the things we've ever gotten are only temporary sources of happiness to us.

Still there is another kind of happiness that is comprised of the inner peace collected by continuously performing virtuous actions, which is metaphor for climbing up 38 stairs, step by step. Each step makes us happier, that is: the more stairs you can ascend, the more happiness occurs in your life. It could entail a kind of Peaceful happiness all the way through to the most Abundant happiness, as well as other External forms of happiness, following the benefits you have accrued.

How could this Inner Peace, which is compared to going up the 38 stair steps happen? And how much does this sort of Happiness make our life and family more peaceful? I welcome all to discover the solutions from this book **“Open Up To Read About Happiness”** right now!

The 1st Step:



Do Not Associate With The Fool.

Actually, good and outstanding personalities are the most desirable for all human beings, which is impossible for everyone. The main cause of this impossibility is failure of consideration. One cannot consider what is good or bad, right or wrong, good deed or bad deed, do or don't do, with such choices as: drinking alcohol, gambling, being a beau, being a liar etc. All are bad, but some may have thought they were good. So when one tried, they got a bad result, in return.

Where does the consideration come from?

1. Being trained by ones who are close to us.
2. From our own judgment.

If we get wrong information from the Fool, our judgment will be wrong, then consequently it is followed by wrong thinking, wrong speech and wrong actions on our path, and maybe throughout our whole life.

Wrong judgment leading to wrong thinking, wrong speech and wrong action are comprehensively known as **“Bad”** or known as **“The Fool”** in the monastic vocabulary.

Subsequently, **“The Fool”** will relay his **“Foolishness”** to others in society, influencing others to behave similarly.

Our responsibilities are to identify whom the Fools are, not to associate with them and not bring them into our homes, as well as getting rid of the Fool inside us.

The 2nd Step:



Associate With The Wise.

In general, we think that one who graduated school and earned a degree was wise.

Actually, he/she is just only a graduate, but not truly wise. Some graduates may behave badly and go to prison. But the true wise one is intentionally avoiding performing bad deeds and instead performing good deeds, exhibiting good conduct, and being honest: all of which could prevent him or herself from incarceration or even from hell as well.

The truly wise person must have a well formed conscience, that can discriminate what good or bad deeds are, that can decide what is right or wrong, what is merit or sin, what is “do” or “don’t,” and helps others to achieve righteousness. This type of person puts his/her faith into upstanding values, and lives with wisdom.

The causes for being wise are that he/she has a concentrated, purified mind that is suitable to work and build up only happiness. No hatred, no burning with anxiety and no misery is present. Finally, right thought, right speech and right action will blossom as a result.

However one could be wise whether he/she could read and write or not, or if they are an educated person or our relative. We should wish to only be wise, and be a person of right view, right speech and right actions.

Right View: To always think of giving, always offer forgiveness, and harbor no malevolent thoughts. Right understanding accompanies right view according to the facts:

For instance: Accepting that there is evil and merit does exist, and accepting the truth that Parents are benefactors.

Right Speech: Speaking only words that are true, reasonable, and useful, and speaking with mercy and appropriateness to the occasion.

Right Action: Loving kindness, kindheartedness, earning one's living in an honest way, making merit by offering donations, observing precepts and continuing to practice meditation.

Hence, the truly wise one is not just the one who gets a degree but is one who observes precepts, practices meditation, and is full of wisdom. The truly wise one lives on the basis of a good life and can teach those who are close to him, and can teach others to have good consideration.

The 3rd Step:



Paying Respect To Those Worthy Of Respect.

The most difficult work in the world is to cultivate right view. Therefore, whoever cultivates this right view, to us is deserved of the highest respect from us throughout our entire lives.

We do not associate with the Fool to prevent ourselves from wrong understanding. We associate with the wise to cultivate right view then we maintain it by paying respect to those worthy of respect.

Those worthy of respect are virtuous persons that we can remind of their virtue, and follow their steps. They can teach others to understand the following:

Making merit or doing good deeds is truly beneficial for all human beings to perform. Paying respect to those worthy of respect should be acted upon. Taking care of good people should be carried out. We should understand that good actions bring good results and bad actions bring bad results. It should be clear that Parents in fact are benefactors. We should realize that the Round of Existence is a reality. The notion of Heaven and Hell is true. The presence of Arahants who have extinguished all passions is true. All of these tenets are the Truths of life and the world and this fact is harder to comprehend than any other knowledge of life.

Ones who could achieve the aforementioned must have earned a higher abundance of merit by practicing *silā*, *samadhi* and wisdom (*pañña*)

more than most of us, such as: the Lord Buddha, the virtuous and dutiful monks, the King who is endowed with the ten regal qualities, the parents or the adults who perform acts of good conduct, the capable and virtuous teachers and leaders who have good conduct and strong moral fiber.

The benefit of paying respect to those worthy of respect makes us have strength and might. Because the worship of these virtuous persons creates in us a vast ocean of positive thinking, it brightens our mind all the time, without causing any negative effects.

Aspiration: To encourage us to follow His (*the Buddha's*) good paths (regarded as Chanda in Pali).

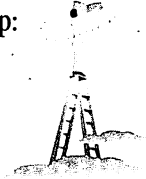
Exertion: To have perseverance so as to pay full attention to completing our responsibilities without fear of hardship (regarded as Viriya in Pali).

Thoughtfulness: To maintain and to concentrate on what we are doing, and not let our work go undone at interval periods (regarded as *Citta* in Pali).

Investigation: To develop ourselves to be more virtuous (regarded as *Vīmaṃsā* in Pali).

All of these are the paths to Accomplishment.

The 4th Step:



Living In A Suitable Location.

A Bodhi tree or a Ficus planted in good soil can grow up equivalent to 10-20 wah in height, but if planted in a small pitcher it can only become a “Bonsai” (dwarf tree). Even if the planted tree lasts for a hundred years, it can only mature into a small dwarf (nowadays limited to 25 centimeters).

Likewise with regards to human beings for instance: a capable intelligent man who lives in an improper surrounding and without

support from others, could accomplish nothing, no matter how intelligent he is.

According to Buddhist Teachings, surroundings affect the progress of our life. Favorable environments do not only support the improvement of our mind and body, but they also contribute to the progression of our work. A favorable environment also acts as an encouragement to continue our virtuous conduct. Suitable locations are termed **“Paṭirūpadesvāsa,”** referred to by Lord Buddha.

What are **“Paṭirūpadesvāsa”**?

1. A comfortable place means a good location. For instance, for a house, it must have good public utilities and surrounded with evergreen trees. For a school, it must have good ventilation, minimum noise, spaciousness, and an arena or sports field. For a shop, it must be in a business district. For a region or a province, it should be in a sanitation district that is temperate

{not too hot or too cold}.

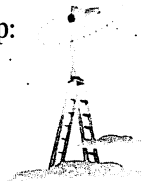
2. A comfortable food supplier means a place that has a quality food supplier who is near a marketplace, or an agricultural area where food is produced in adequate quantities.
3. A comfortable person means a place where there are no hooligans or thieves but there are decent morally disciplined people residing in the area, instead.
4. A Comfortable **Dhamma** means virtue and appropriateness classified as two types namely:

The Worldly Type means the location where there are good schools, good educational institutions as well as capable community leaders in the area.

The Dhamma Type means the location where there are monks or wise men that can offer fine Dhamma teachings. This also

refers to an area where Buddhist teachings can be widespread throughout the population, and where people can perform **Dāna** (making merit by practicing generosity), observe precepts, listen to Dhamma sermons and practice meditation on a daily basis.

The 5th Step:



Having Done Good Deeds In The Past.

Good selected fruits with tasty seeds, whenever they are planted, always bear fruits of fine taste without taking much care of them. Meanwhile, any person who performed good deeds adequately in their past life, will be innocent, will have a cultivated purified mind, will exhibit wisdom, will present a pleasant appearance, will radiate fine health from the moment of his/her birth in this life, and will constantly have good opportunities presented to them to do more meritorious deeds than others besides.

What is **“puñña”** (merit)?

puñña or Merit is goodness or happiness. It’s meaning reflects the occurrence of cleansing the mind of dullness, which in turn creates a clearer and sharper state of mind.

“Merit” may not even be tangibly seen, but we can always clearly see the harbinger of Merit. That is, as we receive Merit in our mind, the result produced is a peaceful happiness, and Merit aids in the development of our qualities of mind to become pure and bright. With a marked lightness in demeanor there remains little intensity, a softening of seriousness, and a warm relaxing feeling. The mind graced with Merit is responsible and reliable to perform work or daily tasks. Moreover it can be collected in the mind as well.

For example:

Merit is classified into two categories, namely: Merit in the long-term distance and Merit in the short-term distance.

- 1. Merit in the long-term distance** represents our good deeds that we have done in the past from the first day of our birth in this life. This enhances the benefits of great quality in this life from our birth on. It makes us have more opportunities to do good deeds. As long as we are not careless, and we keep on making merits in the present, we will be able to rapidly progress in life. On the contrary, if we are careless, and do not continue to perform good deeds presently, we then become a metaphor for a tree which is broken at the top and cannot grow upwards or develop any more.
- 2. Boon in the short-term distance** speaks of our good deeds in this life from birth until the present time, such as paying attention to one's studies, displaying perseverance, associating with the wise, training our mind to be purified from childhood, all of which makes our thinking, speech and capacity to work be of a finer quality than others of the same

age and affords us the ability to progress much further in life while growing up and in the future.

All good deeds we have done benefit us with Puñña (merit). For easy recognition of the three kinds of merit in brief from Lord Buddha's instruction, are namely: **making merit, observing precepts and practicing meditation.**

The 6th Step:



Establishing Oneself Properly.

A merchant can be wealthy because of acquiring a favorable location, making sound investments and demonstrating good management.

A gardener can be prosperous because of utilizing good soil, choosing quality-selected seeds and exhibiting good management.

A layperson that dwells in a favorable place and has **Merit** accrued from previous lives but does not continue carrying out further good deeds, will eventually be bereft of merit (*Puñña*), as well as not being supported by his/her environment, and will depart this life early.

So, before our accumulated merit will be in short supply, we had better try to cultivate increased amounts of new merit, instead.

The methods deemed necessary to establish oneself properly is to set up your goals of life into three levels.

1. **Target on the Earth** is to launch a goal for this life by having established him/herself in a livelihood brimming with honesty.
2. **Target in the Sky** is to solidly intend to make the most merits for our betterment in the next life, since all living beings must be reborn in the Rounds of Existence (**Samara**) as long as any defilement still remains in our minds.

3. **Target over the Sky** is to create a goal to dedicate all of our concentration on meditation for the rest of lives so as to extinguish all defilements, and to attain Nirvana so we will be following the path of the Lord Buddha's Teachings.

Whosoever can establish themselves properly with these three targets as their Goals of life are known as the ones who have established themselves properly.

The 7th Step:



Learning To Be Learned.

Our life is surrounded by misery and decay appearing together since our birth, that we are distasteful towards. The things we prefer are happiness and the ability to progress in life. These finer qualities are acquired by wisdom.

When lacking in wisdom, our health declines, our economic state is in recession, our relatives depart and suffering enters into our life from all directions.

With wisdom, though in the midst of failure, we are a success.

With wisdom, though in the midst of misery, we are happy.

With wisdom, though in the midst of poverty, we are wealthy.

With wisdom, though in the midst of enemies, we have friends.

With wisdom, though in the midst of decay, we are prosperous.

Since this is so, all are searching for wisdom.

Through the process of listening, one who can acquire wisdom is known as **The Person Of Great Learning.**

The 8th Step:



Artfulness In The Application Of Knowledge.

The benefits we will get from planting apple trees depend on their productiveness. At the first period of planting called the pre-productivity stage, the apple trees have only trunks, branches and leaves.

Our knowledge or being well educated is compared to pre-self-preparation before working.

The knowledge will be useful to us when we know how to apply it to bring forth the most benefits for ourselves and for all.

In the core of Buddhism, artfulness means knowing how to apply the knowledge wisely.

No matter how intelligent a person is he/she could not succeed in life if they do not know how to apply it wisely, which is the same as the proverb, “**Overwhelmed with knowledge, one still does not survive**”. This proverb is accurate because a knowledgeable person is not always a capable person.

Knowing “How to act wisely” is something we create with real intention.

Qualifications of a person who has artfulness are as follows:

1. Putting faith in what we intend to do.
2. Being healthy without diseases.
3. Not flaunting oneself as a vehicle to acquire new knowledge.
4. Not exhibiting laziness but perseverance towards achieving new knowledge.

5. Having wisdom that reflects having a wise teacher, and displaying good consideration.

Caution: Do not unearth faults of other people; otherwise you will be a faultfinder. One who is skilled in the art of only finding others faults do not dare to pursue any kind of work since they are afraid of being blamed by others. This type of person will have no skill and could do nothing for their livelihood.

The 9th Step:



Artfulness In Conduct.

A sharpened knife without a sheath or a dangerous bomb without a safety bolt: they could be equally advantageous or disadvantageous depending, because of their lack of a controlling mechanism.

Likewise, wisdom and ability reflect great Learning & Artfulness.

Both of them help to solve all problems and create new things. But without underlying discipline, disaster will come as a result.

When one can not consider what should be done or not, what should be said or not, what should be seen or not etc., he/she may choose improperly and end up destroying him/herself in return.

To establish self-discipline, one should be trained by normally observing the **Five Precepts** and following both social rules and community regulations habitually.

The 10th Step:



Artfulness In Speech.

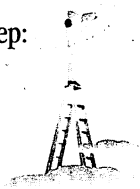
To do perfect deeds, we must prepare ourselves as follows:

1. Always acquire new knowledge (being a wise person).
2. Train yourself to be a capable individual (Artfulness).
3. Our wisdom and ability must be supervised under discipline.

Physical potential is also known as capability. Another ability is known as finesse of speech. Whoever is well trained in this category,

who can display his/her finesse of speech will be more outstanding in his/her action, such as the capability of more successfully spreading Buddhism, This finesse of speech which helps to create a person of good character is known as well spoken words or ***Artfulness in Speech.***

The 11th Step:



Cherishing One's Parents.

When it is time for a tree abundant with water, soil and air to bear fruits but it doesn't, it eventually must be cut down or destroyed.

One who possesses knowledge but does nothing constructive is a worthless person who could not live with others.

To be diligent, and dedicated to doing good deeds, as a human, one must start by carrying out these deeds towards the ones who are the closest to us, which are our parents.

To prove whether gold is real or not, you burn it with fire or put it in acid.

To observe how good a person is, is to see how well he/she took care of their parents.

If not, he/she is not good enough, which is comparable to false gold. But the good person must cherish their parents.

Through a hundred years of being grateful to the parents from their child, a responsibility that is not easy, he/she still could still not pay back all the debts of gratitude towards them.

That is why we have to learn how we can do our best to cherish our parents and give recompense for all of our gratitude towards them.

The solution is in the Teachings of the Buddha.

The 12th Step:



Cherishing One's Children.

One day we must grow old and die. What we really need each moment is delight, and exaltation to clear and freshen our minds.

The delight will happen in our minds whenever the good deeds or meritorious work we performed bring forth their result. The more we express good actions, the more we are delightful. This extends the length of our lives and promotes fine health as well. This applies to our

responsibility for teaching our children these lessons from the Buddha as well as cherishing them as their **Bodhi** minds develop.

The greatest masterpiece for meditators is to extinguish defilements in one's mind.

Thus, the greatest masterpiece for all worldly people is to have and raise good children.

The 13th Step:



Cherishing One's Spouse (The Duties Of A Husband And Wife).

A Husband means boss, supporter, and husband.

A Wife means one who is deserved of support, and wife.

Both are rather positive words and matched words.

A man is regarded as a husband and because he supports his wife.

A woman is regarded as a wife because she is easily supported.

The 14th Step:



Not Leaving One's Work Undone.

It's inevitable for us to avoid our life's duties since we were born starting from our duties as children, as brothers, as sisters, as pupils, as people, as husbands, as wives, as parents, as monks, as nuns, as leaders, as slaves, etc.

Each of them has work to be done, If not, he/she would be one who trifled with work. In other cases, they may have done it, but did not completely finish it. He/she may not pay all of their attention to the

work through to its completion. With all good intentions but poor execution of skill to do the work, it can only be inauspicious.

Hence, all processes of work must be studied in order to test what kind of worker we then are and fortify our resolve to improve ourselves.

In conclusion, this applies to ALL work needing to be done perfectly.

The 15th Step:



Giving Or Charity.

Why do we have to give or donate first?

It's because of the following four reasons:

1. Giving ***Dana*** is the first step towards going to heaven for the next life and it's the easiest method of performing good deeds or gaining merit.
2. Giving will be our provision for the future without any danger,

and will provide the benefit of comfort for anyone who still remains in the birth cycle **{Samsara}** for this life and the next life.

3. Giving directly leads us to the path of **Nirvana** and supports other pursuits towards perfection.
4. These superb reasons contribute to one's escape from the cycle of birth and death.

The important elements constituting a firm foundation of mind for those who will evolve beyond **Samsara** are faith and wisdom.

In reference to the uncomplicated and immediate benefits of giving, these meritorious acts make our faith more firmly rooted and create greater opportunities to acquire more wisdom.

Briefly: "Poverty" will be followed by foolishness and illness.

But "Giving" prevents us from all three mentioned above.

Therefore let's study how to give.

The 16th Step:



Having Moral Conduct.

Before knowing what good and bad deeds is, or what merit and sin is, we have to have already performed many bad deeds. Certainly, when bad deeds bear fruit we must have been affected by what we did.

Whoever never performed badly in the past will be survivors. Therefore the way to prevent bad results and revise the pattern of negative occurrences is to behave according to the moral conducts as comprised of the following:

Having moral conduct means refraining from the Ten kinds of Evil namely:

1. Absolutely refraining from killing or taking all life.
2. Absolutely refraining from stealing.
3. Absolutely refraining from committing sexual misconduct.
4. Absolutely refraining from speaking falsely in all cases.
5. Absolutely refraining from malicious speech, speaking only words that are conciliatory and conducive to harmony.
6. Absolutely refraining from coarseness of speech, speaking only words that are pleasant to the ear.
7. Absolutely refraining from worthless or frivolous speech, speaking only words that are true, reasonable, disciplined, evident and appropriate to the occasion.

8. Absolutely refraining from focusing only on taking the properly earned rights and effects of others.
9. Absolutely refraining from thinking hateful and destructive thoughts or having a destructive attitude toward others.
10. Cultivating **right view** according to the truth of life and the world.

Whoever can achieve all of these is purified in body, speech, and thought, and that is why his/her body and mind are always bright.

The 17th Step:



Looking After Our Extended Family.

All trees living together in the woods can live for a long time because each of them helps bump against a storm together.

On the contrary, a lonely big tree standing alone against a storm in a forest could be easily destroyed.

Relatives mean ones who are close to us. They are reliable to us.

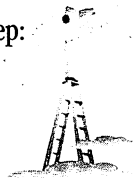
Looking after our Extended Family means helping those mentioned above.

There are four calamities of human life: birth, old age, illness and death. Although we may have a lot of money, but do not utilize it by helping our relatives, we lose our chances to spend our money and help our relatives.

Eventually our property loses its usefulness and just becomes buried in earth.

Our world will be worth living for when all are our relatives. At least, for our relatives, we have to take good care of them from a small sized family to a big one. Then one day our world will be peaceful by being a big world family.

The 18th Step:



Blameless Work.

If sweat does not perspire, it will be trapped and changed into tears. Hence, after being born as a human, a person must work and place his hope in future generations. Then he will be worthy of respect as a teacher.

Actually Buddhism is against Laziness but it promotes Diligence and offers praise to a diligent person. So the person is taught to work

harder and harder for him/herself first then for their Parents, family, religion and for their close relatives to more distant ones and so on.

So blameless work is the work that would not be faulty, not filled with misconduct, not immoral, not illegal, but would be cultured.

It's the kind of work that if expanded, would provide relief and benefit to all of society.

The 19th Step:



The Avoidance Of All Evil.

Absolutely all human beings are sentenced to die. If a prisoner, who is going to be put to death, goes to his/her execution with joy, they would also be accused of insanity.

Actually one knows that one will have to die eventually, but is still careless in life. One should ask oneself how crazy is one? With this on their shoulders they behave the same as a quarrelling animal. Do avoid all bad actions, Please.

A person is composed of body and mind. Our body is controlled by our mind, which is the most important component.

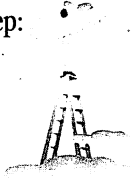
Lord Buddha said, “A Mind is great and a leader of everything. So everything is finished {completed} with the mind.”

If a person has an evil mind, their speech and action are the same as his/her evil mind as well. Evil speech and actions are paid back with suffering. A metaphor exemplifying this is, “Ox foot prints are followed by cart wheels.”

On the contrary, a purified mind will be accompanied with good speech, good actions and happiness like a shadow.

We must refrain from doing bad deeds if we do wish to achieve **Happiness.**

The 20th Step:



The Avoidance Of Drinking Alcohol.

A human's mind is something subtle, hardly to be seen and always immersed in cravings as follows:

1. Struggling to satisfy lust.
2. Cunning to be sly.
3. Difficulty to maintain oneself.
4. Difficulty to be in control.

Though one does not smoke, drink, or is not addicted to drugs, one is still drunk.

What one is heavily drunk on is the indulgence in wanting to be young, in preventing illness, or in prolonging life, all of which are no path to real happiness.

The more one gets drunk from alcohol or addicted to drugs however, the more he/she could perform bad deeds.

The 21th Step:



Carefulness In All Dhamma.

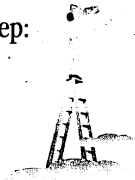
The nature of a mind is always thinking and wandering. Normally one's mind is often unconscious and indulges in the five sensual pleasures namely: forms, tastes, odors, sounds and tangible objects that usually tempt one to do bad deeds with his/her body, speech and mind.

When the thoughts are stuck in bad actions, then the good thoughts will disappear, all of which will make a shamble of our world.

The ***Dhamma*** work, which is based on good care is an attempt at a sound foundation in life, but will not sustain people's dedication to follow it. The result would cause a person to not continue to persevere, working with no sense of respect or responsibility, constantly be in low spirits, leave their work unpredictably, his/her life's direction becomes as changeable as the moon, paying no attention to working and neglecting making merits that lasts.

This inattentiveness of being is known as Carelessness.

The 22th Step:



Respectfulness.

Knowledge of each object or material we encounter according to its genuine specific qualifications will be much more useful to us in the long run than if we are ignorant of their properties.

For instance: a scientist knows the capacity of metal to produce electricity or knows the qualifications of radiation that benefit curing cancer.

It is easy for us to utilize effects properly when knowing the qualifications and capabilities of the substances we are dealing with.

On the contrary, it is difficult for us to know all things correspondent to the facts related to their qualities, but not for the Wise, due to their qualifications to assess them.

In general, it is much more difficult to perceive another person's virtue or goodness since one has disbelief in his/her mind and is inattentive or exhibits self pride, while displaying disgust and stubbornness towards others. One whose traits fit into this category finds it hard to perceive and absorb another's goodness and to receive benefits from them. Moreover, disharmony will spread throughout to all others who associate with them.

The one who realizes the importance of paying all his/her attention and respect to others' virtues and good deeds is considered to be an exceptionally special person because their mind was lifted up and

away from disbelief, and extensively opened to accept another's virtue into his/her mind.

This kind of person is regarded as one who has respectfulness as their personal motto.

The 23th Step:



Humility.

During a dry season, extremely dried soil in a field can become hydrated (reunited) again when it rains. But sand and small rough rock could not be reunited together even if it rains cats and dogs.

A green leafy tree will adapt itself to escape from strong winds but a dead tree still stands against the odds when facing wind. It will definitely be broken in two when facing strong winds. The latter tree will not grow even though it received plenty of water.

A metaphor for a person without humility is likened to one who could not be united with others like the small rough rock. It will not be prosperous or progress in life, and resembles the dried dead tree.

The word humility derives from the word **Nivāto**.

Nivāto means without air or not inflated with air.

Humility is humbleness, lowliness (ego less), gentleness, not showing conceit; not being haughty, puffed up or arrogant, but being one who is humble and does not boast him/herself to be of colossal power etc.

The 24th Step:



Contentment.

A hungry dog had only gruel enough for seven days. On the 8th day he wanted to eat rice. He then had rice for seven days. The next day he wanted only food; then he had food for another seven days. The day after that, he wanted to eat food together with the homeowner.

This kind of dog must be chased away since he is never content.

Being discontented could occur to any being, no matter who they

are: human, animal, the rich or the poor, the knowledgeable one or the ignorant one, male or female. A good person could be transformed into a bad person.

Being discontented is a condition that perpetuates in the mind of the dissatisfied. Whosoever is discontented is devoid of satisfaction due to craving, and greedy in whatever his/her desires may be, regardless of the economic capabilities of that person to fund such cravings. This greedy state propels the individual to engage in the unscrupulous actions to satisfy the plethora of lustful desires. This often leads to prostitution, begging and panhandling, false flattery, plotting and scheming or drug dealing.

The results of these greedy actions are stamped with fury, and anxiousness. Therefore one has to be trained to be contented with and appreciative of what one has by knowing moderation and knowing when you have enough.

Contentment is divided into three levels as follows:

1. Contentment with what one already owns, and does not think to acquire things that belong to others.
2. Contentment with what is within with regards to one's strength or capacity.
3. Contentment with what is befitting, what we are deserved to receive. If we feel undeserving, we should not accept it.

The 25th Step:



Filial Piety.

The rainwater will be evaporating back into the sky if there is only rain from the sky, without water reservoired in a valley, canal or ocean. Sooner or later there will be no rain any more. The world will be extremely dry and all the earth will be turned into desert.

Hence, in order to live we would need to rely on each other's support and exchange services and goods with each other (Barter system).

All living beings normally live with happiness, away from sufferings because of the following!

1. **Upakaṛā**, which is to subsidize each other.
2. **Paṭikāra**, which is to repay a benefactor's kindness.

For example, a son pays back debts of gratitude to his parents by taking fine care of them when they are old, or a student pays respect to his teachers.

Both kinds of individuals help to foster progress in the world.

In some cases, if a son did not pay back debts of gratitude to his parents and a student did not pay respect to his teachers, a big chaotic chain of events would absolutely occur in the world, so the world depends on repaying a benefactor's kindness by gratefully doing favors, regarded as "**Katavedī**" which is conducive to "**Kataññū**" or honoring the person who has done the favor by being grateful.

The 26th Step:



Dhamma Listening To The Occasion.

Dhamma listening to fit the occasion is listening to Lord Buddha's teachings on the proper occasion.

The meaning refers to spending time listening to the *Dhamma* as much as possible. With every possible moment we can devote to the study of the *Dhamma*, we will enable ourselves to develop mental acuity and increase the intellect of our minds to lay the roadmap to right view ***{Sammādiṭṭhi}***.

Right view is the wisdom of right understanding according to the facts of life and the world that exists: what right and wrong are, what good or bad deeds are, what merit or sin is, what to do and what not to do, all of which lead to the source of all virtue and goodness.

However, a person who is capable of learning but has wrong view could not be able to survive. On the contrary, a person who has right view and is average in knowledge could be blessed with prosperity and growth.

Right view is classified as two sources, namely:

1. Listening to the **Dhamma** from a good friend in word and deed (Kalyāṇamitrā) who is capable of giving good advice to us such as, what right and wrong are, what good and bad are, what merit and sin are, what “To Do” and what “Not To Do” are.

2. Developing a thorough discipline of one's thoughts, proper consideration, critical reflection, and analytical reflection.

Since this is so, whoever would like to have right view must undertake a massive effort in order to learn to how to learn about Dhamma Listening.

The 27th Step: Endurance.



“Khanti” means Endurance, referring to maintaining our normal condition of mind and body when affected with something unpleasant or dissatisfying.

Whatever small or large responsibilities have been accomplished in the World have occurred not only depending on the wisdom of the achiever but also from a foundation of morals known as **“Khanti”**

Without **“Khanti”**, nothing was done. Because **Khanti** is a kind of moral, it prevents us from being downhearted or discouraged, but instead encourages us to be diligent, and patient, and to view any obstacles as a test of ability.

Therefore it might be said that achievement of any type of work, no matter whether it stems from a worldly source or a Dhamma source is a monument to **“Khanti”**.

The 28th Step:



Being A Docile Person.

Some people in the world are qualified in the four categories of
Endurance

as in the following:

1. They endure difficulties with patience no matter how bad the weather may be.
2. They endure the misery of illness no matter how ill they are.

3. They endure caustic remarks no matter who speaks with biting sarcasm or a sharp tongue.
4. They endure the temptation of defilements no matter how much they are provoked.

However those of no endurance could not be tolerant when taught or advised by others. Furthermore they feel aggrieved and argue because of mischievous habits, which are hard to be disciplined if they are foolish. If they are intelligent, they will have a paralyzed mind.

Surrounded with valuable possessions, the paralyzed man could not get a chance to enjoy the benefits of their use.

Even though having talented teachers, the mischievous man could not absorb their virtue into his body and mind.

So let's be a docile person who is easily taught.

The 29th Step: Meeting Monks Often.



There are two kinds of **Happiness**:

1. **Sensual indulgence**: It's a physical happiness classified as external happiness.
2. Another is **meditation**, which is not adhering to the material aspects of life but creates a peace of mind and wisdom classified as an Inner peace for the **Enlightened** one.

Both of them when compared, result in the latter one being a much more exceptional and desirable happiness that nothing could be compared with.

It's the happiness that we could not expect and we are not accustomed to. It's a kind of individual matter, even though we have read a lot of books about it. It's still complex to understand.

Nevertheless, we will believe it when we have met a person who attained this happiness. At least, we would like to try to follow up or possibly not take action other than receiving a seed of an idea that has been planted in our mind from it.

The one who could attain this kind of happiness is only a **monk**.

Who is a **monk**?

Monk means Peace.

It refers to the one who ceases from doing bad deeds with body,

speech and mind. In other words, he abstains from doing all bad deeds correspondent to the morality of the monastic disciplines (**sila**) including the Dhamma.

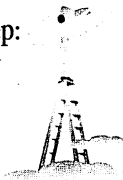
Seeing a **monk**, one will be inspired to think of the Dhamma.

A metaphor for the definition is: A bomb when having its primer lit would extremely explode and would show its colossal power.

The keen Intellect and efficiency of a person will be brought out from seeing a **monk**.

For instance; even **Prince Siddhartha** who was the most Enlightened One, had seen a monk and was then inspired to seek the Dhamma and eventually attained Enlightenment.

The 30th Step:



Conversation Of Dhamma To The Occasion.

Actually a human has to face lot of problems in his/her life, which have to be solved with wisdom (**Pañña**). Therefore humans need wisdom.

One, who is full of wisdom, as though he/she were the one who had a miracle crystal ball within them, is able to overcome obstacles and problems easily.

Two main sources of wisdom are:

1. By listening: that is listening to the wise ones who are Enlightened.
2. By cleverly thinking over things with a **Dhamma** mind.

A short way to rapidly acquire knowledge is by engaging in a **Dhamma talk** that forces one to have a two way communication of listening & speaking with others and simultaneously thinking it over. A Dhamma Talk needs to be carried out carefully; otherwise it will be changed to more of a disaster than a benefit.

What is a **Dhamma conversation**?

Conversation of Dhamma to the occasion is that which consists of at least two persons discussing the Dhamma with each other so as to receive wisdom, which will aid us in the following ways:

1. To know what is wholesome and what is virtue so as to perform more good deeds.

2. To know what is unwholesome and evil so as to refrain from it.
3. To know what is indeterminate that occurs as a fact of nature; being neither good nor bad in nature, but we must see our way through it in order to avoid sufferings that may ensue by making a mistake, as a result.

To be cheerful, to succeed, to progress and to accumulate merit, one must know how to spend and manage their time properly.

The 31th Step:



Ascetic Practice.

After having passed the 30 steps of life, we found that there are many bad habits such as improper manners we display that are in need of much improvement. Some of them were already adjusted, much better improved and have been eliminated, such as hatred, selfishness, envy, conceit and arrogance etc.

But there are some that we have attempted to adjust but still remain, that are comprised of: lust, fame seeking, drowsiness, flinching,

remorse etc., which must be further and more strictly dealt with.

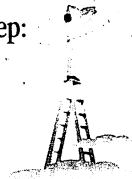
The first things that we have to learn by heart are:

1. The source of all bad conduct comes from defilements hidden in our minds.
2. Hindrances towards Impurity Extinction exist in the following forms:
 - 2.1. We cannot see them.
 - 2.2. Our minds are strongly occupied with the defilements like a fish being accustomed to water.
 - 2.3. Not knowing efficient methods to extinguish the defilements.

In this step, the Lord Buddha taught how to get rid of the defilements and to get absolute results in this proverb: “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.”

That is, when a mind was burnt by defilements; in return, the defilements must be set on fire, which when occurs inside our mind is regarded as **Ascetic Practice**.

The 32th Step:



Celibacy conduct.

After having burned away grasses and having uprooted the fields, the gardeners and agriculturists quickly have to set seeds needed to be planted in the ground at once.

If we leave the ground empty, grasses and weeds (wild plants growing where they are not wanted) will regenerate and grow there instead.

One must practice the Ascetic Disciplines (**Tapa**) to burn away the defilements in the following ways:

- A) Practicing Meditation.
- B) Attending Retreats.
- C) Observing The Five Or Eight Precepts.
- D) Maximizing Learning.
- E) Calming Oneself.
- F) Being Tolerant from time to time until the defilements are diminished.
- G) We Must Cultivate Other Virtues into our minds at each moment. If not, the defilements could arise again and may be much more difficult to quell than before.

The virtue that should be cultivated immediately after precise

practicing of **Tapa** or The Ascetic Disciplines is Celibacy. Practicing Celibacy is a conduct that helps one to develop quality of mind, and the discipline of the mind.

When the defilements will be completely extinguished we will open the door to eventually attain **Nirvana**.

The 33th Step:



Attaining The Four Noble Truths.

The Lord Buddha said, “According to the real basics of life, life is suffering, which we don’t know.” As a metaphor for this saying: All human beings have defects or imperfections as their norm so they don’t know how a perfect person is, or how great a perfect person would look like.

Nevertheless, for a wise person: the older he/she is getting, the more they know themselves of life’s miseries, which they just know but can’t see, and do not know how to conquer them.

There are two kinds of sufferings:

1. **Conditions of sufferings** are the sufferings of the normal lives of all beings. The miseries come with and after the birth. They are birth, old age, illness and death.
2. **Scattered woe** arises in an incapable mind, which does not bear up to outside influences as surmised by the following:
 1. **Soka** is a sorrowful or unhappy mind.
 2. **Parideva** is one's grievances.
 3. **Dhukkha** is physical suffering.
 4. **Domanassa** is sensitivity or sense perception.
 5. **Upāyāssa** is to lose heart or to be in low spirits.
 6. **Apiyehi Sampayoga** is to meet with something unlovable or hateful.

7. **Piyehi Vippayoga** is to be separated from what is loving and caring.
8. **Yam Piccham na labhati** is what one desires but cannot get.

The Lord Buddha knew how to extinguish the sufferings by teaching and training us to strictly follow the paths of the **Blessings Of Life** to subsequently extinguish the misery.

The outcome of practicing The Ascetic Disciplines (**Tapa**) is the burning away of **Kilesa** (defilements) in all of its forms. One method to accomplish this is to attend Meditation retreats, which calms minds down all the time. You must also cultivate morals by practicing celibacy [no sexual conduct], become **Ordained**, then continue practicing Meditation throughout your life and to follow the Noble Eightfold Path.

Eventually, seeing the Noble Truths, being removed from suffering, then attaining real happiness as in the Lord Buddha's path, are the results of perseverance.

Various kinds of meanings of the Noble Truths are as follows:

1. The great noble truths.
2. The truths of the noble one.
3. The truths that make one noble.

The meaning of attaining the Noble Truths is to see through the Noble Facts that help the one who attained this to be liberated from sufferings, namely:

- **Dukkha:** Suffering, or dissatisfaction.
- **Samudaya:** The cause of suffering, or origin of suffering.
- **Nirodha:** The cessation of suffering, or extinction of suffering.
- **Magga:** The path leading to the cessation of suffering

The Four Noble Truths are the keys or the main principles of Buddhism, because if one has attained the Truths first, then **The Dhamma** arising in one's mind, leading to all other knowledge, follows it.

The 34th Step:



Thoroughly Attaining Nirvana.

Is there any place in the world that is without suffering? No.

How come Prince Siddhartha became ordained?

He would you like to find out the place where the sufferings could not reach you.

Did he find it? Yes, he did.

Where was it? It was **Nirvana**.

Where was **Nirvana**?

Since this is so, we have to then study it.

Nirvana means Extinction of the Defilements or Sufferings.

Nirvana means freedom or to free oneself from sufferings or extricate ourselves from the three cycles of Existence and so on.

In General, there are two main meanings of **Nirvana**, namely:

1. **Saupadisesa-Nirvana:** Nirvana with the substratum of life remaining is the Nirvana of the Lord Buddha who extinguished all defilements but was still alive to help all living beings.
2. **Anupadisesa-Nirvana:** Nirvana without any substratum of life remaining is the Nirvana of the Lord Buddha who completely extinguished all defilements causing extinction of the Aggregates {Permanent Nirvana}.

Where is the Nirvana?

In the human body, There is Dhammakaya.

In Dhammakaya, There is Nirvāna or Nibbāna.

The 35th Step:



A Mind Free Of Worldly Vicissitudes.

The mind is the nature of thought inside our body and can collect and assimilate all kinds of sense-objects.

Fear is similar to worry, feeling anxious, and being afraid, which are considered dissatisfaction.

A moving mind has wishes, and desires, which are likely to transpire.

Worldly vicissitudes are worldly conditions that are inevitable for all humans.

A mind that is not affected by the worldly vicissitudes has equanimity or neutrality of mind. Indifference to praise and blame is all in the performance of duty, because the mind sees through it, that's all.

These worldly conditions are classified as two types:

1. Pleasant Objects (known as ***Ittha Ramana***) as in: ***Labha***

= gain, ***Yasa*** = repute, ***Sukha*** = happiness, ***Pasamsa*** = praise.

These four kinds of pleasant objects are favorable in general because we are ignorant that they don't last permanently. So we go in quest of them until we've got them, hold onto them and are concerned about them.

2. Unpleasant Objects (known as ***Anittha Ramana***) as in: ***Alabha*** = loss, ***Ayasa*** = disrepute, ***Dukkha*** = pain, ***Nindana*** = blame.

These four latter ones, which are not disliked but are hated, create fear in us, even if the fear is unfounded. We are afraid of being affected by them, leading to the fear of the damage they might cause, which parlays into the fear of their reoccurrence.

Nevertheless, the eight of them include all things in this world comprising **The Three Common Characteristics** and are regarded as **Ti-lakkhana**: that is to say:

1. **Anicca** is Impermanence. All conditioned states are impermanent, regardless of whether they are occupied by spirit or not. All things change as they get older and get damaged all the time.
2. **Dukkha** is Suffering. All conditioned states are subject to oppression. All living beings have to die, and nothing is left.
3. **Anatta** is Soullessness. All states are not self, not in control of what it is expected, and not in a state of satisfaction.

Not seeing these worldly conditions, we are infatuated with them and then become steeped in grief from that point on. The Lord Buddha sees the **Dhammakayas** inside, which are the characteristics of Permanence (**Niccata**), Happiness (**Sukha**) and **Atta** (your true self), all of which are nature beyond the three common characteristics.

According to the Buddha's Enlightenment, **Permanence, Happiness and True Self ARE Nirvana**, so he was not addicted to the worldly vicissitudes. Not being gloomy, or not being infatuated with them, He concentrated on Nirvana inside himself instead.

Hence, The eight worldly conditions are inevitable for all, no matter whether they are unenlightened or enlightened ones. The only difference being in the way people respond to or act on them. That is to say:

Unenlightened beings (ordinary persons) when facing these conditions will be addicted to them since they do not know or understand the true nature of worldly conditions. On the contrary, the Enlightened one (The Lord Buddha) when facing them will not be addicted to them.

The 36th Step: A Mind Free Of Sorrow.



It's unavoidable for every one to face the eight worldly conditions except for the enlightened one or the noble one whose mind is kept calm and collected no matter what pleasant or unpleasant objects come to him/her.

The Buddha saw through his mind that:

1. **Anicca** is impermanence or transience, and instability.

2. **Dukkha** is suffering that can definitely be destroyed in one day, and is not long lasting.
3. **Anatta** is actually not one's true self and is not in control to lead one to satisfaction, all of which are opposite to **Nirvana**, which are permanence, happiness and self.

Another thing that one does not need to face but causes a person to struggle and then get addicted to is temptation. At first, a person is happy to have something but it is subject to the conditions of impermanence, suffering and not self. So when it is gone, we are blue. This philosophy also refers to love.

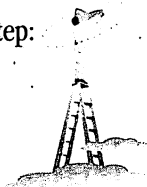
The ones who attain Enlightenment do not preoccupy themselves with love, so they do not experience the grief of it, since they love nothing but Nirvana.

A sorrowful mind is a drained mind or a dispirited mind similar to soil or leaves dried up without moisture. This means that the mind is

affected with something undesirable, making our mind exhausted.
A gloomy, heavy heart is one that is longing for something.

A gloomy mind is not a good state of mind to go to work with, and not capable to perform a responsible job with. This is similar to an ill person who is not ready to do any kind of work.

The 37th Step:



A Mind Free Of Particles Of Defilements.

A particle means fine dust, which is so small that eyes could hardly see it. It could only be seen when sticking to something clean like a looking glass. In small quantities of Particles, we still could not see them. It is only when brightness destroys them can we see them.

A mind with particles is a mind penetrated with fine defilements that bring the mind into grief, less brightness, less sparkle, less glitter, and bereft of efficiency in thinking, as in the case of a mind that thinks

slowly and negatively.

A mind without any particles is a mind free of all defilements both rough and fine, making us fresh, bright and ready to work (the duty of mind is thinking), all of which are the mind of an **Arahant**.

Particles of Defilements in one's mind are:

Rāga ~ Lust or Passion (grasping).

Dosa ~ Ill Will or Hatred (anger).

Moha ~ Delusion or Ignorance (stupidity).

Rāga is lust or sexual passion, which is a fine defilement that adheres to our mind deeply.

There are five sensual pleasures; namely: form, taste, scent, sound, and touch.

These kinds of defilements are not sin or evil to ordinary people.

But without being controlled of mind, they will roughly propel themselves more deeply into this state, and commit more unwholesome acts because of this lust.

Dosa is ill will or malevolence that could lead us to cause harm to ones who make us angry.

Our mind would brim with thinking to scold, or thinking to kill, thinking to kick, thinking to set a house on fire and thinking to make others ashamed etc.

Moha is delusion. This is a state of mind that is filled with dullness, with no thoughts of responsibility for bad or good actions, and knowing nothing about merit and evil.

These particles exist according to worldly knowledge (which we don't know) that is **not** delusion.

Even though there are those who have accumulated abundant knowledge and efficiency in technology but know nothing about

wholesome and unwholesome actions and their benefit and disaster, are regarded as those who are in a state of delusion of ignorance.

The differences between ***Rāga, Dosa and Moha*** are the following:

Rāga: Is a Small disaster but is slow to relieve.

Dosa: Is a Big disaster but is quick to relieve.

Moha: Is a Big disaster and is difficult to relieve.

The 38th Step:



Peace Of Mind.

As soon as we are born, we must face extreme hazardous risks, which are ready to take our lives every minute, as if we had swum in the midst of a dark dangerous sea all the time.

Fears of the world are divided into two types:

1. **Internal Fear** – which is unavoidable.

~ Fear to the front: Fear that Death is awaiting.

~ Fear to the back: Fear that Birth is awaiting.

- ~ Fear to the left: Fear that Decay is awaiting.
- ~ Fear to the right: Fear that Disease is awaiting.

2. **External Fear** – which is immeasurable.

- ~ Fear of Humans such as: an aggressive husband, bad wife, and evil children, an unkind boss, or hooligan friends.
- ~ Fear of Natural Disasters such as: floods or inundation, fire (conflagration), or an earthquake.
- ~ Fear of the Disastrous Results Of Bad Deeds such as: being destroyed by revenge of all kinds of past actions.

These two types of Fear will follow us not only as all the steps of this life but every step of our future lives until we can perform all **38 Steps Of The Blessings Of Life** to extinguish all defilements in order to be truly safe and be regarded as having **Peace Of Mind**.

Peace of mind is a mind with safety, without fear, with extinction of defilements = **Nirvana**.

It means a state of mind that is free from defilements, due to the control of fear or disasters, and has attained real happiness.

The main cause of unhappiness in ordinary people is that they are firmly adhered to defilements that bind them to the Round of rebirth and death (**Samsāra**).

These defilements or *Kilesas* are known as the Fetters.

The Fetters are the Binders meaning the fetters that bind people to the round of existences and sufferings. A metaphor describing this is: the rope that binds animals to a cart.

There are **Ten Fetters** that are classified into two large groups:

The first group is the **Lower Fetters**.

There are five of them:

1. **Sakkāyadiṭṭhi**: is self-illusion or the delusion of self.

This refers to a personality view or false view of individuality

that our body belongs to us or someone else since they do not know their inner bodies. This especially refers to “**Dhammakhandā**,” which is self-illusion that sticks to their minds strongly.

We cannot see according to the truths of life.

What we see is the result of a combination of a totality of components, all of which make a person selfish, in a roughened state, with a stirring up of one’s feelings, being forceful and seriously agonizing because of the wrong view of self-illusion.

2. **Vicikicchā**: is doubt or uncertainty.

This refers to doubtfulness in the value of the Triple Gem through the path of Nirvana and wheel of rebirth because of ignorance of matter or **Dhammadessi**, which makes us unconfident in following the Noble Eightfold Path of life or the **Dhamma**.

3. **Sīlabbataparāmāsa:** is adherence to mere (superstitious) rules and rituals.

Having wrong view that one could extinguish all defilements by following other teachings outside Buddhism only or by following the teachings of Buddhism without Faith.

4. **Kāmarāga:** is sensual lust.

Adherence to or grasping of the five sensual pleasures that are form, sound, scent, taste and touch.

5. **Patigha:** is repulsion that can be categorized as annoyance or irritation.

The second group is the **Higher Fetters**.

There are five of them namely:

6. **Rūparāga:** is attachment to realms of form such as attachment to absorptions of the form sphere, attachment to the satisfaction of the state of happiness, absorptions of the

state of serenity of the fine-material sphere through meditation, desire to be born in the state of the fine-material sphere.

7. **Arūparāga:** is greed for immaterial existence such as attachment to absorptions of the formless sphere. If one were attached to and satisfied with this stage of happiness, his/her mind would not attain the **Dhammakkhandha** (a portion of the Dharma). It is because the mind cannot truly standstill at the center of body.

8. **Māna:** is conceit or stubborn pride.

This fetter refers to too much pride in oneself that causes disdain, such as being swelled with the pride of superiority or causing inferiority of another.

9. **Uddhacca:** is restlessness and absentmindedness.

The distraction of mind with regards to this fetter is the incapacity to completely control ones thoughts because of

ignorance remaining in the mind. This distracted mind is affected very little, in comparison to the five hindrances that affect the mind to a much greater extent.

10. **Avijjā:** reflects an ignorance that is utter darkness, where one does not know the facts of the nature of life, does not see through conditions and does not deeply comprehend the round of rebirth. This fetter represents total ignorance of the Four Noble Truths.

The Lord Buddha did not explain all of these following questions:

Who had created the world?

Who was the first person in the world?

When was our first life as a human?

And who created the defilements?

The Lord Buddha said that one, who was shot by an arrow, did not waste time to find out who shot the arrow? What direction was

the arrow shot from? How far did it travel? Was it a man or a woman who shot it etc? He must be first be cured, then he might discuss about the details later.

Vice versa, all humans occupied by **Kilesa** (defilements) are not safe. We had better extinguish them to be safe first.

After we have extinguished **Kilesa**, all problems would not be difficult to solve any more.

It is not only in this life but also until the last life that we must work at extinguishing all **Kilesa**, and the easy way to do that is to follow all 38 Blessing Steps above until being a noble person is the result. This will help us to then be liberated from the Round of Existence (Samsāra), and the Sufferings by **Kilesa**.

The Enlightened ones are classified by four stages:

1) **Sotāpanna:** or the Stream-Enterer.

One who has attained the first stage of holiness and the

Seven-Times-At-Most for exertion (referring to seven more lifetimes left) will be an **Arahant** eventually.

2) **Sakadāgāmi:** or the Once-Returner.

One who has attained the second stage of the Path and will be reborn on the earth only once more before attaining the final emancipation.

3) **Anāgāmi:** or the Non-Returner.

One who is a Non-Returner will not be reborn again, but will have to continue extinguishing the exhaustive **Kilesa** or thorough defilements in the fine material and immaterial worlds of the **Pañcasuddhāvasa** level. The **Anāgāmi** will then experience a complete extinction of all passions at that level.

When being a part of the laity, one will not be indulging in the pleasure of sensual lust and will always be observing the eight precepts.

4) **Arahant:** or the Worthy One.

This refers to one who is established in the Fruition of Arahantship. He/she completed the extinction of all passions and sufferings and is free from **Samsara**. After extinction of the Five Aggregates, **Dhammakkhanas** will appear in **Nirvana**, the as same as the **Lord Buddha's Nirvana** and are in a state of infinite happiness.

Being an **Arahant** is correspondent to attaining **Vijja 3** which can completely extinguish the lower and higher fetters that bind all living beings to the cycle of rebirth, and have Peace of mind, including eternal safety due to the permanent absence of **Kilesa**.

The word “**Vijjā**” does not mean any subject taught in school.

The expression “**Vijjā 3**” that represents the Threefold Knowledge, is a technical term of religious origin, meaning, in reference to Enlightenment; comprehensive wisdom which is called “**Ñāṇa**” or

“Insight” arising through advanced meditation until attaining **“Inner Dhammakaya”** as follows:

1. **Pubbenivāsānusati-ñāṇa:** Insight of the recollection of past lives.
2. **Cutupapāta-ñāṇa:** Knowledge of the death and rebirth of beings, regarded as “Clairvoyance” of the cycle of existence.
3. **Āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa:** Knowledge of the destruction of the mental intoxication of defilements known as **“Enlightenment.”**

Hence, to completely extinguish all the passions or to be free of the **Kilesas**, to have Peace of mind, to have happiness that is the Truth of life, and to be out of the Round of Existence or Rebirth in order to go to Nirvana, all of which are the highest blessings of life as an Arahant, we need to apply exertion through meditation until we attain Inner Peace or True Happiness with **“Vijjā 3.”** That’s all.



Summary

Those who wish happiness in this life, the next life and the most happiness so as to extinguish all the defilements to reach **Nirvana**, have to develop themselves by following the steps to happiness:

- 1) Do not associate with the Fool but associate with the Wise and pay respect to those worthy of respect so as to depend on their suggestions for the best way for our life.

- 2) Living in a suitable location and having performed good deeds in the past should help to remind us to take pleasure in doing good deeds and setting ourselves up properly in life.
- 3) Keeping in mind Learning to be learned, using Artfulness in the Application of knowledge, Artfulness in conduct and in speech, to be proper with regards to **Vinaya** or Discipline.
- 4) When being a member of the Laity, one has to pay old debts by Cherishing one's Parents, pay new debts by Cherishing one's Children and Spouse and Establishing Good Status in life by not leaving one's work undone.
- 5) Merit Making by Generosity, Taking The Refuges, and Practicing Righteousness, Acquiring Knowledge and Developing the Capacity of Looking After our Extended Family and Helping Others with Blameless Work.
- 6) Refraining from harming others with the avoidance of all evil. Refraining from harming ourselves with the avoidance of

drinking Alcohol, while Enhancing Good Deeds with Carefulness in all the Dhamma.

- 7) Developing Ourselves to Fulfill our Responsibilities and Paying Respect to those Worthy Ones and Practicing Humility.

Establishing Ourselves with Dignity, and Being Righteous People with Gratitude.

Avoiding Sloth and Torpor with Dhamma Listening to the Occasion.

- 8) Preventing, Getting rid of and Controlling all disasters with Patience. Having self-reliance with a kind docile personality. Following the Path by Meeting Monks and Being free from doubt with Dhamma Conversation.

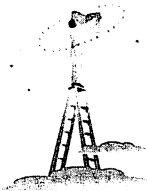
- 9) Purifying ourselves by practicing **Sila** or the precepts with religious austerity or engaging in Ascetic Practices that

include Retreating and Controlling of the senses: Purifying the mind with Celibacy Conduct that is one of the required monastic observances, all of which are to attain the **Four Noble Truths** and **Nirvana**.

- 10) After attaining **Enlightenment**, the mind will not be preoccupied by worldly vicissitudes, not stuck in Grief, the mind will be liberated from all passions and experience true happiness.

The one who is jubilant will not lose anywhere but will get luck everywhere. In case of no attainment of Enlightenment, we always make merit by performing good deeds so they will carry over to be past deeds for the next life, and at that time, we will be happy and have virtue of life until we will meet the most eternal happiness which is beyond the Three Characteristics: that are Impermanence, the State of being Oppressed and Soullessness.

True happiness is known as “Nirvana”.



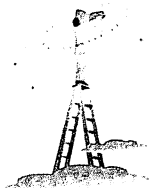
The End

The book of “**Open Up To Read About Happiness**” may not be the same as your first expectation before reading. The theme of this book is to explain the reality of the world and life so as to tell us that no matter how long we have remained in the Round of Rebirth, we will know what we have to do in order to attain Real Happiness.

Any suggestions are appreciated; please contact The Thinkers & The Writers For World Peace Club.

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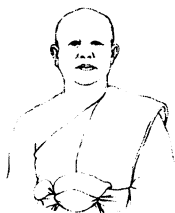
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Point of View

Every minute of life has been counted down since our birth, so life is a sort of misery. The way to decrease suffering and to attain happiness is to learn what Real Happiness is and how to attain it.

If one does not know where to get the first start to learn, You're Welcome to start with **38 Paths Of Blessings Of Life** since, for Buddhists, it is **The 38 Steps To Happiness.**



About Phrabhavanaviriyakhun

(Phadet Dattajeevo)

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President: Dhammakaya International Society of California, USA

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1) Dhamma for Family:

- The Virtuous Person the World Awaits.
- The Origin of Thai Etiquette.
- Jataka Tales.
- The Genesis of the World and Human kind

2) Dhamma for Education:

- Respecting One's Teacher.

3) Dhamma for Marriage:

- Jataka Stories on Women (Itthi)

4) Dhamma for General Management:

- A Buddhist Way to Overcome Obstacles.
- Good Employee, Endearing Millionaire.

- Strategies towards Success.
 - Strategies for Decision- making.
 - Buddhist Principles of Administration
 - Thoughtful Vision
 - Warrior Progress
 - Virtues for an Army General
 - The Secretary's Handbook
- 5) Dhamma for Social Administration
- The Ten Virtues of a Monarch
 - Following in the Royal Footsteps
 - The Marks of a Great Man
 - Singalovada Sutta
 - A Recipe for Success in Developing Society and Economy
- 6) Dhamma for Temple Administration
- Ovadapatimokkha

- Ordination to Pursue Perfection
 - Readiness to go to the Temple
 - Complete Generosity
 - Merit on One's Birthday
 - To Pursuers of Perfection 1-3
 - The True Monk
 - Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta
- 7) Dhamma Miscellany
- Jivaka Komarabhacca: Celestial Physician
 - Something to know

Meditation for Beginner

For those who are interested in meditation for relaxation, consciousness and mindfulness. These followings below are searched from www.dhammadownload.com

Meditation is something which we already do in everyday life allowing us to focus on the task at hand – but the depth of meditation is superficial.

The events around us in the world soon rob us of our attention and our concentration is gone. The mind that wanders outside our own body is the source of all types of suffering.

By deepening our meditation until our mind comes to a standstill we can unlock the potential and unused ability within.

We maintain a balance of mindfulness and happiness for ourselves bringing contentment and direction to life in a way not possible through any other technique.

Step-by-step Introductions for the Meditation Technique

1. The sitting posture, which has been found to be the most conducive for meditation, is the half-lotus position. Sit upright with your back and spine straight – cross-legged with your right leg over the left one.

You can sit on a cushion or pillow to make your position more comfortable. Nothing should impede your breathing or circulation. Your hands

should rest palms-up on your lap, and the tip of your right index finger should touch your left thumb. Feel as if you are one with the ground on which you sit. Feel that you could sit happily for as long as you like.

2. Softly close your eyes as if you were falling asleep. Relax every part of your body, beginning the muscles of your face, then relax your face, neck shoulders, arms, chest, trunk and legs. Make sure there are no signs of tension on your forehead or across your shoulders.

3. Close your eyes and stop thinking about the things of the world. Feel as if you are sitting alone – around you is nothing and no-one. Create a feeling of happiness and spaciousness in your mind. Before starting, it is necessary to acquaint yourself with the various resting points or bases of the mind inside the body.

The first base is at the rim of the nostril, on the right side for men and on the left side for women.

The second base is at the bridge of the nose at the corner of the

Base (1) Nostril { Left nostril for women
Right nostril for men

Base (2) Bridge of nose { Left for women
Right for men

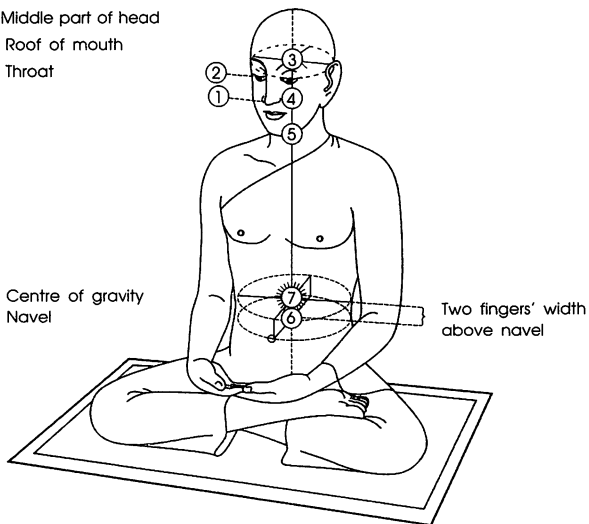
Base (3) Middle part of head

Base (4) Roof of mouth

Base (5) Throat

Base (7) Centre of gravity

Base (6) Navel



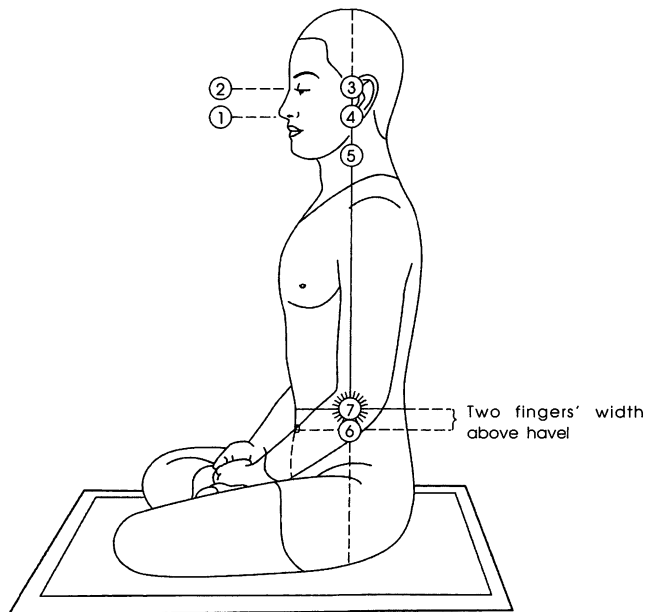
eye – on the right side for men and on the left side for women.

The third base is at the center of the head.

The fourth is at the roof of the mouth.

The fifth is at the center of the throat above the Adam's apple.

The sixth base is at a point in the center of the body at the meeting point of an imaginary line between the navel through the back and the line between the two sides.



The seventh base of the mind is two fingers' breadths above the sixth base. This base is the most important point in the body. It is the very center of the body and the point where the mind can come to a standstill.

4. Feel that your body is empty space, without organs, muscles or tissues. Gently and contentedly rest your attention at a point near to the seventh base of the mind – at the center of the body. Whatever experience arises in the mind, simply observe without attempting to interfere. In this way your mind will become gradually purer and inner experience will unfold.

5. If you find that you cannot dissuade the mind from wandering, then your mind needs an inner object as a focus for attention. Gently imagine that a bright, clear, crystal ball, the size of the tip of your little finger, is located inside at the center of the body. Maybe you'll find you can imagine nothing, but later you'll be able to see a crystal ball of increasing clarity. Allow your mind to come to rest at the very center of the crystal ball. Use the subtlest of effort and you'll find that the crystal ball becomes brighter and clearer. If you see too much effort you will find that it gives you a headache.

6. If you find that your mind still wanders from the crystal ball, you can bring the mind back to a standstill by repeating the mantra, “Samma-araham” silently, as if the sound of the mantra is coming from the center of the crystal ball. Repeat the mantra over and over again without counting.

7. Don't entertain thoughts in your mind. Don't analyze what's going on in the meditation. Allow the mind to come to the standstill – that's all you need to do. If you find that you can imagine nothing, then repeat the mantra, “Samma-araham” silently and continuously in the mind. If you find that you're not sure about the location of the center of the body, anywhere in the area of the stomach will do. Persevere because today's day-dream is tomorrow's still mind, today's darkness is tomorrow's inner brightness, today's perseverance is tomorrow's fulfillment. Don't be disappointed if you find your mind wandering. It is only natural for beginners. Make effort continuously, keep your mind bright, clear and pure, and in the end, you will achieve your goal.

8. Keep repeating the mantra and eventually the sound of the words will die away. At that point a new bright, clear, crystal ball will arise in the mind

of its own accord. The crystal ball will sparkle like a diamond.

This stage is called “**pathama magga**” (primary path). At this stage the shining crystal ball is connected firmly to the mind, and is seated at the center of the body. You will experience happiness, With continuous observation at the center of this crystal ball, it will give way to a succession of increasingly purer bodily sheaths until it reaches the ultimate one called “Dhammakaya”, the highest level of attainment of supreme happiness.

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Every kind of social ladder leads the climber to a higher position of more loneliness and suffering. However there is a more wondrous kind of ladder that the higher one ascends, the further away from suffering one is lead.

This is the ladder that only leads to Happiness. It has, as its religious name, "The 38-Stepped Ladder of Highest Blessing."

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